

A RESOLUTION OF THE AMATS POLICY COMMITTEE REGARDING THE KNIK ARM CROSSING PROJECT

WHEREAS, the 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) identifies and prioritizes the transportation and air quality improvements to be carried out by the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions area for the next 20 years, and

WHEREAS, the Knik Arm Crossing (KAC) project is included in that plan as a regionally significant project with no funding currently planned for AMATS project implementation of the Interim MTP to be used to support construction of any element of the KAC, and

WHEREAS, the AMATS Policy Committee has serious reservations about the viability and need for the KAC project including but not limited to the financial assumptions, the environmental impacts along with the impacts to the Government Hill Neighborhood, and

WHEREAS, the AMATS Policy Committee understands the need to approve an Interim Metropolitan Transportation Plan in a timely manner without adding or deleting any projects, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the AMATS Policy Committee expresses their reservations regarding the need, impact and cost of the Knik Arm Crossing Project, and ask that the project be revisited as part of the 2040 MTP update process.

Dated July 23, 2015



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**

GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

3132 Channel, Suite 200
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Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500
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October 16, 2015

Rob Campbell, P.E., Chair
AMATS Policy Committee
4700 Elmore Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Dear Mr. Campbell,

We appreciate the AMATS Policy Committee taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

Regarding the Policy Committee's resolution pertaining to the Knik Arm Crossing project (Need IDs 20255 and 20256), we understand that you have concerns related to this project. Per the Governor's direction under Administrative Order 271, the Department is currently moving forward with completing the permitting processes and securing financing for the project. Upon completion of these activities, a final determination on the viability of constructing this project will be decided.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the Knik Arm Crossing project, please do not hesitate to contact the Knik Arm Crossing Project Director, Judy Dougherty, at 907-269-6698 or judy.dougherty@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Vigue".

Mike Vigue
Director
Division of Program Development

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Andy Varner <avarner@sandpointak.org>
Sent: Monday, August 24, 2015 11:33 AM
To: dot.stip
Subject: Comment on Draft STIP- Sand Point Dock

Greetings,

This comment is made in support of the Sand Point City Dock Replacement project, ID # 29989.

For years the City of Sand Point has been trying to get the dock replaced and it is nice to see the project finally make it into the STIP, but the community desperately needs to see the project stay on the list and move forward with funding and construction.

The existing dock, having functioned for more than the original 30 year design life, is beginning to show its age. During recent engineering assessments it was found that the existing dock does not meet current seismic design criteria for marine structures. Given the difficulties involved in renovating the existing structure, replacement of the dock was determined to be the best approach. After careful review Alaska DOT also agreed with this approach, favoring replacement over rehabilitation. Upgrading the design for the latest seismic codes and providing a new, robust dock system will provide a valuable and necessary asset to the City of Sand Point for the next 30+ years.

The city dock currently serves as a multi-function dock acting first and foremost as a shipping and receiving terminal for commercial goods, services and industry, as well as a service terminal for the *Tustumena* ferry. The Sand Point City Dock receives barge service weekly from Seattle throughout the year. The dock also handles processed seafood via shipping container vans regularly. Given the lack of road access to the city of Sand Point, the city dock is an essential component of infrastructure providing critical access between Sand Point and the Pacific Northwest region. If the current dock were left to degrade and ultimately fail, it would seriously jeopardize the essential barge service resulting in the increasing costs of goods for city residents enormously and may put processing industry and logistics jobs in peril if products were "stranded".

The opportunity to attract new shore-side processing also relies heavily on access to a reliable and safe dock. Increased processing capacity in Sand Point harbor would contribute to more State, regional and local revenue significantly. A sound critical infrastructure could also lead to many new jobs if the new dock system becomes a selling point for plants planning to process products year round.

In summary, funding this project now will:

- Allow the facility to more reliably be used for industrial application (i.e. freight offload, fishing industry support, heavy equipment offload etc.).
- Guarantee the City of Sand Point will have statewide as well as Pacific Northwest marine access for the next 30 years.
- Assure the Alaska Marine Highway System that Sand Point will be a reliable port of call for the next 30 years.
- Allow emergency response coordinators to rely on Sand Point's City dock for disaster relief planning.
- Ensure that a new facility is in place before degradation of the existing structure can prevent access to Sand Point.

- Provide a code compliant dock facility in Sand Point able to survive large seismic events and meet emergency infrastructure needs for the City.

Thank you for your attention.

Andy Varner | City of Sand Point

City Administrator

3380 C St, Ste 205 | Anchorage, AK 99503

o: 907.274.7561 | c: 907.301.7528

www.sandpointak.com

Good, Sheila D (DOT)

From: Good, Sheila D (DOT)
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2015 10:30 AM
To: 'avarner@sandpointak.org'
Subject: Comment on Draft STIP- Sand Point Dock

Mr. Varner,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

We understand that the Sand Point City Dock is a priority for your community and agree that this project will provide many benefits. It is currently listed in the STIP with Surface Transportation Program funds in the amount of \$9,600,000 in Federal Fiscal Year 2017. At this time, we expect to move forward with the project as scheduled and believe the project estimate is reasonable.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Southcoast Region, Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1775 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

Sheila Good

Transportation Planner I
Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development
3132 Channel Drive | P.O. Box 112500 | Juneau, AK 99811

T (907) 465-6392 | F (907) 465-6984



Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 2:34 PM
To: dot.stip
Cc: Potter, Shelley M (DOT)
Subject: FW: Design & Construction Standards feedback



FYI

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 12:40 PM
To: 'smyke@ctcak.net'
Subject: RE: Design & Construction Standards feedback

Ms. Smyke,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Department appreciates your comments regarding the Whitshed Road Bike and Pedestrian Path project; public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

Based on public comment received for the Draft 2016-2019 STIP, the Department is working to accelerate the project development timeline for this project and we welcome your further participation as this project moves forward.

In relation to speed limits—speed limit determination is directed by ADOT&PF policy and a function of the region's Traffic and Safety section. There has been a series of speed studies conducted on May 16, 2011; September 10 and 11, 2012; and September 10, 2013. The studies concluded that the current 35 MPH speed limit aligns with ADOT&PF policy. Any additional studies can be requested by the City of Cordova.

Road safety is a chief concern of ADOT&PF and we appreciate your comments. If you have additional questions or concerns regarding this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Duane Hoskins at 451-2382 or duane.hoskins@alaska.gov.

Best,

Sara

Sara E. Mason

Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive
Juneau, Alaska 99801
☎: 907.465.2065 | ✉: sara.mason@alaska.gov

From: Crabb, Mike (DOT)
Sent: Tuesday, August 25, 2015 9:50 AM
To: dot.stip
Subject: FW: Design & Construction Standards feedback

From: Chambers, Mike J (DOT)
Sent: Tuesday, August 25, 2015 9:39 AM
To: Crabb, Mike (DOT)
Subject: FW: Design & Construction Standards feedback

Morning Mike,
Can you help me get this to the appropriate person. I believe this is your shop, right?

Thanks
Mike

From: smyke@ctcak.net [<mailto:smyke@ctcak.net>]
Sent: Tuesday, August 25, 2015 9:26 AM
To: Chambers, Mike J (DOT)
Subject: Design & Construction Standards feedback

name	Anita Smyke
satisfied	Choose
comments	<p>Thank you very much for allowing me to comment on the STIP for Alaska DOT & PF. Thanks to Judy, Duane and Jeff for coming to Cordova to give us an overview and explain the STIP process and what projects Cordova, Alaska has and where they are on the overall list. Comments: The community of Cordova, Alaska has been long awaiting the safety bicycle/pedestrian pathway for the 3/4 mile of the Whitshed Road that links the recreational ballfields and RV park to town, via anarrow dangerous road. Recently that road was resurfaced and we were all holding our breath, hoping therewould be added at least some paved shoulders. Unfortunately, the type of project did not allow it, even though wewere able to ask for (and got) 10ft. travel lanes with a 1 foot shoulder and two "Bike/Ped safety 25mph recommended" speed signs. It was helpful but not sufficient. This community is desperately trying to make this stretch of road safer before the "inevitablehorrible crash"! none of us wants to see happen. With that said, we feel the placement on the STIP with dedicated funding (moved up from status as "Illustrative") is imperative, as a safety & prevention project. This has been looked at by your engineering staff and determinedthat at present there is insufficient roadway surface to accommodate a path, unless a road alignment is done, which would include carving out some of the hillside and/or cantilevering in some of the pinch points. Thus the project called for a road reconstruction with bicycle/pedestrian pathway which put the price up to 12 million dollars and currently us out of the possibility for the near future. We believe that some creative design, utilizing road shoulders when necessary, could still achieve a viable project and are requesting that you consider moving the design phase up to 2016 in order to be able to look at several different options for this road that might make the cost more feasible and still make for a safer road! .Perhaps some of the "left over" funding or FLAP dollars could! serve to fund this design alternatives portion. The many stakeholders for this project are in agreement and supportive that something needs to be done, ASAP. Thank you for your consideration. Anita Smyke (mother of 3 girls that live off of Whitshed Road and use it for biking to town)</p>
zipcode	99574
state	AK
email	smyke@ctcak.net
city	Cordova

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 2:34 PM
To: dot.stip
Cc: Potter, Shelley M (DOT)
Subject: FW: Comment on Draft STIP



FYI

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 12:29 PM
To: 'Ann Harding'
Subject: RE: Comment on Draft STIP

Ms. Harding,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Department appreciates your comments regarding the Whitshed Road Bike and Pedestrian Path project; public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission. Based on public comment for the Draft 2016-2019 STIP, the Department is working to accelerate the project development timeline of this project and we welcome your further participation as this project moves forward.

Speed limit determination is directed by ADOT&PF policy and a function of the region's Traffic and Safety section. There has been a series of speed studies conducted on May 16, 2011; September 10 and 11, 2012; and September 10, 2013. The studies concluded that the current 35 MPH speed limit aligns with ADOT&PF policy. Any additional studies can be requested by the City of Cordova.

Road safety is a chief concern of ADOT&PF and we appreciate your comments. If you have additional questions or concerns regarding this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Duane Hoskins at 451-2382 or duane.hoskins@alaska.gov.

Best,

Sara

Sara E. Mason

Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive
Juneau, Alaska 99801
☎: 907.465.2065 | ✉: sara.mason@alaska.gov

From: Ann Harding [<mailto:aglionby@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2015 3:38 PM
To: dot.stip
Subject: Comment on Draft STIP

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan.

For many years, Cordova residents have requested assistance in creating a safer route for pedestrians and bicycle riders (many of whom are families with children) on Whitshed Road.

I am very pleased to see that the STIP includes the Whitshed Road project to accommodate bicycles, and ask that you consider moving the design phase of the bike path to 2016 and begin funding the project at that time. I bike to town daily on this road with two small kids (2 and 5yrs old), and we often feel unsafe with fast cars and in bad weather when driving visibility is poor. I'd like to bring up our kids in a place where they can safely bike to school, and I can bike to town without worry about safety.

In the immediate future, I'd also like to request that the Department of Transportation reduces the speed limit on Whitshed Road from the current 35 mph to 25 mph. The road has sharp curves, is narrow, and serves as a thoroughfare for trucks, pedestrians, and bicycles.

Many thanks,

Dr. Ann Harding

Auk Ecological Consulting

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 2:34 PM
To: dot.stip
Cc: Potter, Shelley M (DOT)
Subject: FW: Whitshed Pedestrian and Bike Path



FYI

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 12:42 PM
To: 'Anna Hernandez'
Subject: RE: Whitshed Pedestrian and Bike Path

Ms. Hernandez,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Department appreciates your comments regarding the Whitshed Road Bike and Pedestrian Path project. Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

Based on public comment received for the Draft 2016-2019 STIP, the Department is working to accelerate the project development timeline for this project and we welcome your further participation as this project moves forward. Road safety is a chief concern of ADOT&PF and we appreciate your comments.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Duane Hoskins at 451-2382 or duane.hoskins@alaska.gov.

Best,

Sara

Sara E. Mason

Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive
Juneau, Alaska 99801
☎: 907.465.2065 | ✉: sara.mason@alaska.gov

From: Anna Hernandez [<mailto:ed@cordovalibrary.org>]
Sent: Tuesday, August 18, 2015 11:41 AM
To: dot.stip
Subject: Whitshed Pedestrian and Bike Path

Hello,

My family and I were just discussing how unsafe we feel it is to walk or bike along Whitshed Road. There is a ball field that is about a mile from the center of the city, and I personally feel uneasy letting my children walk to get to this spot. There are many turns on this road and with weather being a factor in visibility I feel it unsafe. I know this project has been discussed much over the years, and nothing has come of it. I as a concerned citizen, urge you to please consider building this for the safety of all who live in this community.

Thank you for taking comments,

Anna Hernandez
Librarian
Cordova Public Library
(907) 424-6667

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Anne Fuller <fernleafgt@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2015 4:23 PM
To: dot.stip
Subject: Comments on STIP

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft of the transportation improvement program (STIP).

These comments are submitted by Anne Fuller and Michael Sakarias. Our preferred contact information is fernleafgt@yahoo.com

As an overall reaction, we would ask that you reconsider the large budget items you have pushed into future years. The low price of oil will restrict state spending and increasing adverse effects of climate chaos will probably affect our lives. At the least, DOTPF will need to address changing conditions in the Far North.

Is replacing riprap the best idea for Nome? Remember, we trusted the Army Corps of Engineers to build and maintain levees in Louisiana, which failed. Perhaps there is adaptation, even relocation to consider to fill Need ID: 27309 Name: Nome Sea Storm Permanent Repairs .

Will there be design that fully supports people riding bicycles on Sheep Creek Road (near Fairbanks) and Capt. W. H. Moore Bridge (near Skagway)?

Need ID: 27532 Name: Sheep Creek Road Upgrades

Need ID: 6059 Name: Skagway - Replace Capt. W. H. Moore Bridge

It will be important to consult (and listen to) local people who ride bicycles about designing bike lanes and maintaining safe access for us during construction.

Need ID: 21114 Name: Ketchikan - S. Tongass Hwy Improvements Deermount to Saxman

Need ID: 23563 Name: Egan Drive Improvements - Main St to 10th St.

Need ID: 26112 Name: Juneau - Glacier Hwy Improvements: Glacier Hwy Access Rd to Twin Lakes

We applaud your efforts to rehabilitate highways and bridges. Please consider speeding up the progress towards the goal of reducing fatalities and major injuries to very low levels.

Need ID: 29929 Name: Glenn Highway Rehabilitation Chickaloon Grade Section: MP 77 to 79

Need ID: 6447 Name: Bridge Inventory/ Inspection/ Monitoring/ Rehabilitation and Replacement Program

Need ID: 6457 Name: Seismic Bridge Retrofit Program

Need ID: 12579 Name: Bridge Scour Monitoring and Retrofit Program

Need ID: 18330 Name: Strategic Highway Safety Plan

It is absolutely essential to fund and carry through with improving conditions for people who walk near McKinley Village

Need ID: 26157 Name: MP 231 Enhancements

There's not nearly enough money soon enough for ferries. Please take money for such things as an elevated intersection in Juneau (for the 13 minute rush traffic) and put it towards

Need ID: 18358 Name: Ferry Refurbishment

Need ID: 28669 Name: Haines Ferry Terminal End Berth Facility

Need ID: 28790 Name: AMHS Tenakee Ferry Terminal Improvements

Need ID: 30189 Name: AMHS Tustumena Replacement Vessel

Need ID: 29709 Name: Auke Bay Stern Berth Modification and Improvements

Also, money listed for Need ID: 3028 Name: Kake Access should be invested to develop local, renewable energy options in Kake, including Gunnuck Creek hydro, wind, and solar options instead of building 27 miles of new single land, unpaved roadway.

We're glad to see transit improvements included. (end of comment)

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Good, Sheila D (DOT)
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2015 2:41 PM
To: fernleafgt@yahoo.com
Cc: dot.stip; Potter, Shelley M (DOT); Hagan, Christa M (DOT); Heidemann, Marie E (DOT); Post, David E (DOT); Howard, Chad J (DOT); Tripp, Charles M (DOT)
Subject: Comments on STIP

Ms. Fuller and Mr. Sakarias,

Thank you for the comments you provided regarding the Draft 2016-2019 STIP. We appreciate the time you have taken to comment on a variety of projects listed in the Draft STIP. Public engagement and participation is important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission. Please accept the following responses to your specific project comments.

Regarding your concerns on Nome Sea Storm Permanent Repairs (NID 27309), there are strict guidelines and limitations involved with reconstructing a facility back to its pre-disaster event condition, when using emergency relief (ER) federal highway funding.

Sheep Creek Road Upgrades (NID 27532) are not scheduled to begin the design process until FFY19 (October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019). The scope will be developed to meet the needs of that roadway. Elements such as bicycle and pedestrian facilities will be considered to improve the safe movement of vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian traffic along the roadway. Additionally, the new replacement bridge for the Captain W. H. Moore Bridge (Need ID 6059) will have 6 foot shoulders, which should sufficiently accommodate bicyclists.

As for bicycle and bike lane improvements on S. Tongass Highway - Deermount to Saxman (NID 21114), Egan Drive Improvements – Main Street to 10th Street (NID 23563), Glacier Highway Improvements -Glacier Highway Access Road to Twin Lakes (NID 26112), all bicycle lanes or paths included in these projects will meet the appropriate American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards for bicycle infrastructure. As well, the Department considers comments from local users for any project and you are encouraged to contact the Project Manager if you have specific concerns or suggestions.

- 21114 Ketchikan – S. Tongass Hwy Improvements: Deermount to Saxman: Project Manager- Chad Howard chad.howard@alaska.gov
- 23563 Egan Drive Improvements – Main St. to 10th St.: Project Manager – Chuck Tripp chuck.tripp@alaska.gov
- 26112 Juneau – Glacier Hwy Improvements: Glacier Hw Access Rd to Twin Lakes: Project Manager – Chuck Tripp chuck.tripp@alaska.gov

Marine Highway projects are funded with Ferry Boat Program funds and are then allocated other federal funds as project priorities are identified by Marine Highway staff, using safety, reliability, demand and other metrics. All of the ferry projects you referenced are fully funded for the project description identified. Additionally, Ferry Refurbishment (NID 18358) is a holding place for Ferry Boat Formula Program funds and fluctuates as funds are allocated to specific vessel projects and needs.

The Department is currently in the process of developing an Environmental Impact Statement for Kake Access (NID 3028), will provide guidance on a future course of action. Unfortunately, the Department does not have authority to repurpose state funding for developing local, renewable energy options in Kake.

The Department continues pursuing its mission of preserving our transportation system and working towards zero deaths. Part of this mission is to identify and fund highway safety projects. We identify segments of our highway system

with the highest accident rates and recognized safety hazards, with attention focused on fatal and serious injury accidents. We then direct our projects to these segments so every dollar spent maximizes lives saved and injuries eliminated. The Department's safety initiative supports implementing the strategies in the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) while also providing intermediate solutions to improve safety as new highway improvement projects are built.

Pedestrian and road safety is a chief concern of ADOT&PF and we appreciate your comments in support of MP 231 Enhancements (NID 26157). Once again, thank you for your participation in the STIP process. If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for the appropriate region:

Northern Region, Shelley Potter at 451-2375 or shelley.potter@alaska.gov

Southcoast Region, Marie Heidemann at 465-1775 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov

Central Region, David Post at 269-0512 or david.post@alaska.gov

Marine Highways, Christa Hagan at 228-6801 or christa.hagan@alaska.gov

Sincerely,

Sheila Good

Transportation Planner I

Department of Transportation & Public Facilities

Division of Program Development

3132 Channel Drive | P.O. Box 112500 | Juneau, AK 99811

T (907) 465-6392 | F (907) 465-6984



Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Annette A <alaskanannette@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, August 22, 2015 7:12 PM
To: Carpenter, Margaret (DOT); djgardino@ci.fairbanks.ak.us; Boyle, James D (DOT); lyonch@muni.org; Hagan, Christa M (DOT); Heidemann, Marie E (DOT); Post, David E (DOT); Potter, Shelley M (DOT); dot.stip; GOV All Legislators; amatsinfo@muni.org; wwmas@muni.org
Subject: include bicycles on the current STIP
Attachments: Letter for bike lanes to STIP Aug 2015.pdf

Hello,

Please include bicycle infrastructure on the STIP that is currently open for public testimony and which covers 2016-2019.

By strengthening bicycle infrastructure, a reasonable and safe alternative mode of transportation may be offered to people so that everybody is able to navigate safely throughout the city.

As a driver, I have had more close calls with bicycles on Anchorage streets that do not have bike lanes than I care to recollect. I support bike lanes because it doesn't matter who has the right of way when a bicyclist gets hit by a moving car. In light of a recent hit and run in which a cyclist died, I implore you to include even a brief addition which addresses bicycles to the STIP.

Attached please find a letter echoing this sentiment.

Thank you,

Annette Alfonsi

Good, Sheila D (DOT)

From: Good, Sheila D (DOT)
Sent: Thursday, October 01, 2015 3:03 PM
To: 'alaskanannette@gmail.com'
Cc: dot.stip; Post, David E (DOT); Moulton, Marcheta A (DOT)
Subject: include bicycles on the current STIP

Ms. Alfonsi,

We appreciate you taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

The Department recognizes the health, environmental, and air quality benefits of cycling both for recreation and as a mode of transportation, and continues to strive to provide suitable accommodation for all modes of travel. We applaud the Alaska Grassroots Activists for the People (AKGAP) commitment and dedication to participate and contribute to better Integrate appropriate bicycle and pedestrian considerations into routine system and project planning.

Regarding AKGAP's recommendation that all construction, redevelopment and upgrades to roadways should include not only passing lanes but also bike lanes, bicycling and pedestrian elements are considered and wherever practical, incorporated into road rehabilitation and reconstruction projects. Projects are evaluated on a case-by-case basis with consideration of the suitability, safety, and right of way impacts of such non-motorized features. While not commonly a part of a basic repaving project, our road rehabilitation and reconstruction projects routinely incorporate separated pathway facilities, sidewalks, or bike lanes. For example, the Glenn Highway/Muldoon Road Interchange project will include a separated pathway, widened shoulders, and sidewalks to provide a long-term solution to address safety concerns associated with the increase in vehicular and pedestrian traffic at this interchange.

AKGAP can assist the Department in developing policies and procedures to strengthen and promote a consistent approach for balancing the objectives of bicycle and pedestrian needs with other transportation modes, and promote the selection of investments to meet those objectives by participating in the update of the Alaska Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and development of the federally funded Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP).

The Department anticipates soliciting requests for proposals this fall to update the Alaska Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan in an effort to better Integrate appropriate bicycle and pedestrian considerations into routine system and project planning in both rural and urban settings to include; connectivity, mobility, safety, accessibility, and other statewide goals such as healthy, livable communities and safe routes to schools. For more information please contact Marcheta Moulton at 907-465-8769 or marcheta.moulton@alaska.gov

The TAP, once implemented, will provide funding for programs and projects defined as *transportation alternatives*, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation; recreational trail projects; safe routes to school projects; and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former divided highways.

Finally, please be aware that the State is a partner in both the Anchorage and Fairbanks Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). The non-motorized transportation plans and programs within these metropolitan areas are developed by the MPOs. The MPO's Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) are incorporated into the STIP by amendment. Information on these programs are available at the following websites:

<http://www.muni.org/departments/ocpd/planning/amats>

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Central Region, David Post at 907-269-0512 or david.post@alaska.gov

Sincerely,

Sheila Good

Transportation Planner I

Department of Transportation & Public Facilities

Division of Program Development

3132 Channel Drive | P.O. Box 112500 | Juneau, AK 99811

T (907) 465-6392 | F (907) 465-6984



Alaska Grassroots Activists for the People (AKGAP)

AKGAP907@gmail.com

To Whom It May Concern,

We represent a volunteer organization known as Alaska Grassroots Activists for the People, or AK GAP. Our organization is dedicated to improving our state by improving our communities through positive and inclusive action. Recently we participated in the multi-organizational rallies in support of Medicaid expansion, which will lead to implementation in the near future.

As we assess safety in our Alaskan communities, our attention is drawn from healthcare to road conditions. Upon viewing the current STIP plans for 2016-2019, we assert that the scopes of these projects that are in the STIP are too narrow, and they should be more inclusive of alternative modes of transportation, specifically bicycling.

There is currently nothing in the STIP to expand infrastructure supporting bicyclists in Anchorage. A plan addressing this oversight is sorely needed. Organizations such as Bike Anchorage have compiled significant data to create an inclusive proposal, which was unanimously approved by the Anchorage assembly. We agree that each plan should include bicycle infrastructure in its scope.

The current plan states it will “Rehabilitate or improve various City Streets or roads. May include widening, paving, resurfacing, drainage improvements, and ditching.” All construction, redevelopment and upgrades to roadways should include not only passing lanes but also bike lanes. In areas where a bike lane cannot be included on the roadway safely, a separate bike path should be created alongside the roadway. Steps need to be taken to ensure continuous access for safe travel via bicycle in areas in which bike paths or bike lanes are segmented, disjointed, or abruptly discontinued. This will increase driver and biker safety and decrease traffic congestion, as well as improve traffic flow.

We believe infrastructure for bicyclists is necessary to achieve the goal of safe and efficient transportation for both bikes and cars. Overlooking bicycle infrastructure is detrimental to both driver and bicycle safety. We are dedicated to participating in and contributing to implementing bike infrastructure in any way we can. AKGAP eagerly anticipates doing our part to keep our city safe by making a bike friendly city a reality. How can we work together to assist you to expand the STIP to be inclusive of bike-friendly infrastructure?

Sincerely,

AKGAP

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Friday, October 02, 2015 11:59 AM
To: Brantner, Maren H (DOT)
Subject: Fwd: Comment on Draft STIP
Attachments: image003.jpg

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Mason, Sara E (DOT)" <sara.mason@alaska.gov>
Date: September 15, 2015 at 12:16:10 PM AKDT
To: Tony Johansen <TJohansen@grtnw.com>
Subject: RE: Comment on Draft STIP

Mr. Johansen,

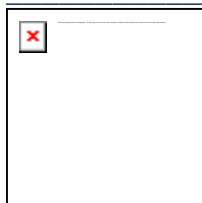
Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

In this fiscal climate, it is important that the Department maintain a statewide perspective when programming projects to ensure the highest possible return on investment. The Department does not operate on a regional allocation system and has not done so for many years. Additionally, when looking at the distribution of funds across regions, it is highly likely that the seeming disparity is the result of several large-scale projects in Central Region finally nearing readiness for construction. We are striving to maintain transportation infrastructure for all Alaskans and those who visit our state, across each of our regions and modes.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Northern Region, Shelley Potter at 451-2375 or shelley.potter@alaska.gov.

Best,

Sara



Sara E. Mason
Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive
Juneau, Alaska 99801
☎: 907.465.2065 | ✉: sara.mason@alaska.gov

From: Tony Johansen [<mailto:TJohansen@grtnw.com>]
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2015 5:00 PM
To: dot.stip
Subject: Comment on Draft STIP

I am down to the wire so my comments will be brief.

This STIP unfairly distributes the majority of the money to the Central Region, so much so that I must wonder whether the Commissioner is managing AKDOT&PF from 30,000 feet. He is certainly not looking out for the Governor's interest. Alaskans from outside the Central Region will be enraged when they finally figure out what Headquarters has done.

I will be reviewing this in depth with the Interior delegation and anyone else I can get to listen.

Anton K. Johansen, P.E. | Great Northwest, Inc. | www.grtnw.com

2975 Van Horn Road, Fairbanks, AK 99709

T: (907) 452-5617 F: (907) 456-7779 C: (907) 460-5898 E: tjohansen@grtnw.com

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 2:36 PM
To: dot.stip
Cc: Potter, Shelley M (DOT)
Subject: FW: STIP Shepard Pt. Road and Whitshed Bike Path



FYI

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 1:28 PM
To: 'Belle Mickelson'
Subject: RE: STIP Shepard Pt. Road and Whitshed Bike Path

Ms. Mickelson,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Department appreciates your comments regarding the Shepard Point Road and Whitshed Road Bike and Pedestrian Path projects. Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

Currently ADOT&PF's role in the Project is that of a cooperating agency; this role is a contributing role to the overall project. The responsibilities of ADOT&PF are as follows:

- Program federal aid highway funds to the road project construction via the STIP.
 - o These funds will only be utilized when the construction phase of the project is authorized to begin. Until that time the federal highway funding amount of \$5.5 million will be annotated in the current federal fiscal year. This is a single contribution of \$5.5 million towards the project.
- Function as the pass-through agency for the expenditure of Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) Investment Fund allocations for the project, currently managed by the Alaska Department of Revenue.
 - o These funds are required to be expended towards a project located at Shepard Point by the Alyeska Consent Decree issued by the U.S. District Court in 1992. ADOT&PF is required to act on this fund as a fiscal agent only; we do not have the authority to amend nor rescind this fund.
- The Shepard Point Road project listed in the STIP is not managed by ADOT&PF.
 - o Any concerns regarding project feasibility and development should be directed to the Federal Highway Administration, Western Federal Lands (WFL) division at (360) 619-7700 or wfl.fhwa@dot.gov. (Your STIP comment will be shared with WFL by ADOT&PF.)

Regarding the Whitshed Road Bike and Pedestrian Path project; based on comments received during the Draft 2016-2019 STIP public comment period, the Department is working to accelerate the project development schedule of this project and we welcome your continued participation as this project moves forward. Road safety is a chief concern of ADOT&PF and we appreciate your comments.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Duane Hoskins at 451-2382 or duane.hoskins@alaska.gov.

Best,

Sara

Sara E. Mason
Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs

Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive
Juneau, Alaska 99801
☎: 907.465.2065 | ✉: sara.mason@alaska.gov

From: Belle Mickelson [<mailto:bellemickelson@gmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, August 25, 2015 1:28 PM
To: dot.stip
Subject: STIP Shepard Pt. Road and Whitshed Bike Path

Dear Department of Transportation,
I am a Cordova resident and I would like to comment on both the STIP Shepard Point Road and the Whitshed Road Bike Path.

The Shepard Point Road is not needed and would be a serious waste of government money--and a safety liability for the state. We already have an excellent place in the town of Cordova for storing spill response materials that is easy to get to and close to the homes and boats of the people who will be responding to oil spills. The Shepard Point Road would be extremely expensive to build and maintain and is very dangerous. The roadway crosses numerous avalanche chutes which would not only endanger the lives of the road builders--but the people driving and maintaining the road now and in the years to come. Building the road would require blasting and filling--and the oil/paving from a roadway and the stream crossings would negatively impact our wildlife--and the fisheries which the town depends on economically, as well as for feeding Alaskans and people around the world.

I hope you can prioritize and fund the 3/4 mile Whitshed bike/pedestrian path that links the recreational ball fields and RV Park and the town. It's so important for the safety of our precious children--as well as adults. I was thinking about that the other day as I biked with two young elementary school students. They were weaving in and out on their bikes as they enjoyed their time in the summer sun--and talking with each other. Even as an adult biker, it is sometimes difficult to keep to a straight line and hear every car that comes up behind me. A bike path definitely makes riding so much easier and safer! And with the national encouragement toward healthy living and energy conservation--more and more people are biking.

Thanks so much for your consideration!

Sincerely,

Belle

Margaret Belle Mickelson
Box 1362, Cordova, Alaska 99574
[907-424-5143](tel:907-424-5143)

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Bob French <bgtkfrench@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2015 4:13 PM
To: dot.stip
Cc: Sandra Garcia-Aline
Subject: Comments on the Draft 2016-2019 STIP

August 27, 2015

State of Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development
ATTN: STIP
PO BOX 112500
Juneau, AK 99811-2500

Via email: dot.stip@alaska.gov

To Whom This Concerns:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft 2016-2019 STIP for Alaska.

I urge Alaska DOT & PF to remove all new and existing funding for the Knik Arm Crossing, ID's 20255 & 20256, Juneau Access, ID 19214, and (while being funded through the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority), the Ambler Mining District Access Road. I encourage DOT & PF to instead transfer that funding towards existing maintenance backlogs, repairs and reconstruction, ferry, bridge, transit, safety, along with non-motorized transportation projects.

Federal planning regulations require the STIP demonstrate that appropriate funds are available to adequately maintain and operate the surface transportation system as a whole. With 49% of Alaska's roads listed in "poor or mediocre" condition, and 24% of our bridges listed as "structurally deficient / functionally obsolete" (source: <http://www.transportation.gov/policy-initiatives/grow-america/road-and-bridge-data-state>), it is clear that Alaska has a tremendous backlog of deferred maintenance. With record state budget deficits and oil prices below \$40/barrel, we need to stop spending hundreds of millions of dollars on these costly and unnecessary projects and instead use our dwindling federal transportation money on fixing and upgrading existing state transportation infrastructure.

Because KABATA/DOT has grossly over-estimated the number of toll bridge users (compared to the estimates done by DOT & PF and the Matanuska Susitna Borough (MSB) for the Wasilla Bypass, while using a population growth estimate that is 60% higher, and assuming that nearly all of the growth in the MSB will take place in lower Point MacKenzie) toll revenues will not be sufficient to build and operate the bridge. That will most likely mean that state funds will be required to pay back the TIFIA loan (if one is ever received), rather than being paid for by toll revenues. In addition to the hundreds of millions already being contemplated to pay off the state issued bonds, the additional costs of repaying the federal funds used for the bridge, will adversely impact transportation funding for Alaska for the foreseeable future.

Projects are included in the STIP on the basis of available funding, and based on Amendment 12 to the existing STIP, it is evident that deleting "Mega Projects", will raise the available funding for projects that are actually needed.

I commute daily between Eagle River and Anchorage, and I know that the major "bottleneck" of traffic on the Glenn Highway, is the Eagle River Bridges and the Artillery Road Interchange in Eagle River. While I am glad that the northbound bridge and 3 lane expansion is nearing completion, it is incredibly disappointing to find that the construction of the southbound 3 lane expansion and reconstruction of the existing Eagle River Interchanges is missing out of the draft 2016-2019 STIP. Even more disappointing, is knowing that we could have already paid for those projects with just the money that has already been spent just getting to a 35% design stage for the Knik Arm Bridge.

It is clear that Alaska has tough times ahead, and continuing to spend hundreds of millions of dollars on the Knik Arm Bridge, the Juneau Access Road and the Ambler Mining District Access Road (with little hope of ever having the funding to actually complete those projects) is just as clearly a poor use of state funds.

Comments on "Let's Get Moving" Policy Plan

It is very frustrating trying to figure out what projects are included in the current STIP, what projects used to be in previous versions of the STIP, what is the total budget of the STIP, and even how many projects are included.

I encourage DOT & PF to include a requirement in the "Let's Get Moving" policies to provide transparent information, such as Excel files which are fully sortable that would have each Project (Need ID) information on a single line.

With the existing exportable format, it is not possible to do any kind of summarization or analysis of the information. If each project had all of it's information on a single line, they could be sorted by region, program, highway, funding source, cost, etc.

Thank you very much for your attention and response to these and other public comments.

Sincerely,

Robert French, P.E.

CC: Sandra Garcia-Aline, Alaska Division Administrator, Federal Highways Administration

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Brantner, Maren H (DOT)
Sent: Tuesday, November 24, 2015 2:51 PM
To: 'Bob French'
Cc: dot.stip
Subject: RE: Comments on the Draft 2016-2019 STIP

Dear Mr. French,

We appreciate you taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

The Department recognizes the importance of balancing preservation and maintenance of the State's transportation system with the need to plan for future expansion of the system. The Draft 2016-2019 STIP directs over \$100 million per year to three regional programs focused on addressing pavement and bridge preservation. Additionally, there is funding directed to existing infrastructure that needs more extensive work than would qualify for those three regional programs. The increased emphasis on preservation has already shown to result in improving pavement conditions within the state based on pavement data gathered as part of our Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS).

Regarding your comments on Knik Arm Crossing (Need IDs 20255 and 20256) and Juneau Access (Need ID 19214) listed in the Draft 2016-2019 STIP, we understand that you have concerns related to these projects. Per the Governor's direction under Administrative Order 271, the Department is currently moving forward with completing the permitting processes for the Knik Arm Crossing and securing financing for the project. Upon completion of these activities, a final determination on the viability of constructing this project will be decided. In addition, the Department intends to complete the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS), including the Record of Decision for the Juneau Access project. The SEIS will provide guidance on a future course of action. With regards to the Ambler Mining District Industrial Road, this is an AIDEA project and the Department does not have discretion over its funding.

The Department will be considering a southbound Glenn Highway expansion project from Hiland Road to Artillery Road in future STIP amendments, but this initial draft STIP was conservatively focused on carrying forward existing projects and limiting new projects primarily to preservation and maintenance of the existing transportation system.

Lastly, thank you for your suggestion about easily sortable STIP project information files. We are currently using FHWA staff as a resource in developing a more user-friendly STIP tool and your comments will help guide this effort.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Surface Transportation Planning Manager for Central Region, David Post at 907-269-0512 or david.post@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

Maren Brantner

STIP Planner III
Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development
3132 Channel Drive | P.O. Box 112500 | Juneau, AK 99811

T (907) 465-2744 | F (907) 465-6984

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Brad Sworts <Brad.Sworts@matsugov.us>
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2015 4:21 PM
To: Post, David E (DOT); dot.stip
Cc: Kemplen, Allen (DOT); Witt, Jennifer W (DOT); John Moosey; George Hays; Eileen Probasco
Subject: MSB 2016-2019 STIP Comments

Below are Matanuska-Susitna Borough Comments on the Draft 2016-19 STIP:

- One of MSB's top priorities is the Seward Meridian Parkway Phase II project – we request ADOT&PF accelerate the schedule for ROW acquisition and advance construction funding to 2017.
- Projects of Regional Significance should be included in the STIP such as the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension and the Parks Highway Alternative Corridor
- Museum Drive Extension and Herman Road Extension should both be included in the 2016-19 STIP – National Highway Performance Funds can pay for projects that benefit the NHS (Parks Highway).
- MSB 2013 Road Bond projects have been funded 50% via borough voters. The MSB would like to see a number of these projects shown in the 2016-19 STIP and programed to receive funding for the remaining 50% as part of the CTP and AHS funding program.
- The Parks Highway Alternative Corridor should be shown in the 2016-19 STIP and programed for federal funding through the Planning/Environmental phases.
- As population growth continues in the Mat-Su at a rate higher than almost anywhere else in the state we would like to know why the 2016-19 STIP only contains one CTP project for the Mat-Su – Seward Meridian at \$29,207,000. The Kenai Peninsula seems to have at least seven CTP projects estimated at about \$50,000,000. If the STIP is based on need it would seem this allocation is out of balance.
- A Palmer-Wasilla Highway Corridor Management Plan should be included in the 2016-19 STIP using NHS funds.
- A Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway Pre-EIS Planning effort should be included using AHS or NHS funds. (The MSB recently completed the Big Lake CIA which provides a large portion of the data needed along with the KABATA EIS.)
- The Borough requests a more thorough briefing on how ADOT&PF determines priority projects in the 2016-19 STIP
- Other projects that appear to be missing for the Mat-Su:
 - Palmer/Wasilla Highway Eastern Terminus Phase II
 - Point Mackenzie Road Upgrade – Ayrshire to KGB
 - Petersville Road improvements
 - All Mat-Su specific Transit Projects – a Multi-modal Transit Hub Facility (rail passenger terminal, administrative offices, dispatch center and bus maintenance shop) in the Wasilla area should be included in the 2016-19 STIP as should Park and Rides identified in the Borough's CIP program.

Brad Sworts
MSB Acting Director
Capital Projects Department
350 E. Dahlia Ave. (Mailing Address)
533 E. Fireweed Ave. (Bldg. Address)

Palmer, Alaska 99645

1-907-861-7715

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THE STATE
of ALASKA

GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and
Public Facilities

Program Development

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dot.state.ak.us

October 6, 2015

Brad Sworts, Acting Director
Capital Projects Department
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
350 E. Dahlia Avenue
Palmer, AK 99645

Dear Mr. Sworts,

Thank you for the comments you provided on behalf of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough regarding the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

We appreciate your continued support for the Seward Meridian Parkway (Need ID 2481). The Department will begin acquiring right-of-way for the project in 2016. The acquisition process is often dependent upon timeframes that are outside of the Department's control in order to follow legal due process. Should the acquisition process appear to be proceeding ahead of schedule, the Department will evaluate whether construction can begin in 2017 and amend the STIP as appropriate.

Your request to include new National Highway System (NHS) and Community Transportation Program (CTP) projects in the 2016-2019 STIP cannot be accommodated at this time. Maintaining fiscal constraint in the STIP has limited the number of projects that can be constructed in a given year. We will continue to monitor the regional needs and provide for projects as funding allows.

There may be additional opportunities to nominate CTP projects for inclusion in a future STIP document. At this time it is uncertain when the Department will issue a new call for project nominations. Your comments have been shared with the Central Region Planning Division so that they may continue to work with you on transportation development in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. We will be sure to notify you when the Department issues a new call for CTP project nominations.

Regarding your funding comparison between the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and the Kenai Peninsula Borough, it is important that the Department maintain a statewide perspective when programming

"Keep Alaska Moving through service and infrastructure."

projects to ensure the highest possible return on investment. The Department does not operate on a regional or community allocation system. Additionally, when looking at the distribution of funds within Central Region, it is highly likely that the funding disparity between communities is the result of several projects in the Kenai Peninsula that are nearing readiness for right-of-way acquisition and construction. That being said, the STIP is a four-year, fiscally constrained planning and programming document that is continuously revised to adjust for project schedules and funding categories as projects identified in the 2016-2019 STIP develop. We will work closely with the regions to monitor all project delivery schedules and will adjust the 2016-2019 STIP accordingly to provide for projects as funding allows.

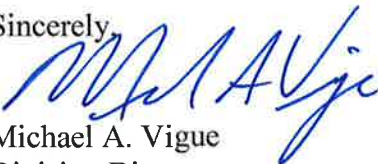
Your request for a more through briefing on how the Department determines project priorities has been noted. The ADOT&PF is required to carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive statewide transportation planning process that includes a stringent public participation process to afford public involvement opportunities and provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of the STIP. This process includes notifying Cities and Boroughs impacted by changes in the STIP so officials have an opportunity to evaluate and comment on the impacts changes to the STIP have on their communities. In addition, as part of the non-metropolitan consultation process, the Department reviews and considers resolutions, plans, and project priorities of local governments that are presented to the Department.

Projects of Regional Significance are included in the 2016-2019 STIP per the requirements in 23 CFR 450.216 (h). Only projects that require an action by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) or the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) are required to be included in the STIP. Both the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension and the Parks Highway Alternative Corridor projects are not anticipated to require an action by either agency at this time. We will work closely with Central Region to monitor the projects and delivery schedules and will adjust the 2016-2019 STIP accordingly.

If you have questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Central Region, Allen Kemplen at (907) 269-0513 or at allen.kemplen@alaska.gov.

We appreciate your involvement in the STIP process.

Sincerely,



Michael A. Vigue
Division Director

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: outlook_9efc2e67e46b06d4@outlook.com on behalf of Bruce Conant
<bsconant@ptialaska.net>
Sent: Tuesday, August 18, 2015 3:27 PM
To: dot.stip
Cc: aukebay.plan@juneau.org; BoroughAssembly@juneau.org
Subject: Draft STIP Comments

This email is written to comment on your draft Alaska Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

Over the last year I have been involved with the development of the Auke Bay Area Plan by the City and Borough of Juneau. A consistently identified priority needed for implementation of this plan is your 'Bypass Road', to get the increasing traffic congestion away from the core area of Auke Bay. A key to reducing this congestion and to allow the core area of the Auke Bay community to develop as envisioned, is to divert the commercial and 'drive through' traffic around this core area. When built, the Bypass Road will be a great benefit for both the Auke Bay community, all the citizens of the City and Borough of Juneau and our increasing number of visitors.

To this end, I strongly recommend that the 'Bypass Road' project be moved from the future needs list to the actively funded projects for the Alaska Department of Transportation as soon as possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your latest STIP draft.

Bruce Conant
Juneau resident

Good, Sheila D (DOT)

From: Good, Sheila D (DOT)
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2015 2:07 PM
To: 'bsconant@ptialaska.net'
Cc: dot.stip; Brantner, Maren H (DOT)
Subject: Draft STIP Comments

Mr. Conant,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

The bypass road was listed as a long term improvement recommendation in the ABCor Study, completed in 2004. It has now been included in the CBJ Auke Bay Plan adopted in the past year as a long term recommendation (10-20 years) primarily because the existing route through to the ferry terminal and beyond currently functions well and is not over capacity. The bypass road may become a high priority project in future years as the Auke Bay area continues to develop. At this time the Department is focused on completing short term improvements including the recently completed Back Loop roundabout and the soon to be constructed improvements between Fritz Cove and Seaview.

We recognize your concerns regarding traffic congestion and have shared your suggestions with the Southcoast Region Planning Division. If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Southcoast Region, Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1775 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

Sheila Good

Transportation Planner I
Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development
3132 Channel Drive | P.O. Box 112500 | Juneau, AK 99811

T (907) 465-6392 | F (907) 465-6984



Good, Sheila D (DOT)

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Thursday, October 15, 2015 11:18 AM
To: Chris D; dot.stip
Cc: llojo@mtaonline.net; 'Don Judd'; 'Jesse Rippy'; 'Scott Brown'; Ferguson, Cynthia (DOT)
Subject: RE: Comment on Draft STIP

Categories: Red Category



Mr. Dotur,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

We have forwarded your proposal to the project manager, Cynthia Ferguson, and the Department will be continuing to analyze options at the intersection of Seldon Road, Lakeview Road, and Seward Meridian Parkway extension.

The Department is tracking the progress of the Seward Meridian Parkway extension (Need ID 2841) in conjunction with the Wasilla Fishhook Road/Main Street project (Need ID 2503) and as the construction date for either nears, will adjust the schedule as appropriate to minimize traffic disruptions.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding our role in this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Allen Kemplen at 269-0513 or allen.kemplen@alaska.gov.

All the best,

Sara

Sara E. Mason

Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive
Juneau, Alaska 99801
☎: 907.465.2065 | ✉: sara.mason@alaska.gov

From: Chris D [<mailto:CJDotur@msn.com>]
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2015 7:02 AM
To: dot.stip
Cc: llojo@mtaonline.net; 'Don Judd'; 'Jesse Rippy'; 'Scott Brown'
Subject: Comment on Draft STIP

Alaska DOT-

Hello! Attached, please find official public comment and proposals regarding the Seward-Meridian Parkway Extension Project Phase II (Need ID 2841) from the King's Ridge Homeowner's Association, located on East Lakeview Road near Wasilla, Alaska. The Seward-Meridian Parkway extension project has a serious flaw, as a perhaps unintended consequence of the project, that it funnels the entirety of its traffic (ADOT listed the 2013 AADT of N. Seward-Meridian Parkway as being 11,440) into East Lakeview Road as a primary route extension of Seward-Meridian. E. Lakeview Rd. is a small, winding, residential road that is not built or maintained to be a major arterial road that it is being set up to be. Please see the attached document for details and proposals to modify the Seward-Meridian Phase II project.

Thank you-

Chris Dotur
President, King's Ridge Homeowner's Association
(907) 376-7517
P.O. Box 872741, Wasilla, AK 99667

King's Ridge Owner's Association
P.O. Box 872741, Wasilla, AK 99667
Proposal Contact: Chris Dotur, KROA President
(907) 376-7517

STIP Public Input Regarding Project Need ID 2841, Project Need ID 2503, and East Lakeview Road

Proposals: (1) Modify the upcoming Seward-Meridian Parkway Phase II extension project to funnel traffic flow to and from appropriate existing highways of Seldon Rd and Wasilla-Fishhook, and away from Lakeview Rd, which is not equipped to handle traffic volumes. (2) Deconflict scheduling of Seward-Meridian extension (Need ID 2841) and Wasilla Fishhook reconstruction (Need ID 2503) projects, to minimize traffic detour re-routings.

Background: The existing Seward-Meridian Parkway Phase II extension project had an unintended consequential flaw of trying to use E. Lakeview Road as a major arterial extension of its traffic. Lakeview is a small, quiet, residential borough community road (speed limit 30 mph) on the north side of Wasilla, uniquely placed at the junction of three major state highway arterials: Seldon Road (50 mph), Wasilla-Fishhook Road, (45 mph) and N. Seward-Meridian Parkway. (currently 45 mph) Vehicles of all types routinely use Lakeview as a shortcut between the three highways. (See figures 1, 2)



Figure 1: East Lakeview Road location in relation to Wasilla/Parks Highway (highlighted yellow) N. Seward-Meridian Parkway project (red), Seldon Road (green), and Wasilla-Fishhook Road (purple)



Figure 3: Completed 5+ lane Seward-Meridian Parkway Phase I project, viewed southward.
Soon to be extended in same magnitude in project Phase II north through Seldon, into Lakeview Road



Figure 4: Current view southward of N Seward-Meridian Parkway portion ending at Lakeview Rd/Seldon intersection.
Soon to be 5+ lanes when Phase II project complete



Figure 5: Current Seldon Road, looking west towards Seward-Meridian/Lakeview Road intersection



Figure 6: East Lakeview Road, a small, winding, 2-lane residential road

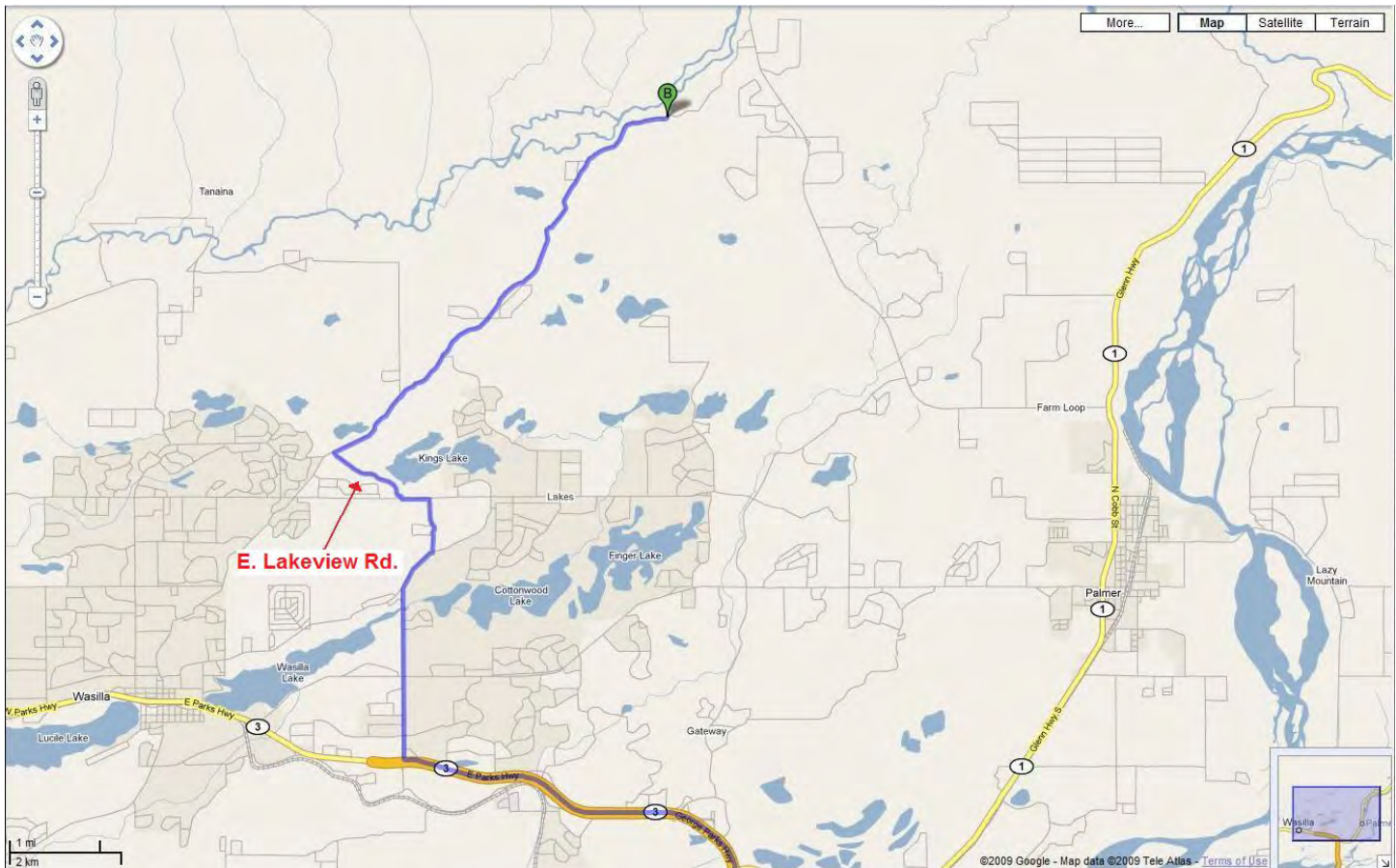


Figure 7: Google Maps navigation instructions, directing all Northwest Fishhook region Valley traffic through Lakeview

To further emphasize the issue, navigation programs/companies providing directions from the south Mat-Su Borough, (i.e. Glenn/Parks Highways, Anchorage, etc) to multiple areas in the north (i.e. Hatcher's Pass) already provide directions through Lakeview Road as a primary route shortcut. (see Figure 7 above) Traffic volume will only increase with easier access through the expanded Seward-Meridian Parkway, and the proposed Hatcher's Pass development project. The Frontiersman newspaper has reported that the Fishhook area is the 2nd fastest growing region in the whole state of Alaska, and the entire western half of that region is being set up to travel directly through Lakeview Road and Seward-Meridian Parkway as the primary route to and from Anchorage!

As currently designed, the Seward-Meridian extension project will funnel thousands of drivers, every single day, directly straight into Lakeview Road. The design connects a 5+ lane highway, larger than almost any other highway in Alaska, directly into Lakeview, a road that is as small, winding, and residential as can be found in Alaska and remain paved. Thus, for example, unless northbound drivers are given a specific reason to turn off from Seward-Meridian onto the other major arterial highways, they will naturally continue straight, directly through the small residential Lakeview Road. To reiterate, commuter travel on Lakeview Road is not necessary, as the major borough and state highways of Wasilla-Fishhook, Seldon, and Seward-Meridian connect with each other as designed, and are specifically built for this traffic flow. If the current Seward-Meridian project is not modified, it will set up the small residential Lakeview Road to circumvent the major traffic infrastructure, and be the primary route of heavy traffic Lakeview is not designed to handle. Think of this like designing a major electrical grid project that spends millions of dollars to run high voltage power lines to a region, but instead of relying on other established power grids for distribution, feeds the high voltage electrical main supply directly into a small paper clip as the primary conduit to the next large grid. Obviously, this is neither a proper, nor safe, design.

According to discussions on this subject with the Seward-Meridian project manager, Cynthia Ferguson, the only measure the state intends to take to address this huge design problem is to shorten the timing cycle of the future traffic signal that will be installed at the intersection of Seldon Road and Seward-Meridian/Lakeview. While traffic signal timing could be helpful, the King's Ridge Owners Association does not accept this as being effective enough to qualify as the sole control measure for traffic flow of thousands of vehicles, naturally traveling in a straight line through the intersection.

The King's Ridge Owner's Association (KROA) asks for additional, substantive control measures to deliberately and effectively direct traffic onto existing highways as designed, and is open to suggestions from transportation design experts. We look forward to the further work with State and Borough DOT offices that will be required to fix this existing design flaw. KROA requests consideration of the following additional options, potentially used in combination with each other. Note that Options 1, 2, and 3 below incur minimal additional cost or design modification, while retaining traffic capabilities through alternative routings. Primary heavy traffic flow is appropriately routed along the appropriate major arterial highways that are designed to handle the traffic.

- (1) Sever the west end of Lakeview Road from Wasilla Fishhook, in between Aoki Drive and Wasilla Fishhook. (just to the West of the "B" marker in Figure 2) Post "Not a Through Road" signs at the southern entrance to Lakeview Road from Seward-Meridian and Seldon. This eliminates Lakeview from being a major arterial direct shortcut, but because Aoki Drive also connects to Wasilla Fishhook, if anyone (i.e. emergency services) really needed to travel through from either end, it is still possible using both Aoki and Lakeview. Lakeview could even be blocked at that point using large decorative concrete barriers (with reflective markers) that could be removable by emergency services equipment if needed. Locked gates are also possible. Per Alaska DOT, this option is currently successfully in use in many locations in Anchorage. Since Lakeview is unnecessary as a shortcut between the major highways that connect to each other anyway, this option retains all traffic capabilities while eliminating the problem. Redundant access is still possible. Since this would modify Lakeview Road itself, which is a Borough road, the Mat-Su Borough would need to be involved with this plan as well.
- (2) Design the new intersection at Seldon Rd and Seward-Meridian/Lakeview, on both the northern and southern sides, to have left and right turn lanes, so northbound and southbound traffic can turn left and right onto Seldon Rd. However, do not incorporate straight through lanes northbound and southbound, from Lakeview to Seward-Meridian, and vice-versa. This will prevent motorists from using Lakeview as a major arterial shortcut, while retaining access to each road at the intersection. Primary traffic to and from the major arterial Seward-Meridian Parkway will be properly routed to and from the highways of Seldon, and thereafter Wasilla-Fishhook, not Lakeview. Traffic to and from Lakeview is still possible from Seldon.
- (3) Install large monument markers on each shoulder, of both the south and west entrances to Lakeview Road, clearly labeling Lakeview as a residential community and not a through road.
- (4) Extend Lakeview Road eastward, relocating its intersection with Seldon Road to the east, away from Seward-Meridian. Motorists travelling north on Seward-Meridian would have to turn east on Seldon, in order to get back on Lakeview headed northwest. These extra turns and travel distances may be enough to dissuade drivers from using Lakeview as a shortcut, instead of the established and intended major highways. This option would incur significant additional cost with right-of-way purchase from the existing Salvation Army camp that owns that property.
- (5) Just to be thorough in this discussion, it would also be possible for Alaska DOT and the Mat-Su Borough to take the opposite strategy in correcting this design flaw. This would mean instead of directing the major

traffic of Seward-Meridian to and from the existing major highways designed for it, creating a new major arterial road to extend Seward-Meridian's traffic through to Wasilla-Fishhook or beyond. Whether this is done using Lakeview as it twists to the west, or a new road straight to the north, this would incur tremendous right-of-way and construction costs. Because Lakeview is small and winding, with residential property built up to the road, residents would need to be bought out and relocated to straighten and widen the road. As discussed, Lakeview does not have the capability of being upgraded to an arterial road. Similarly, a new road built straight to the north would require at the very least buying out the entirety of our neighboring private Salvation Army camp and other properties. Either option also would require construction over King's Lake, or moving the geographical shores of the lake, which comes right up to the curves of Lakeview Road.

Again, the King's Ridge Owner's Association supports the Seward-Meridian Parkway expansion project, but asks that the project design be modified to directly funnel heavy traffic onto the existing major highways of Wasilla-Fishhook and Seldon Road that are constructed and maintained for that purpose, and NOT directly into Lakeview Road, which absolutely is not. Lakeview simply can not support that traffic activity, much less the hazards it presents to residents and area children activities. Therefore, measures should be implemented to route traffic away from Lakeview Road, control the entry of vehicles to Lakeview Road, and the traffic activity upon it. The project consequence of treating Lakeview as the major arterial road that it is not, constitutes a serious design flaw, which should be corrected now, during the design phase.

Secondary Issue: According to the 2016 – 2019 Draft STIP, it appears that both the Seward-Meridian Phase II Extension Project (Need ID 2841) and Wasilla Fishhook Reconstruction Project (Need ID 2503) are scheduled to start primary construction in FY 2018. Given that these two highways are the primary conduits to connect all of Northern Wasilla and the Western Fishhook areas to the Parks Highway, each of them will also be the primary alternate routes to the Parks Highway during the other project's construction. We recommend that these two projects be deconflicted from each other, to prevent excessive doubling of construction re-routing and traffic delays.

King's Ridge Owner's Association thanks you for your consideration on these matters, and we look forward to the further work with your offices, that will be required!



August 27, 2015

State of Alaska, Department of Transportation
& Public Facilities
Program Development, Attn: STIP
PO Box 112500
Juneau, AK 99811-2500
E-mail: dot.stip@alaska.gov

Re: Draft 2016-2019 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) –
Inclusion of Akutan Harbor Road (Need ID 26122)

Dear Sirs:

I am writing on behalf of the City of Akutan (COA) to request that the above referenced project be added to the final 2016-2019 STIP. Efforts to develop a road between the community of Akutan and the harbor development site date back to the mid 1990's. The project was included in at least one previous STIP, probably in the late 1990's.

The road is proposed as a two-mile, sixteen-foot wide gravel rural road along the northwest shore of Akutan harbor. It will provide the only land access from the village of Akutan and Trident's fish processing plant to the newly constructed Akutan boat harbor at the head of Akutan Bay.

The project is shovel-ready. The environmental review, detailed design and permitting work were completed using a \$1.2 million Indian Reservation Roads (IRR) grant and local contribution. Needed construction permits are in hand or ready to undergo the application process. The property owners will contribute land for the right-of-way as an in-kind contribution. Total construction is estimated to cost between approximately \$22 million.

The new \$31 million boat harbor was constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers under the sponsorship of the Aleutians East Borough (AEB). The harbor has a capacity to offer moorage for 58 vessels. The AEB is expected to spend another \$3.1 million over the next year to construct the first large vessel float within the harbor.

The Akutan harbor access road is an essential part of the City's economic development plans linking vessel crews and visitors to the long established village and the Trident


fish plant. Without the road, crews, visitors and harbor support personnel have no access to lodging, groceries and other services other than by small watercraft. This is an inefficient and potentially unsafe system for moving people and goods to and from the harbor, particularly during rough weather typical of the region. A lack of harbor access will likely reduce interest in mooring and constrain future economic development and job creation.

The COA is also in the process of developing a sizeable geothermal resource in Hot Springs Bay on Akutan Island to produce low cost power for the village and the fish plant. The project is a joint effort between the COA, the State of Alaska, Trident Seafoods, Akutan Native Corporation, the Aleut Corporation and the Akutan Traditional Tribal Council. As part of this effort, an access road is contemplated running from the harbor area over to Hot Springs Bay. The proposed harbor road would join up with the geothermal access road, allowing for more efficient maintenance and operations of the geothermal facilities.

The road is a long-established goal in local and regional planning documents. Combined with the new regional airport on Akun Island, the new harbor and the access link between Akutan and Akun Islands operated by the AEB, the Akutan Harbor Access Road is necessary for economic development and sustainability. Whether it is programmed for funding completely or on a phased basis, the COA requests that the project be included for construction within the 2016-2019 STIP.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. Please give me a call at (907) 698-2228 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Joe Bereskin
Mayor

cc. Mr. Rob Campbell, Acting Regional Director, Southcoast Region, DOT/PF



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**

GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

3132 Channel, Suite 200
PO Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500
Main: 907.465.4070
Fax: 907.465.6984
TTY/ITD: 907.465.3657
dot.state.ak.us

September 24, 2015

Mayor Joe Bereskin
City of Akutan
P.O. Box 109
Akutan, AK 99553

Dear Mayor Bereskin,

Thank you for the comments you provided on behalf of the City of Akutan regarding the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

We understand that you would like to have a new project, Akutan Harbor Road (Need Identification [NID] 16122) added to the 2016-19 STIP. Unfortunately, when this project was evaluated by the Project Evaluation Board in 2011 it did not rank high against other projects statewide to access Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds and be placed in the STIP. You can view the ranking results here: http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/cip/stip/projects/Assets/peb_final.pdf.

There may be additional opportunities to nominate this project for inclusion in a future STIP document. A subsequent nomination may prove to be more successful given that you have now completed design and, as you have indicated, have other developments in your City that elevate the importance of this project to your area. At this time it is uncertain when the Department will issue a new call for project nominations. Your comments have been shared with the Southcoast Region Planning Division so that they may continue to work with you on transportation development in your City and notify you when the Department issues a new call for project nominations.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Southcoast Region, Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1775 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov.

We appreciate your involvement in the STIP process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sheila Good".

Sheila Good
Transportation Planner I

"Keep Alaska Moving through service and infrastructure."



August 7, 2015

Mr. Andy Hughes
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
PO Box 112506
Juneau, AK 99801-2506

Dear Mr. Hughes:

The City of Craig has reviewed the proposed 2016-2019 STIP for the State of Alaska and offers the following comments.

1. Need ID No. 28949 – Clark Bay Parking Expansion

The City of Craig supports the placement and funding of this project. The project proposes to add vehicle parking capacity to the parking area that serves both the Clark Bay ferry terminal and the adjacent public seaplane float. The ferry terminal and seaplane float are both used on a daily basis, and the demand for parking is constant.

In 2014, about 2,600 passengers crossed the seaplane float to and from vehicles in the subject parking area. In addition, about 52,000 passengers pass through the ferry terminal facility each year. That averages about 150 passengers per day that rely on the terminal facility and its parking area. Expanding parking capacity will reduce the occurrence of vehicles parking parallel and immediately adjacent to the fog line of the Klawock-Hollis Highway, resulting in much safer conditions for passengers walking to/from parked vehicles to the state-owned intermodal transportation facilities at Clark Bay.

2. Need ID No. 19120 – 5311 funding

The Interisland Ferry Authority is one of a number of public transit entities eligible for funding from this project. This program is an important revenue source for the IFA and its 52,000 annual passengers.

3. Need ID No. 19217 – Highway Safety

Need ID 19217 provides important discretionary funding to make safety upgrades to state highways in Alaska. Among these are much needed safety upgrades to pavement/subgrade failures on the Thorne Bay Road and the Hydaburg Road, both of which are scheduled for construction this year. Provided that a proportionate share of this funding is spent in the Southcoast Region, including Prince of Wales Island, the City of Craig supports this item.

4. AMHS Funding

The AMHS system has ongoing capital needs, for both the ferry fleet and the many terminal facilities along the AMHS system. The City of Craig supports the AMHS projects identified in the STIP.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jon Bolling', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Jon Bolling
City Administrator



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

3132 Channel, Suite 200
PO Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500
Main: 907.465.4070
Fax: 907.465.6984
TTY/TTD: 907.465.3657
dot.state.ak.us

September 24, 2015

Jon Bolling, City Administrator
City of Craig
P.O. Box 725
Craig, Alaska 99921

Dear Jon Bolling,

Thank you for the comments you provided on behalf of the City of Craig regarding the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

We appreciate your indication of support for projects providing funding for Clark Bay ferry terminal parking, 5311 transit funding for the Interisland Ferry Authority, highway safety funding, and Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) funding.

Please note that the pavement rehabilitation projects on Thone Bay Road and Hydaburg Road were both funded from the Southcoast Region Pavement and Bridge Rehabilitation funds (Need 18922) rather than from the Highway Safety Improvement Program (Need 19217) as you indicate in your letter. Both the Regional Pavement and Bridge Rehabilitation and Highway Safety Improvement Program funding sources are important to maintaining a safe and reliable transportation system in Alaska.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Southcoast Region, Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1775 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sheila Good".

Sheila Good
Transportation Planner I



City of Homer

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Planning

491 East Pioneer Avenue
Homer, Alaska 99603

Planning@ci.homer.ak.us

(p) 907-235-3106

(f) 907-235-3118

August 12, 2015

State of Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development, ATTN: STIP
PO BOX 112500
Juneau, AK 99811-2500

RE: STIP 2016-2019 Draft

The City of Homer would like to express its support for several projects in the 2016-2019 Draft.

Need ID: 23176, Pioneer Avenue Rehabilitation

This project is in the heart of downtown Homer. Pioneer Avenue supports commercial development in the Central Business District and serves as a gateway to Homer's residential districts while providing access to East End Road. Several sections of the road are in need of constant repair and at times represent hazards and traffic needs to be directed out of the travel lane. Structural improvements are necessary to avoid the increasing failure of the pavement.

Need ID 23197, Lake Street Rehabilitation

Lake Street is an essential connection and preferred truck route between the Sterling Highway and East End Road. It represents one of the three major surface transportation routes through Homer. Lake Street has not undergone a major rehabilitation project since 1997. The pavement, excluding the abnormally mild winter this year, routinely experiences major failure every year. The thin asphalt overlays applied to sections of the street in 2011 and 2013 are not expected to offer any structural correction of the deficiencies that will inevitably lead to reoccurrence of the annual failures.

Need ID: 2670, MP 157-169 Rehabilitation - Anchor Point to Baycrest Hill

The Sterling Highway is the only land connection Homer has to the Alaska Highway System. This road is imperative to the livelihood of the City of Homer. The consistent serious and fatal crashes along the highway necessitate improvements. The proposed improvements should not only improve safety but will allow for some relief of congestion that is only predicted to worsen in years to come. The completion of this project demonstrates assurance that route will remain viable well into the future.

Sincerely,

Rick Abboud, AICP
Homer Alaska City Planner
rabboud@ci.homer.ak.us



THE STATE
of ALASKA

GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

3132 Channel, Suite 200
PO Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500
Main: 907.465.4070
Fax: 907.465.6984
TTY/TTD: 907.465.3657
dot.state.ak.us

October 2, 2015

Rick Abboud
City of Homer
491 East Pioneer Avenue
Homer, AK 99603

Dear Mr. Abboud,

Thank you for the comments you provided on behalf of the City of Homer regarding the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

We appreciate your continued support for projects included in the 2016-2019 STIP that provide funding for pavement rehabilitation, drainage and safety enhancements along Pioneer Avenue, Lake Street and the Sterling Highway between Mile Posts 157-169 (Anchor Point to Baycrest Hill).

If you have questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Central Region, Joselyn Biloon at 907-269-0580 or joselyn.biloon@alaska.gov.

We appreciate your involvement in the STIP process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sheila Good".

Sheila Good
Transportation Planner I



City Manager
334 Front Street
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Phone (907) 228-5603
Fax (907) 225-5075

August 11, 2015

State of Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development
ATTN: STIP
PO Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Endorsing Inclusion of City of Ketchikan Projects in the Draft 2016-2019 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

With regard to the above referenced subject, please be advised that at its meeting of August 6, 2015 the City Council adopted the motion directing my office to advise the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities of the City of Ketchikan's concurrence of those City projects listed in the draft 2016-2019 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

Should you have any questions on this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

Karl R. Amylon
City Manager

cc: Mayor and City Councilmembers
David Martin, Assistant City Manager
Steve Corporon, Acting Public Works Director
Chet Hugo, Contracts/Grants Administrator
Katy Suiter, City Clerk
Senator Bert Stedman
Representative Dan Ortiz
Ray Matiasowski



THE STATE
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Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

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Main: 907.465.4070
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dot.state.ak.us

September 24, 2015

Karl R. Amylon
City Manager
City of Ketchikan
334 Front Street
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Dear Mr. Amylon,

Thank you for the comments you provided on behalf of the City of Ketchikan regarding the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

We appreciate your indication of support for projects within the City of Ketchikan and continued involvement in the STIP process.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Southcoast Region, Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1775 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sheila Good".

Sheila Good
Transportation Planner I



City of Pelican

BOX 737 - PELICAN, ALASKA 99832 - PHONE: 735-2202/2203 - FAX: 735-2258 - EMAIL: cityhall@pelicancity.org - WEBSITE: www.pelican.net

August 6, 2015

State of Alaska, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Division of Program Development
Attn: STIP
PO Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500

Re: STIP - Proposed Projects for 2016-2019 Draft STIP:

Need ID 18358 Ferry Refurbishment – Statewide – Ferry Boats – Sufficiently funds AMHS vessel replacement; begin replacement/refurbishment of the M/V LeConte and M/V Aurora to ensure reliable service to remote rural villages already serviced by the AMHS. Also the layups are finding extensive repairs and refurbishments that need to be made before the vessel can be signed off on for return to service; is this sufficient funding to meet those improvements.

Need 18359 Design/Construct/Lease/Purchase Ferryboats & Terminals: consider installation of shore side power at Pelican ferry terminal. The City of Pelican has hydro generated electricity and the ferry can plug into shore power when it has to overnight to comply with US Coast Guard requirements.

Need ID 28811 Pelican – Main Street Bridge (No. 1268) Improvement
FFY16 \$600,000 FFY17 300,000

The City of Pelican received three awards (\$400,000, \$300,000 and \$300,000) from the Denali Commission Transportation Program for Pelican Boardwalk Repairs, Project 692316; the Alaska DOT&PF provided the program match for project design, contract oversight, and environmental documents - these awards repaired most immediate needs and improved the load bearing rating of the boardwalk to handle the weight of the City of Pelican fire truck. And during construction of the City's new water distribution system new cross bracing were installed on existing piles to support the new water distribution pipes; Village Safe Water funds replaced the cross bracing. The City procures boardwalk planks from Icy Straits Lumber in Hoonah for ongoing plank replacement.

The most difficult section of the boardwalk (tidal influence), from the breakwater to the west end of the boardwalk; this section is the community's primary economic center, fish processing activity and visitor traffic entering and exiting the Pelican Harbor area. Portions of the boardwalk are in need of (but not limited to) several precast concrete footings, creosote treated pilings and treated timber stringer replacements. The City of Pelican supports inclusion of this project in the STIP, and likely additional funds will be needed to complete upgrade the boardwalk. Thank you,

Sincerely,

Patricia Phillips
Mayor Patricia Phillips



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

3132 Channel, Suite 200
PO Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500
Main: 907.465.4070
Fax: 907.465.6984
TTY/TTD: 907.465.3657
dot.state.ak.us

September 24, 2015

Mayor Patricia Philips
City of Pelican
PO Box 737
Pelican, Alaska 99832

Mayor Phillips,

Thank you for the comments you provided on behalf of the City of Pelican regarding the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

The funding identified in Need ID 18358: Ferry Refurbishment is obligated on an as-needed basis to projects that are developed using annual surveys, condition assessments and critical need assessments. The dollar amount will fluctuate as we obligate vessel specific projects from this Need ID in a given year. We have completed the Columbia Repower project and have just obligated the Matanuska Repower project, Need ID 29409 in the 2012-2015 STIP. Providing service to the coastal communities of Alaska is the priority of the Alaska Marine Highway System and new builds are being supported; the Tustumena Replacement vessel (Need ID 30189) is in final design and the two Alaska Class Ferries are under construction.

Thank you for your project suggestions to install shoreside power at the Pelican dock for overnight mooring of the M/V LeConte from Need ID 18359: Design/construct/Lease/Purchase Ferryboats. Much like the Ferry Refurbishment funding identified above, the funding associated with this Need ID is also obligated for projects on an as-needed basis based on annual surveys, condition assessments and critical need assessments.

The Pelican Main Street Bridge project (Need ID 28811) is showing in the Draft 2016-19 STIP with \$600,000 in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2016 to begin design work. There is additional funding listed in the later years to continue to move the project forward. The Phase four (construction) estimate currently listed is \$15M in FFY19; however this is a preliminary estimate. It is entirely possible that this estimate is too high given both statewide priorities and the community's ability to provide match. As the project moves forward the construction estimate will be refined after a full assessment of the refurbishment needs and associated costs are determined. We anticipate refurbishing the bridge sufficiently to have it

be removed from the bridge deficiency list, but likely will not be able to do a full replacement. The Department and the City of Pelican will need to agree on a final scope of work given the bridge needs and funding availability. In addition, the City of Pelican will need to agree to pay the 9.03% required match.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Southcoast Region, Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1775 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov.

Sincerely



Sheila Good
Transportation Planner I

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Thursday, August 20, 2015 11:05 AM
To: Heil, Cynthia L (DEC)
Cc: Christensen, Peter D (DOT); Balstad, Liz (DOT); Koch, Denise (DEC); Edwards, Alice L S (DEC); Good, Sheila D (DOT); Brantner, Maren H (DOT)
Subject: RE: STIP Comment/Missing DEC projects



Hi Cynthia,

We are aware that several of the CMAQ projects were not included in the Draft 2016-2019 STIP that is currently out for public comment. I do apologize for any confusion that this may have caused. We have staff working to ensure that these projects will be included in the approved 2016-2019 STIP and will not have to wait for subsequent amendments.

Thank you for the work that you do!

Sara

Sara E. Mason

Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive
Juneau, Alaska 99801
☎: 907.465.2065 | ✉: sara.mason@alaska.gov

From: Heil, Cynthia L (DEC)
Sent: Thursday, August 20, 2015 10:46 AM
To: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Cc: Christensen, Peter D (DOT); Balstad, Liz (DOT); Koch, Denise (DEC); Edwards, Alice L S (DEC)
Subject: STIP Comment/Missing DEC projects

Hi, after reviewing the 2016-2019 STIP that is currently out for public comment, I noticed that projects we submitted to continue our efforts to address air quality within Alaska are missing. Attached is the file that DEC and DOT staff worked on together. In order to keep our efforts moving, please incorporate these projects back into the STIP. We would rather they not be added in a future amendment as we will begin to need these this state fiscal year (earlier rather than later). If you have any questions please let me know.

Need ID 26168 Name: Air Quality Mobile Source Modeling

Need ID 20294 Name: Air Quality Public Education

Need ID 18791 Name: Statewide Congestion and Mitigation Air Quality Program

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Cynthia Wentworth <cynthiawentworth@me.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2015 8:59 AM
To: dot.stip
Subject: Comments on Draft STIP
Attachments: DRAFTSTIPComments.docx

Hello. Here are my comments:

And the link to the referenced article: <http://www.adn.com/article/20150723/forget-knik-bridge-lets-build-rail-transit-alaskas-people-climate>

Please acknowledge receipt of these comments.

Thanks very much.

Cynthia Wentworth
Economist, Masters in Cultural Anthropology
907 653 7796 h; 330 4249 c
cynthiawentworth@me.com

To: Alaska Department of Transportation

From: Cynthia Wentworth, Economist, Masters in Cultural Anthropology
907 653 7796 h; 907 330 4249 c
cynthiawentworth@me.com

Subject: Comments on Draft Surface Transportation Improvement Program
(STIP) August 2015

I am a former employee with the Alaska Railroad Corporation, Marketing and Sales, and a longtime advocate for commuter rail (see attached). Alaska is leading the country in climate change impacts. Seventy-two percent of U.S. oil is used in the transportation sector, mostly by cars and trucks. They contribute two to three times more greenhouse gas emissions per passenger than rail transit. Thus it is imperative that passenger rail for commuters be an important part of Alaska's transportation planning. Rail transit is also consistent with Alaska's Long Range Transportation Plan, which stresses "multi-modal" throughout.

Yet nowhere in the Draft STIP, which includes funding projections as far as FY19 and beyond, do we see a word about passenger rail for commuters. The Overview to the Draft STIP states that the STIP is consistent with other planning efforts. It lists the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the Highway Safety Improvement Plan, and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Yet it does not even mention the Alaska State Rail Plan! Why not?

According to the Alaska State Rail Plan website, the most recent meetings of the Rail Plan Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Committees were in October 2013. That was almost two years ago! Why have no meetings been held since? I was recently told that the State Rail Plan was being updated. The STIP should not be allowed to move forward until after this State Rail Plan is put out for public review. Then it needs to be referenced in the STIP. Rail transit corridor planning also needs to be in the STIP.

ADOT's October 2013 presentation on the State Rail Plan begins by stating that rail plans are required by the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA) of 2008, and that the Plan outlines the State's vision for rail's role in freight and passenger (including commuter) transportation. The Draft Plan Vision talks about supporting communities, and providing efficient freight and passenger services coordinated with other transportation modes. The Draft Planning Context states that the public would like to see commuter service, which will require external financial support. The Preliminary Plan Goals established by the Steering Committee in October 2013 include establishing a state rail authority, pursuing commuter rail service with enabling legislation, and including the Anchorage International Airport in regular public passenger service.

I realize that a Regional Transit Authority requires approval by the State Legislature. However, I believe that the ADOT has a very important role to play here. To meet the preliminary goals of the State Rail Plan, rail transit planning money needs to be in the STIP. This would help the legislature and the public to see the need for a Transit Authority in order to make rail transit with connecting bus service, a reality.

Since 2003 and earlier, the Alaska Railroad has documented much public support for commuter rail (see Alaska Railroad Community Ties Newsletter, 1st Quarter 2003). The Matsu Valley population has grown at a rate of 10% during the past four years – almost 3 times the State average. Yet a good deal of misunderstanding exists. Many people confuse commuter rail with light rail, and are unsure about the costs. It is ADOT's responsibility to enlighten the public by doing **multi-modal corridor planning** – not just highway planning. For example, if \$500,000 can be allocated in the STIP for design of Seward Highway improvements (FY16), similar amounts of money can be in the STIP for commuter rail design.

Legislators and others need to know the costs of transportation improvements within the Anchorage-Matsu **transportation corridor**, both for rail transit with connecting bus service, and for Glenn highway improvements. Hundreds of millions of dollars are currently in the STIP for Glenn Highway improvements! Given the urgency of climate change, where are our priorities?

Also, as a multi-modal transportation agency, it is ADOT's responsibility to enlighten the public on operating costs across surface transportation modes. For example, some people think we don't have rail transit for commuters because it is "too expensive". In 2002, annual operations and maintenance for commuter rail between Anchorage and Matsu was estimated at \$3 million. Yet how many people know that, even though the Whittier Tunnel was supposed to pay its own way through tolls, the State has been subsidizing it at an annual operating and maintenance cost of \$ 2.5 to \$ 3 million? The Draft STIP now contains \$ 4.15 million per year for operations and maintenance for the Whittier Tunnel!

In 2012, during Congressional deliberations on the transportation reauthorization that resulted in MAP 21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act), Alaska Railroad's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) formula funding was threatened with large reductions. Some members of Congress insisted that commuter rail service be a qualifying criterion to receive FTA funding. The Alaska Railroad was able to keep most of this funding thanks to our Congressional delegation, and by successfully arguing that its passenger service constitutes year round public transportation. It also told Congress that it was working towards commuter style options.

I feel use of FTA formula funds is justified in that Alaska Railroad passenger service is public transportation which saves energy, emits less CO2 per passenger mile than cars and trucks, and saves wear and tear on highways. However, I think Congress might be even more determined to cut the Railroad's FTA funding next time it comes up for debate, if ADOT does not move ahead with rail planning for commuters now. Losing

this funding would obviously have a huge negative impact on the Railroad's passenger and freight business, hurting the State's economy. Railroad employment would be cut, and it would become even harder to begin commuter rail.

The Draft STIP discusses the MAP 21 transportation reauthorization, adopted in 2012. The Draft states that MAP 21 is a multi-modal program that includes improving safety and protecting the environment. The rail mode can help meet both these goals. If the STIP provides funds for multi-modal corridor planning, this planning can:

- 1) show line item costs for rail stations, railcars, high speed internet for laptop use (not just I Phones), and connecting bus services
- 2) compare accident rates and public safety costs on the Glenn Highway with those for rail transit alongside
- 3) run passenger traffic models and compare greenhouse gas emissions per passenger by mode according to motor vehicle and rail occupancy rates
- 4) compare commuting times by car and by train, at both peak and non peak periods, with and without traffic congestion and icy conditions
- 5) compare comfort and amenities between bus rapid transit, vanpools, and a train (i.e. restrooms, ease of movement, coffee bar).
- 6) provide for a citizens advisory committee for rail transit

To summarize and conclude, ADOT has a responsibility to finalize the State Rail Plan before financial resources are programmed in the STIP. And funds for rail transit corridor planning need to be in the STIP.

Thanks very much for considering my comments.

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 2:33 PM
To: dot.stip
Cc: Potter, Shelley M (DOT)
Subject: FW: Comment on Draft STIP

FYI

-----Original Message-----

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 12:12 PM
To: 'Daniel W Logan'
Subject: RE: Comment on Draft STIP

Mr. Logan,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Department appreciates your comments regarding the Whitshed Road Bike and Pedestrian Path project. Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

The Whitshed Road project is scheduled to begin design in FFY 2017 with anticipated construction in 2019. The design phase is when various alternatives are developed; this is when designs such as widening the road and providing an in-road facility, as you suggest, will be appraised and a preferred alternative selected. The alternative selection process has a large public involvement component and we welcome your further participation as this project moves forward.

While we understand there has been interest expressed by residents to lower the speed limit from 35 MPH to 25 MPH, speed limit determination is directed by ADOT&PF policy and is a function of the region's Traffic and Safety section. There has been a series of speed studies conducted on May 16, 2011; September 10 and 11, 2012; and September 10, 2013. The studies concluded that the current 35 MPH speed limit aligns with ADOT&PF policy. Any additional studies can be requested by the City of Cordova.

In regards to maintaining the Copper River Highway past MP 37- there are significant challenges. You'll be happy to learn that the Department has reached out to the U.S. Forest Service to explore the possibility of maintaining the portion of the Copper River Highway that has been cut off. While an arrangement may take some time to develop, it is our hope that in coordination with our partners we will be able to manage the right of way on the other side of the MP 37 Bridge.

Road safety is a chief concern of ADOT&PF and we appreciate your comments. If you have additional questions or concerns regarding this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Duane Hoskins at 451-2382 or duane.hoskins@alaska.gov.

Best,

Sara

Sara E. Mason
Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive

Juneau, Alaska 99801

Phone: 907.465.2065 | Email: sara.mason@alaska.gov

-----Original Message-----

From: Daniel W Logan [<mailto:diverdanak@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Sunday, August 23, 2015 8:09 PM

To: dot.stip

Subject: Comment on Draft STIP

I attended the DOT STIP meeting last week. After giving our comments we were told we needed to send them in on this page. Here's my comments:

1. If you ask people to attend your meeting and they give you their thoughts it would be nice if you recorded it at the meeting rather than listen to comments then tell everyone they need to go to a web page to make comments.
2. Whitshed road is listed under illustrative funding as a Bike and Pedestrian path. I am not interested in a bike and pedestrian path as I am a road with wide enough shoulders to make the road safe for pedestrian and bike traffic. This road has lots of bike and pedestrian traffic to the ball field or the whiskey Ridge subdivision. In looking at the road to the ball field I think you could widen the shoulder by 3 feet on each side. Three feet is probably not enough to meet the standards of a dedicated path but enough that vehicles will not need to cross the center line when encountering a bike. This issue was raised several times with the request to at least lower the speed limit. I have a fear that we will have a devastating accident on this road between a bicycle and vehicle. Widening the shoulder on Whitshed road from the Copper River Highway to the Ball Field needs to be a road reconstruction priority.
3. I would like the DOT, U.S. Forest Service, and other interested management agencies evaluate the public use and maintenance needs from the 37 mile bridge to Childs Glacier. That section of road is now being used by 2 commercial transporters providing transportation from 37 mile to Childs Glacier. Given the current use of this section of road a cooperative maintenance strategy needs to be developed for this section of road.

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 2:34 PM
To: dot.stip
Cc: Potter, Shelley M (DOT)
Subject: FW: Comment on Draft STIP



FYI

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 12:24 PM
To: 'Dustin Solberg'
Subject: RE: Comment on Draft STIP

Mr. Solberg,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Department appreciates your comments of support regarding the Whitshed Road Bike and Pedestrian Path project; public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission. Based on public comment received for the Draft 2016-2019 STIP, the Department is working to accelerate the project development timeline for this project.

To ensure you're aware of future amendments to the STIP, please follow this link to our STIP website. <http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdpplng/cip/stip/index.shtml>. Towards the bottom of that page you will see a red envelope that says "Subscribe to receive news and updates".

While we understand there has been interest expressed by residents to lower the speed limit from 35 MPH to 25 MPH, speed limit determination is directed by ADOT&PF policy and is a function of the region's Traffic and Safety section. There has been a series of speed studies conducted on May 16, 2011; September 10 and 11, 2012; and September 10, 2013. The studies concluded that the current 35 MPH speed limit aligns with ADOT&PF policy. Any additional studies can be requested by the City of Cordova.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Duane Hoskins at 451-2382 or duane.hoskins@alaska.gov.

Best,

Sara

Sara E. Mason

Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive
Juneau, Alaska 99801
☎: 907.465.2065 | ✉: sara.mason@alaska.gov

From: Dustin Solberg [<mailto:dustinsolberg@hotmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, August 25, 2015 11:29 PM
To: dot.stip
Subject: Comment on Draft STIP

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan. I'm very interested in the STIP process and wish to be included in all future updates.

For many years, Cordova residents have requested assistance in creating a safer route for pedestrians and bicycle riders (many of whom are families with children) on Whitshed Road. In particular, we have supported the addition of a bike path that would extend approximately .75 mile between the junction of the Copper River Highway and the town's baseball field, Frisbee park, and municipal campground.

I am among many in our community who are pleased to see that the STIP includes the Whitshed Road project to accommodate bicycles. That said, I do respectfully request that you consider moving the design phase to 2016 and begin funding the project at that time. Here in Cordova, both city government and the Native Village of Eyak, the federally recognized tribe, have pledged monetary support for the bike path project.

In the immediate future, I'd like to request that the Department of Transportation invest its resources in reducing the speed limit on Whitshed Road from the current 35 mph to 25 mph. The road has sharp curves, is narrow, and serves as a thoroughfare for trucks, pedestrians, and bicycles. The road is often wet, and in winter is often snowy or icy. It is poorly lit. Frequent rain here simply makes it more difficult to see clearly through a windshield, and if a driver neglects to squeegee the inside of his windshield in the winter months, that driver's visibility is likely even worse. A combination of dark and rainy conditions make for treacherous driving at higher speeds.

In other regions of the country, a similar road may warrant a 35 mph speed limit. But I recommend we consider local climate and the aforementioned conditions as we determine the best recommended speed for this road. Let's remember that a one-size-fits-all interpretation of traffic data may not, in fact, produce the best results for this Alaska community.

Let's keep Alaska moving, but let's be sure that we keep Alaska moving safely. Our young people, in particular, deserve nothing less. Wouldn't you agree?

Lastly, I would like to thank the three Alaska Department of Transportation representatives – Judy Chapman, Duane Hoskins, and Jeff Roach – who visited Cordova and patiently explained the STIP and listened to our comments and questions.

Best regards,

Dustin Solberg
P.O. Box 2052
Cordova, AK 99574

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Elizabeth Van Burgh <betsvburgh@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2015 8:45 AM
To: dot.stip
Subject: Comment on Draft STIP

DOT Representative,

I was very disappointed in hearing that Gov. Walker has approved of spending more money on the proposed Juneau Road. I very strongly believe the road is a mistake, with all the steep terrain that must be dealt with, huge avalanche potential, and the large amount of money that would be needed to keep the road open, and still run a ferry into Haines and Skagway. The potential for people being stuck along the road or at the kazehein is huge. I think this project is a waste of our State's money, esp during a time where we are cutting funds to many programs in our State and that we barely can keep up with improvements and maintenance to our own existing roads.

I strongly urge you to NOT use more money on this Juneau Road project. Put money into the ferry system and allow that mode of transportation to continue in SE AK.

Thank you for your time

Sincerely

Elizabeth Van Burgh
Haines, AK

betsvburgh@gmail.com

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Good, Sheila D (DOT)
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2015 2:50 PM
To: betsvburgh@gmail.com
Cc: dot.stip; Heidemann, Marie E (DOT)
Subject: Comment on Draft STIP

Dear Ms. Van Burgh,

We appreciate you taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

Thank you for the comments you provided regarding Juneau Access (Need ID 19214) listed in the Draft 2016-2019 STIP. We understand that you have several concerns related to the highway alternatives proposed in this project. Per the Governor's direction under Administrative Order 271, the Department intends to complete the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS), including the Record of Decision. The SEIS will provide guidance on a future course of action. We appreciate and look forward to your continued involvement in the STIP process.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Southcoast Region, Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1775 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

Sheila Good

Transportation Planner I
Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development
3132 Channel Drive | P.O. Box 112500 | Juneau, AK 99811

T (907) 465-6392 | F (907) 465-6984





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Alan Trist

August 27, 2015

To: Northern Region DOT / STIP

Re: ID: 6617 Shepard Point Road COMMENT

The Eyak Preservation Council is a public charity with 501(c)(3) status based in Cordova, Alaska whose mission is to honor Eyak heritage and to conserve wild salmon habitat and culture through education, awareness and promotion of sustainable lifeways for all peoples.

The Eyak Preservation Council offers educational and outreach programs that concentrate on the regional salmon way of life, indigenous cultural preservation and the promotion of sustainable economies. We represent the communities and people of the Copper River and Prince William Sound and have program participants from this region and from the nation at large.

We, in the Public Interest, are against the Shepard Point Road project, and represent a viable regional constituency.

The stated primary purpose of the road is to go to the site of the planned Shepard Point deep-water port. This entire project has a stated purpose of improved oil spill response. That is not a responsible or logical purpose, and we strongly contend, or need.

Viable concerns include:

- The road will traverse many active avalanche and landslide chutes, and would most likely be inaccessible during winter months and during heavy wind and rainstorms (see U.S. Forest Service overhead photo attached of Shepard Point).
- Reports from CH2MHILL submitted to the Army Corps cite a percentage of accidents and potential deaths that could happen on this road, despite the best mitigation design efforts.
- The road will be subject to high tides and the effects of climate change and rising sea levels.
- It will be very expensive to build and maintain. The estimates that the STIP presents are old, and considered insufficient.
- The State should not undertake anything in this fiscal climate that would very probably incur cost overruns.
- The lead applicant does not have oil spill response experience, nor does it have the road building and maintenance experience that would be necessary for this extremely large project.
- Repeatedly, State and Federal agencies have commented against this road and port project (NOAA letter attached), stating environmental concerns to the waters of Orca Inlet and beyond, and to the terrestrial wildlife and plants that this project would incur.
- There are other locations that would be safer, cost less to build and maintain and be closer to both the Cordova harbor (the primary oil spill response vessels and equipment) and the airport (for emergency assistance and expertise personnel).



- Community members, businesses and commercial fishermen have repeatedly submitted comments over the years against this road and port project.

Finally, we had a recent event that underscores the current oil spill response capabilities in Cordova. On Monday, August 24, the U.S. Coast Guard administered and observed an oil spill response exercise in Cordova. Cordova's response capabilities, in timing and execution of response went above and beyond compliance measures. Booms were loaded and deployed within time requirements. Quotes from the Response Department Head of the Coast Guard about the training included: "...went great...all benchmarks were met...the booms are in a perfect location..." Additionally, Cordova has also been chosen to host a Regional Citizens Advisory Council and Industry-led oil spill exercise in February 2016.

We contend that this is proof and an important fact for the STIP department to take into account, along with our other above stated concerns.

EPC contends that this road and purported oil spill response port is not only unnecessary, but a ruse for other imagined development intentions. The majority of our community does NOT want this road and port. This is an ill-conceived and misleading project. The STIP and the Department of Transportation would be working in the benefit of the public interest to somehow transfer these funds into other much needed projects for the community of Cordova.

If the Army Corps permits this project, it will still continue to be fought via litigation and/or legislation. We would applaud the STIP team to endeavor to work with us to see if these funds can somehow be reallocated for a road project(s) that would truly benefit Cordova and eastern Prince William Sound.

Sincerely,

Carol Hoover
Executive Director

cc: DL, DH, BB, VB, GS



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

3132 Channel, Suite 200
PO Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500
Main: 907.465.4070
Fax: 907.465.6984
TTY/TTD: 907.465.3657
dot.state.ak.us

September 13, 2015

Carol Hoover
Eyak Preservation Council
P.O. Box 460
Cordova, Alaska 99574

Subject: Draft 2016-2019 STIP Comments on the Shepard Point Road Project

Dear Ms. Hoover,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Department appreciates your comments regarding the Shepard Point Road project. Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

Currently ADOT&PF's role in the Project is that of a cooperating agency; this role is a contributing role to the overall project. The responsibilities of ADOT&PF are as follows:

- Program federal aid highway funds to the road project construction via the STIP.
- - o These funds will only be utilized when the construction phase of the project is authorized to begin. Until that time the federal highway funding amount of \$5.5 million will be annotated in the current federal fiscal year. This is a single contribution of \$5.5 million towards the project.
- Function as the pass-through agency for the expenditure of Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) Investment Fund allocations for the project, currently managed by the Alaska Department of Revenue.
 - o These funds are required to be expended towards a project located at Shepard Point by the Alyeska Consent Decree issued by the U.S. District Court in 1992. ADOT&PF is required to act on this fund as a fiscal agent only; we do not have the authority to amend nor rescind this fund.
- The Shepard Point Road project listed in the STIP is not managed by ADOT&PF.
 - o Any concerns regarding project feasibility and development should be directed to the Federal Highway Administration, Western Federal Lands (WFL) division at (360) 619-7700 or wfl.fhwa@dot.gov. (Your STIP comment will be shared with WFL by ADOT&PF.)

"Keep Alaska Moving through service and infrastructure."

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding our role in this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Duane Hoskins at 451-2382 or duane.hoskins@alaska.gov.

Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Sara', with a stylized, flowing script.

Sara Mason
Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs



Image © 2009 DigitalGlobe
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Imagery Date: Apr 26, 2006

60°37'43.24" N 145°39'47.33" W elev 824 ft

Eye alt 6634 ft



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

National Marine Fisheries Service

P.O. Box 21668

Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

January 27, 2010

Colonel Reinhard W. Koenig
District Engineer, Alaska District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P. O. Box 898
Anchorage, Alaska 99506-6898

Re: POA-1994-1014
Shepard Point

Attn: Mary Lee Plumb-Mentjes

Dear Col. Koenig:

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has reviewed the above referenced public notice regarding a proposal by the Native Village of Eyak (NVE) to construct a dedicated deep-water port and additional staging and storage area at Shepard Point (near Cordova, Alaska) to function as an oil spill response facility, as well as 4.4 miles of new road connecting the facility to the existing road system. Under the applicant's preferred alternative, the proposed work includes discharging a total of 289,594 cubic yards of fill into 14.8 acres of waters of the United States. Of this total, 2.3 acres of fill would be located at Shepard Point, of which 2.1 acres would be in marine waters, for construction of the proposed dock with a 600-foot sheet pile face. In addition, 12.5 acres of fill are required for the road to Shepard Point, of which 10.9 acres are in marine waters, including 1.7 acres of eelgrass and 3.7 acres of rocky intertidal shoreline, which includes kelp beds.

Section 305(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) requires federal agencies to consult with NMFS on all actions that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). NMFS is required to make conservation recommendations, which may include measures to avoid, minimize, mitigate or otherwise offset adverse effects. The Corps of Engineers (Corps) has determined that the project may adversely affect EFH. NMFS agrees with this determination, and notes that alternatives exist which meet the purpose and need, are practicable, would cost about half as much as the NVE's preferred alternative, and have less environmental impacts to living marine resources, including EFH.

Living Marine Resources and Essential Fish Habitat

The nearshore marine environment of Orca Inlet, between Cordova and Shepard Point, is productive EFH for various life stages of fish, including: Pacific cod, flathead sole, walleye pollock, yellowfin sole, sablefish, rock sole, rex sole, arrowtooth flounder, sculpin, and five



species of Pacific salmon [Table 3-2 of the EFH Assessment in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)]. According to this document, marine hydroacoustic surveys were performed every six weeks for approximately one year. Three common size classes of fish were identified: 1) a surface layer of scattered individual small targets (typical of night time distribution of juvenile fish); 2) large dense aggregations of targets in mid-water (typical for schooling herring and young pollock); and 3) large single targets deep in the water column (typical of adult Gadids [pollock and cod]). Fish biomass was found to be variable through both time and space. The highest biomass of fish was found during winter in deep water between Shepard Point and the Rude River. This may be an important over-winter area for pollock, as evidenced by the results of a winter trawl survey. In addition, the presence of many small targets around both Humpback Creek and Fleming Spit were likely juvenile fish that were utilizing these habitats, and herring that were overwintering near the freshwater inflows.

The project area includes certain marine habitats that have enhanced ecological functions and are thus inherently more valuable to the health, stability, and resilience of marine ecosystems. These habitats include nearshore areas of intertidal and submerged vegetation (eelgrass, laminaria), rock, and other substrates. These areas provide food and rearing habitat for juvenile groundfish (e.g. pacific cod) and spawning areas for some species such as Atka mackerel and yellowfin sole. Eelgrass beds and laminaria gardens function as nursery areas, providing food, shelter and protection from predators for many ecologically, commercially, recreationally and subsistence species of juvenile fish and shellfish. Additionally, due to changes in the nearshore physiography following the 1964 earthquake (uplifting), estuarine habitat is relatively rare in this area (FEIS, 2007), making a more compelling argument to conserve the functions and values of the marine ecosystem in this area.

Project Description

The purpose of the proposed project is to construct an oil spill response facility in the Cordova area that will receive oil spill equipment from any location via an air-to-ground-to-response vessel or cargo vessel-to-response vessel transportation sequence; accommodate existing and foreseeable future oil spill response and cargo vessels with deeper drafts than the current capabilities of existing facilities in the area; and include an adequate staging area contiguous to the dock. Construction and operation of an oil spill response facility in the Cordova area would fulfill the intent of the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company (Alyeska) Agreement and Consent Decree.

Project Alternatives

NMFS has had a long history of involvement in this project. We have repeatedly provided comments to the Corps, and most recently to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) that the preferred alternative was not the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative

(LEDPA). In a January 26, 2007 letter (enclosed), the Corps also asserted that the preferred alternative was not the LEDPA.

No Action Alternative

The FEIS states the No Action Alternative does not meet the project purpose and need. NMFS disagrees with this assertion because it is not substantiated in the FEIS. The current port facilities in Cordova appear to be adequate to meet oil spill response needs. Without a demonstrated public need, “No Action” would represent another practicable alternative. The applicant has not adequately demonstrated that building an oil spill response facility at Shepard Point, with a deep draft port, will enhance oil spill response capabilities (i.e. decrease response time, increase capabilities), over existing facilities. In fact, for spill scenarios in both Prince William Sound (PWS) and the Copper River Flats response time (based on response vessel average speed and nautical miles travelled), would actually increase using the Shepard Point site when compared to the current facility in town.

According to a 1993 PWS Regional Citizens Advisory Council (RCAC) study (Lohse, 1993) and the 1995 Sound Tanker Spill Prevention and Response Plan (FEIS, 2007), the current port facilities in Cordova are adequate to meet oil spill response needs. In addition, during the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review process both Alyeska and British Petroleum (Alaska) Inc. stated that access to a deep water port in Cordova would not improve oil spill response (FEIS, 2007).

Further, the most critical features of any oil spill response facility and most direct and efficient way to enhance Cordova’s current facilities are: 1) an adequate lay-down or staging area, and 2) the ability to transfer equipment such as conex units via cranes. The RCAC Oil Spill Prevention and Response Committee (Lohse, 1993) stated that “...inventories in Cordova have ample dock space to set up the necessary loading stations, and equipment for those stations is either present or readily available.” If the existing facilities in Cordova meet the standards of the oil spill response community, and/or could be enhanced with nominal measures, such as a lay-down yard and crane, then the No Action Alternative would meet the purpose and need.

Build Alternatives

A comparison of project alternatives is presented in Table 2-7 of the FEIS and page five of this Public Notice (Table 2-7). All the build alternatives achieve the project purpose and need. The environmental impacts of Alternatives 2, 3, and 5 are similar and involve building a new oil spill response facility and deepwater port on the existing road system. Alternative 4, which is the applicant’s preferred alternative, involves building a new oil spill response facility and deepwater port at Shepard Point and approximately 4.4 - 4.5 miles of new road.

The applicant’s proposed project, (Alternative 4, Road option 3), is the most environmentally damaging and most expensive alternative in the FEIS. NMFS was unable to find any explanation in the FEIS as to why the most expensive and environmentally damaging alternative is identified as the preferred alternative. The loss of nearshore marine habitat, particularly eelgrass and laminaria under NVE’s preferred alternative, would result in substantial adverse effects to living

marine resources. These effects are not justified given the availability of several viable alternatives. According to the Table 2-7, Alternatives 2, 3, and 5 would meet the project purpose and need, are practicable, and would cost about half as much (\$14.2 -\$19.4 million) as any of the options under the NVE's preferred Alternative 4, Road Option 3 (\$30.1 -\$36.4 million).

Originally, based on the information in the FEIS, NMFS recommended to the BIA pursuant to Section 305(b)(4)(A) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act that they select Alternative 3 or 5 as the build alternative in their Record of Decision for the FEIS. However, a sixth alternative (Orca Cannery site) that was not advanced during the NEPA review process is now available for consideration. The Orca Cannery site also supports the project purpose and need as an oil spill response facility, insofar as it: 1) provides uplands for storage and staging of equipment and supplies, 2) provides access to the existing road system, 3) is closer to the Cordova Airport to receive oil spill response related air support, 4) is closer to the fuel dock for fueling response vessels, 5) is closer to Cordova Harbor, location of the fishing fleet that comprises the Tier 1 and 2 response vessels, and 6) has an existing pile-supported dock that can be extended on pilings into waters already disturbed by the original cannery operation

Further, the Orca Cannery site alternative, in comparison to the proposed alternative, would minimize adverse impacts to living marine resources: 1) it eliminates the permanent loss of productive EFH from the 2.1 acres of fill for the sheet-pile/fill dock at Shepard Point (Alternative 4); instead utilizes an existing pile-supported dock, and 2) it eliminates 10.9 acres of fill associated with construction of a new road; the Orca Cannery is on the existing road system. While the Orca Cannery Alternative does not currently include a cost estimate, we expect costs to be below those associated with Alternative 4, since the site does not require construction of a new road or sheet-pile dock.

Effects of the Proposed Action on Essential Fish Habitat

The build alternatives differ in the quantity of EFH affected as well as the magnitude of the effect. All build alternatives could adversely affect EFH both directly through activities such as dredging, filling, excavation and pile driving; and indirectly through runoff, possible contaminant pollution (including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons), possible introduction of exotic species through ballast water, and the conversion of aquatic habitat that eliminates, diminishes, and disrupts the functions of EFH. The mortality of prey species could also be considered an adverse effect on EFH.

Dredging Impacts

Alternatives 2, 3, and 5 would involve dredging an estimated 267,000 cubic yards of material from 32.9 acres of subtidal habitat to provide a deep draft navigation channel. As presented in the executive summary (ES) of the FEIS (Table ES-1, p. ES-35) and Section 4.2.2.2 of the EFH Assessment, the impacts dredging in the Eastern Channel are expected to be minor.

NVE has pointed to potential impacts of dredging associated with all the build alternatives,

except Alternative 4 (Shepard Point). While dredging can certainly have adverse effects on marine life, including EFH, the effects of dredging are largely transitory, and can be controlled to a large extent by best management practices (BMPs), namely: 1) *avoidance* of juvenile fish in nearshore waters by use of timing windows (in-water work window of October 1-April 30), and 2) *minimizing* suspended solids by use of silt curtains. We recommend these BMPs for in-water work in Prince William Sound based on beach-seine data on nearshore habitat use by juvenile fish. During winter, as production decreases, juvenile fish typically vacate nearshore habitats and move to deep water where they lower their metabolic activities and decrease or cease feeding, utilizing fat stores. During this period, October through April, nearshore waters are minimally used by fish, thus avoiding any adverse effect. These timing windows are now routinely included as permit stipulations and incorporated into construction schedules by applicants and contractors with success on a variety of dredging projects. In sharp contrast, fill of marine nearshore waters removes productive fish habitat forever.

Additionally, the potential effects from dredging could be decreased further or eliminated completely if the deep draft requirements were removed from the purpose and need. Appendix B of the FEIS provides documentation from the oil spill response community that supports the view that a deep draft port is not critical or necessary for the success of an oil spill response facility.

Fill Impacts

Alternative 2 would require 5.2 acres of fill below the high tide line associated with a fill dock, and 4.6 acres of fill associated with a pile-supported dock (see Table 4.1 of the EFH Assessment). Of the 5.2 acres required for the fill dock, 1.7 acres of eelgrass beds and 0.8 acres of *Fucus* habitat would be buried under the fill material. For the pile-supported dock, 3.4 acres of eelgrass beds and 1.1 acres of *Fucus* habitat would be lost.

Alternative 3 (sheet pile dock) would result in 2.1 acres of filled habitat below MLLW, of which .5 acres would be *Fucus* habitat and 1.5 acres of subtidal flora (*Laminaria* & *A/aria* spp). By using a pile supported dock even less habitat would be lost with a total of 1.4 acres of which only .4 acres is *Fucus* habitat and 1.1 acres is subtidal flora.

Alternative 4, road option 3 (NVE Preferred Alternative), would result in filling of 14.8 acres with approximately 1.7 of those acres including eelgrass, and 3.7 acres of *Fucus* and 1.4 acres of blue mussel habitat.

Alternative 5 would require 4.9 acres of fill below the high tide line associated with a fill dock, and 3.4 acres of fill associated with a pile-supported dock. Of the 4.9 acres required for the fill dock, 0.8 acres of *Fucus* and .1 acres of blue mussel habitat would be buried by the fill material. For the pile-supported dock, 1.4 acres of *Fucus* and .3 acres of blue mussel habitat would be filled.

Orca Cannery Alternative was not reviewed under FEIS. This site is on the existing road system and no new road construction would be needed. The existing dock design is piling over

previously disturbed mud bottom habitat and allows for the loading and off-loading of vessels. Thus, any supplemental fill requirements are expected to be minimal.

Summary of Alternatives Discussion

The FEIS states that the No Action alternative, as well as the three other build alternatives that utilize the existing road system, would not satisfy the purpose and need. Further, the FEIS asserts:

A deep draft dock is necessary for an oil spill response facility. Therefore, funding for an oil spill response facility in the Alyeska Consent Decree is restricted to the Shepard Point alternative (Alternative 4). Other alternatives and funding are not then available to be explored.

NMFS disagrees with this assertion and is concerned that this argument amounts to construction of “strawman alternatives”, biasing the alternatives analysis. Information gathered during the EIS process, from experts within the oil spill response community (FEIS, 2007) suggests a deep draft dock is *not* needed to enhance response time or increase the capacity for oil spill operations.

Thus, the purpose of a deep draft dock at Shepard Point, as stated in the Alyeska Consent Decree, appears to be linked to building a new road access to Shepard Point for other purposes, and bears re-examination. Decisions involving potential impacts to living marine resources, when other alternatives have less environmental impacts, should not be influenced by previous earmarked funding. The Alyeska Consent Decree provides a mechanism for the applicant to re-apply for funds and funds to be re-allocated for alternative sites that are more viable (e.g. Orca Cannery). As discussed above, impacts to marine habitat and living marine resources would be greatest under Alternative 4, the applicant’s preferred alternative.

EFH Conservation Recommendation

In accordance with Section 305(b)(4)(A) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, NMFS offers the following EFH Conservation Recommendation:

- The project as proposed (Alternative 4) should be denied. The applicant should examine less damaging options for providing an oil spill response facility to serve the community of Cordova including the No Action alternative and the Orca Cannery alternative.

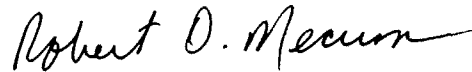
Conclusions

NMFS recognizes the importance of this project to the community of Cordova and is available to work with the applicant in achieving their project's goals, while minimizing impacts to EFH and our trust resources. NMFS strongly opposes issuance of a permit for the applicant’s preferred alternative, because the information we have reviewed does not demonstrate that this is the

LEDPA. Four build alternatives (three listed in the FEIS, and the fourth, Orca Cannery, described in the Public Notice), as well as the No Action Alternative, are less damaging to living marine resources, including EFH. Other alternatives exist to meet the need for an oil spill response facility in Cordova. The project, as proposed, will have substantial and unacceptable impacts on aquatic resources of national importance, as defined in Part IV, Paragraph 3(b) of the Clean Water Act section 404(q) Memorandum of Agreement between our agencies. Should you decide to issue the permit over our objections, we may seek higher level review of your decision pursuant to the 404(q) Memorandum of Agreement. We hope that this matter can be resolved at the field level instead.

Under section 305(b)(4) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the Corps is required to respond to NMFS EFH recommendations in writing within 30 days. If the Corps will not make a decision within 30 days of receiving NMFS EFH Conservation Recommendations, the Corps should provide NMFS with a letter within 30 days to that effect and indicate when a full response will be provided. Brian Lance is the contact for this project and can be reached at 907-271-1301 or by e-mail: brian.lance@noaa.gov.

Sincerely,



Robert D. Mecum
Acting Administrator, Alaska Region

Enclosure

cc:

BIA- kristin.k'eit@bia.gov
UFWS- Betsy_McCracken@fws.gov
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City of Cordova-
ADFG- michael.daigenault@alaska.gov
NVE- bcain@nveyak.org

References

Lohse, R. E. 1993. Dock Analysis. Prepared for the Regional Citizens' Advisory Council of Prince William Sound Oil Spill Prevention and Response Committee. 37 pages.

Cordova Oil Spill Response Facility, Final Environmental Impact Statement, Record of Decision. Prepared by Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, March 27, 2007



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

Regulatory Division
POA-1994-1014-2

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, ALASKA
P.O. BOX 6898
ELMENDORF AFB, ALASKA 99506-0898

JAN 26 2007

Ms. Kristin K'eit
U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs
Alaska Region
Post Office Box 25520
Juneau, Alaska 99802-5520

Dear Ms. K'eit:

Please find enclosed our comments to the Cordova Oil Spill Response Facility Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). We have reviewed the FEIS pursuant to our authorities under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA).

The concerns we have expressed in previous correspondence and meetings with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Department of Interior, regarding the purpose and need and the BIA preferred alternative (Shepard Point) achieving compliance with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Section 404(b)(1) guidelines, remain. As you are aware, the 404(b)(1) guidelines allow the Corps of Engineers to authorize only the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative (LEDPA). Most recently the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army reiterated these same concerns to the Associate Deputy Secretary of the Interior in a November 20, 2005 letter.

As our comments reflect, we do not find the information provided in the FEIS sufficient to conclude the BIA preferred alternative is the LEDPA. A permit decision favorable to the BIA preferred alternative would not be possible unless the preferred alternative is clearly the LEDPA. The FEIS identifies Alternatives 2, 3, 4, and 5 as practicable. Based on our review of the information provided in the FEIS, alternative 3B (Fleming Point, pile supported dock) appears to be the LEDPA.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the FEIS and remain available for continued coordination. If you have any questions or wish to discuss these issues further, please contact Mr. Bryan Herczeg of my staff, at (907) 753-2712, toll free from within Alaska at (800) 478-2712, by email at bryan.a.herczeg@poa02.usace.army.mil or by mail at the address above, ATTN: CEPOA-RD-E.

Sincerely,


Glen E. Justis
Chief, East Branch

Enclosures

USACE Comments on Final EIS for Cordova Oil Spill Response Facility

1.0 Purpose and Need

General comments: As a cooperating agency, the Corps has strongly recommended the BIA include economic development in the purpose and need statement in various official correspondences throughout the development of the EIS. The NVE as the project sponsor and ultimately owner of the proposed deepwater port and oil spill response facility has also expressed their desire to include economic development in the project purpose and need. The NVE has also expressed interest in developing other uses and industries which would benefit from a deepwater port. The EIS indicates the NVE is exploring the development of a Port Authority under an arrangement that might include the City of Cordova and Eyak Corporation (Section 4.0 Socioeconomic Resources). The EIS indicates the NVE would develop a schedule of moorage, wharfage, and storage fees for any use of the dock and staging area. The development of a Port Authority would clearly allow development of projects and economic strategies to maximize revenue generated from uses other than oil spill response.

The EIS does not include economic development in the purpose and need and fails to provide the analysis for reasonably foreseeable uses of the facility other than oil spill response. The project has a long history with the City of Cordova and ADOT as previous sponsors. From the inception of the project, the purpose of a deepwater port was identified as providing the support necessary for the growth of a diversified economic base in eastern PWS region. The Draft EIS noted that a 1990 engineering study by PND recommended Shepard Point as the best location for a deep-draft port and also found that access to the new port would help oil spill contingency plans. Despite recommendations of the Corps and the NVE, the BIA has not included economic development in the project purpose and need limiting the purpose and need to a dedicated spill response facility to improve response capabilities. The EIS fails to identify any current spill response deficiencies identified by ADEC or other regulatory agencies other than to say that the deepest-draft response vessels that may potentially call on the facility may experience a delay during periods of the lowest tides.

Because the purpose and need identifies only oil spill response and excludes economic development (from other uses), and the analysis is limited to only a facility dedicated to spill response, the purpose as defined for the Clean Water Act Section 404(b)(1) analysis will be narrow and the BIA's preferred alternative may be eliminated during the Corps' subsequent evaluation of the Department of the Army permit application as it does not appear to be the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative as required by the 404(b)(1) guidelines.

p. 1-1, section 1.1

Although a definition for the term "deepwater port" has been added since the PFEIS, there is no clear explanation why this definition differs significantly from those of the Marine Transportation System National Advisory Council, or the USACE definition of deep draft navigation. Specific reference to Section 2.1 should be made (rather than "as noted below") with regard to design vessel configuration.

The proposed action defines “dedicated” when referring to the deepwater port, oil spill response facility, and associated access road as meaning the primary purpose is for oil spill response however, the primary purpose is not taken to exclude other ancillary uses. The EIS fails to disclose or analyze the effects of other ancillary uses. Using the analogy of the extremely low rate of oil spills from vessels worldwide (0.004%) reported in Section 4.5.1.8.3 the proposed deepwater port, response facility, and associated road will likely be used for other ancillary uses much more often than oil spill response. The EIS fails to disclose and analyze other reasonably foreseeable uses.

p. 1-2 section 1.3

This section does not adequately establish the need for deep draft response vessel access at any tide since all Tier 1 and 2 response vessels are fishing vessels which already have access at any tide to the existing docks and channels. In addition, Appendix B indicates that some delay on tides was acceptable to the response planners with the exception of the NVE. Further, section 4.2.1.8.2 states that freight vessels, such as barges towed by the *Gulf Titan* call on Cordova once per week, and APSC has stated that it does not have any problem accessing Cordova with deep-draft response vessels. Finally section 1.3 refers to deficiencies in the current response plan despite documented successful testing of the current response system.

p. 1-2, 1.3, par. 1

The justification of need states, “By providing access to deep-draft oil spill response vessels at any tide, with road connection to the airport, the proposed facility will improve response capacities”. Section 1.6.1.1 (p. 1-14) indicates the SERVUS escort and response barge vessel stations (Port Etches, Naked Island, and Port Valdez) have been designed to eliminate or reduce the need for time consuming, round trip travel to shore based loading docks. Given the current successfully tested response system in place, the probability of the BIA preferred alternative significantly or even substantially improving response capacity or efficiencies appears very low. Additionally, road closures due to avalanches could delay response times under the current proposal by 72 hours; a duration that is much longer than a 6-hour tide delay would cause should a response facility be constructed be without any dredging proposals for Alternatives 2, 3, and 5.

p. 1-2, section 1.3, par. 3

This section states that out of region equipment mobilized to the region, would then be transported to the spill site by fishing vessels. Since the fishing vessels in Cordova already have all tide access the need for spill response deep draft vessel access at all tides is not adequately identified.

p. 1-2, section 1.3, par 5

Incorrectly states that existing docks do not have all-tide access due to shoals in Orca Inlet north east of Cordova. The existing docks do have all-tide access for all Cordova Tier 1 and 2 response vessels as well as for a wide variety of other deeper draft vessels (e.g. ferries, cargo vessels and barges, USCG vessels) which call on Cordova. The EIS reports that Orca Inlet has a 500-foot wide channel to -25 feet MLLW and a 200-foot wide channel to -28 feet MLLW with many wider and deeper areas. Additionally, future deeper draft vessels would experience at most a 6-hour delay in accessing existing facilities without dredging. This is substantially less than a potential 72-hour delay associated with avalanche road closures to Shepard Point.

p. 1-3 section 1.3, par 1

A statement is made that presently there are deficiencies in response capabilities in Cordova, yet section 1.5.2 reports the Cordova Community Response Center contains more pre-positioned equipment than any other center in PWS except for the SERVUS annex in Valdez. Section 1.5.2 further states that APSC has demonstrated they can meet the statutory response requirements (PWS Regional Advisory Committee) and ADEC reported the system has been successfully tested by mobilizing equipment to the region (see also 1.5.4.3.3). Section 1.5.4 also states that existing response capability in Cordova and PWS has been greatly improved over that which existed prior to the EVOS. Section 1.5.4.3.2 states there are 300 Tier 1 and 2 response vessels. The EIS fails to clearly document substantial deficiencies in the current Cordova response capabilities.

p. 1-3, section 1.3, par 4

This section indicates that pre-positioned equipment adjacent to the dock is needed to “minimize or eliminate current deficiencies”. Section 1.6.2 states that even if a new oil spill response facility is constructed in Cordova, all existing pre-positioned equipment may not be relocated to the new staging area. The EIS does not identify what spill response equipment would be available at the proposed new facility or what pre-existing equipment in Cordova if any will be moved to the new facility. It appears there are no commitments from current spill responders to move their equipment to a proposed new facility. How did BIA conclude the proposed facility would “minimize or eliminate current deficiencies” without knowing what equipment will be pre-positioned at the proposed “dedicated” facility?

p. 1-3, section 1.3, par 5

In regards to the discussion of the “dedicated” deepwater dock reducing risk of groundings, avoiding delays, and more efficient resupply and improving efficiency in ongoing spill response; the EIS does not actually identify how many deep draft vessels would be expected to utilize the facility in a spill response. No risk/cost benefit analysis is provided to determine what level of improvement in efficiency will result from various levels of use by deep draft vessels. Without knowing the level of use by deep draft vessels and potential delays with existing channel depths, meaningful comparison of the increase or decrease in efficiencies from each alternative cannot be achieved. Regarding delays, it would appear that more substantial delays than occur under even the no action alternative could occur as a result of avalanche road closures between Cordova and Shepard Point.

p. 1-9, section 1.5.4.2.2

Refers to the existing dock facilities as adequate for use by fishing industry, the state ferry, and to facilitate the movement of freight. Discussion of the success of the current spill response system on page 1-6 paragraph 3 indicates that existing infrastructure is also adequate for meeting the required statutory spill response requirements. The new fast vehicle ferry is also discussed as a means of transporting freight from communities with road access or good airports to Tatitlek and Chanega Bay docks. The EIS fails to provide empirical data and information that clearly demonstrates the need for all-tide access for spill response deep draft vessels.

p. 1-12, section 1.5.4.3.2, par 3

This section notes that existing plans rely upon currently available vessels, equipment, and facilities, and that with the addition of a deepwater port with all-tide access oil spill response plans would be updated, and the role of larger, deeper-draft vessels would be incorporated. Since deep draft vessels can and do access Cordova (see section 4.2.1.8.2) what role do they have under the current response plan? No comparison of the existing response plan versus the updated response plan is provided. No information is provided as to how the existing spill response plan would rely on larger deeper-draft vessels other than to say their role would be incorporated. Section 4.3.1.8.1 states that at the present time there are no firm plans to base a large (assumed deep draft) oil spill response vessel at a new Cordova facility.

p. 1-15, section 1.6.1.1, par 2

This section acknowledges that although fishing vessels would conduct the majority of the Cordova transport duties, there is potential that some equipment would need to be transported by larger SERVUS vessels. The probability of SERVUS vessels or any other deep draft vessel calling on Cordova during a spill response is not identified. Paragraph 1 of this section (p. 1-14) indicates the SERVUS escort and response barge vessel stations (Port Etches, Naked Island, and Port Valdez) have been designed to eliminate or reduce the need for time consuming, round trip travel to shore-based loading docks. Under the current response system the probability of SERVUS vessels calling on Cordova appears very low.

p. 1-15, section 1.6.1.3

This section acknowledges that the “large fleet of fishing vessels is capable of quickly transporting supplies”. Also states that due to the high cost of airfreight, lower priority out-of-region supplies would be trucked to road-accessible communities, or transported by container barge. EIS fails to explain why this would change with construction of deepwater port in Cordova, since supplies would still have to be flown in.

2.0 Project Alternatives

Different sizes and configurations of the proposed fills should be included. For example, to reduce impacts to eelgrass under Alternative 2B, the staging area could be configured with the same footprint as 2A if the dock configuration was changed. Fill dock configurations could be shaped more like those of the pile supported dock shapes to reduce fill while still simultaneously accommodating 1 deep draft vessel and 4 fishing vessels?

p. 2-3, Table 2-1

The deepest draft of SERVUS vessel that would call on Cordova is 22 feet which does not require a -35-foot MLLW channel depth as proposed for alternatives 2, 3, and 5. In addition APSC has stated that it does not have any problem accessing Cordova with deep-draft response vessels (page 4-11, par. 2, last sentence). Since there are no plans to base large spill response vessels at a new Cordova facility at this time (see 4.3.1.8.1) and the current response plan calls for fishing vessels to load equipment to take to the spill site the EIS lacks substantive information to support the need for deep draft response vessels or even cargo vessels to have all tide access.

p. 2-4, Table 2-2

The deepest draft likely cargo vessels are 20 feet which does not require a -35-foot MLLW channel depth for safe and efficient navigation as proposed for alternatives 2, 3, and 5. Larger, deep draft container/cargo vessels cannot call on Cordova even with a deeper channel as there are no industries which can support larger vessels or infrastructure to off load these types of vessels (see 2.1.1.2).

p. 2-8, section 2.1.2

If there will be other allowable uses identify this in the purpose and need statements as a multi-purpose facility and provide the analysis of impacts.

p. 2-9, section 2.1.4

The dock and channel depths selected appear unnecessary and the need is not substantiated based on the response plan assumptions (sections 1.3 and 1.6.1.1) that out of region equipment would be transported to the spill site by fishing vessels (which already have all tide access). The deepest draft existing design vessel for spill response, an extended tractor tug, has only 22-foot draft (section 2.1.4). Based on the views of the majority of the response planners the selected channel depth does not appear necessary. With the exception of the NVE response planners found:

- no pressing need to bring larger vessels into Cordova
- some delays acceptable for larger vessels since the maximum delay would be up to six hours
- channel does not need to accommodate every vessel at all times
- tide delay for the largest vessels is acceptable

Additionally, multi-purpose docks with -30 ft MLLW water depth are available at Tatitlek and Chenega Bay and docks with -35 ft MLLW or deeper are available at Valdez, Whittier and Seward to receive and load spill equipment.

An extreme low tide of -5 MLLW has been chosen, despite the fact that future predicted tides for the next 50 years (9/7/2006 – 9/7/2056) would only reach -4.0 MLLW on two occasions. Given the draft of the response vessels there appears to be no need to dredge to -35 MLLW.

Demirbilek and Sargent (1999) report the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) guidance for design vessels for channels state the following: *For deep-draft projects, the design ship or ships is/are selected on the basis of economic studies of the types and sizes of the ship fleet expected to use the proposed channel over the project life. The design ship is chosen as the maximum or near maximum size ship in the forecasted fleet (USACE 1984, 1995, 1999).* Channel depth is typically chosen on the basis of economic optimization to meet the present need and, if possible, anticipated traffic requirements (Demirbilek and Sargent, 1999).

p. 2-10 and 2-11, section 2.1.5.2

If the facility should have all-season road access and must be capable of accommodating heavy truck traffic the proposed road for the preferred alternative which include one lane segments, steep grades up to 9% and may experience temporary closures due to avalanches more

information is required to explain how this alternative remains practicable. A comparison of potential delays, both from avalanches and from low tides, from each of the alternatives would be helpful in evaluating the alternatives.

What is the rationale for not dismissing a potential alternative on the basis of potential for road closures due to avalanches? The FEIS indicates road closure durations of 72 hours due to avalanches could occur under Alternative 4. Alternatively, if one of the other alternatives were selected, even without the need for dredging, the deep draft design vessels would only have to wait a maximum of 6 hours for high tides.

p. 2-11, 2.1.7

The Final EIS states “the proposed new staging area may not be used to store all of the equipment currently pre-positioned in Cordova.” If there is no commitment to consolidating this equipment, then BIA should consider minimizing the staging area footprint by 1.5 acres to reduce potential impacts.

p. 2-12, section 2.2.2

Additional site information (water depth and size of area) regarding the potential for beneficial use of dredged material at Two Moon Bay to cap anaerobic bark deposits is needed to fully evaluate the practicability of the dredging alternatives.

p. 2-20, section 2.2.5:

The rationale for selection of the preferred alternative (4A) claims that the MOA and Consent Decree require an all-tide access oil spill response facility. The Consent Decree does not require “all-tide access” it only identifies \$ 6 million for “construction of a road from Cordova to Shepard Point and when appropriate, for work related to the construction of a response storage facility and the pre-positioning of oil spill response equipment at that location...”. The rationale avoids stating for what vessel draft all-tide access is required by these agreements. It could be construed that a 35’ draft is required, then none of the alternatives would meet this need; alternatively, it can be met by the current situation with all-tide access for the bulk of the response fleet, fishing vessels. Again, this rationale contradicts other parts of the EIS and the project purpose remains muddled in various terms, definitions, and conflicting information.

The rationale states that construction and operation of a facility at Shepard Point would avoid adverse impacts associated with the other alternatives, however section 4.0 Environmental Consequences fails to identify any such significant adverse impacts from the other alternatives.

p. 2-22, section 2.2.5.3

Discusses acreages for impacts from tideland fill and the crossing Unnamed Creek and Humpback Creek but does not identify impacts for other stream crossings including intermittent and/or ephemeral streams that are waters of the U.S.

p. 2-23 & 2-24, section 2.2.5.6

See comments above for p. 2-10, section 2.1.5.2 regarding practicability of road.

p. 2-27, section 2.2.7.3

Additional information regarding site conditions at the proposed Observation Island disposal site and Two Moon Bay is required to make a more informed decision on the alternatives.

p. 2-27 & 2-28, section 2.2.7.3.1

This section dismisses nearshore containment fills as not a practicable alternative due to cost of constructing containment fill, concern over the seismic stability, and probable permitting difficulties. How much is the cost compared to other disposal alternatives? The use of dredged material for containment fills such as the Cordova boat harbor and the North Containment Fill Dock have been successfully constructed for docking, parking and staging areas despite potential seismic risks. The PND discussion provided states “such risks must therefore be understood when dredged material is being considered for fill.” Has there been any risk assessment done on this alternative?

3.0 Affected Environment

General Comments: Over half (44 pages) of this chapter is on the Social and Economic Environment, indicating that societal and economic impacts of the proposed project are very important.

p. 3-17, 3-18, section 3.1.4.3

Indicates four cultural resource investigations have been undertaken within the APE. Does not say how APE was determined. Based on descriptions in these sections, investigations appear somewhat cursory and geographically incomplete.

p. 3-18, section 3.1.4.3.1

States that an aerial survey of the Inland Road Option “resulted in judgment” that the area had low site sensitivity for archaeological resources. Does not state who conducted survey, who made judgment, or cite reference.

p. 3-35, section 3.1.5.4.3

A description of the type of capital development project should be included for each project in Table 3.1-11. Dollar figures alone are not sufficient. This would be useful in the cumulative impact assessment.

p. 3-43, section 3.1.10

The discussion of existing oil spill response capability would be more credible if results of previous tests of the system mentioned in Chapter 1 were presented in detail here. This section appears to just be a restatement of the purpose and need.

p. 3-44, section 3.1.10.2

With regard to using multiple areas for storage and staging paragraph 2 states the use of multiple areas potentially creates inefficiencies and logistics when trying to maintain inventory of equipment. This is contrary to recommendation by the USCG that staging equipment in multiple places provides greater opportunity to respond quickly (section 2.1.7)

p. 3-51, section 3.2.2.2.1

Reference to 31 streams within the project area has been changed to discuss the three formally named streams, and mentions "several" streams along the project area.

p. 3-56, section 3.2.5

States two streams flow to Orca Inlet between Orca and Shepard Point. Next paragraph says there are a number of small streams in the project area. These two statements are contradictory.

p. 3-62, section 3.3.1.1

Upland should be defined in this section. It apparently refers to terrestrial, since it includes a discussion of estuarine salt marsh and small emergent bogs, which are wetland communities.

p. 3-63-64, section 3.3.2

Refers to four main drainages and at least 10 smaller drainages. This is inconsistent with 3.2.2.2.1 and 3.3.5.2.3.

p. 3-65, section 3.3.3.2.1

If the accuracy of the eelgrass survey by Scheel et al. (1998) is unknown, ground truth surveys of eelgrass resources within the project area should be conducted. Mapping of the eelgrass resources will be required prior to submittal of the Corps permit application.

p. 3-67, section 3.3.3.2.2

There is no description of the location or extent of kelp beds in the project area. A discussion of functions and values is not sufficient.

p. 3-71, section 3.3.5

Field verification of the wetlands in Road Option 1 and Road Option 3 still needs to be completed.

p. 3-72, section 3.3.5.1.2

This section would seem to fit better in the cumulative impact analysis.

4.0 Environmental Consequences

p. 4-1 thru 4-7, Tables 4.1-1 thru Table 4.1-4

Paragraph 2 of section 4.1 states the analysts use regulatory criteria to rank the effects of each alternative. This implies the rankings and tables are based on regulation which they are not. The criteria have no regulatory or scientific basis.

The method of assessment of significance is problematic for Tables 4.1-1 thru 4.1-4 given that an effect may involve criteria at different impact levels across four factors (magnitude, extent, duration, and likelihood) and then requires extrapolation of an overall impact level value. Since the four factors are not necessarily of equal weight summing the factors and averaging the impact levels for the four factors is not applicable. Assigning the overall impact level for a particular effect allows substantial room for subjectivity among reviewers. It is assumed that an overall

impact level of major results in a significant impact. Readers will invariably arrive at different conclusions because the EIS does not define or establish a threshold for significance. The rationale for how the authors have arrived at the overall impact level and significance for each of the effects reviewed under Section 4.0 is most often not explained.

The tables do not define region or project area or provide the rationale for their selection under magnitude/extent for a type of effect such as visual resources, recreation, and subsistence. It seems there can be a substantial permanent direct impact that affects the project area but would not be considered a major impact because the impacts are diluted across a region or the state.

p. 4-7, section 4.2.1.1

There is no change in land ownership under Alternative 1 and therefore no effects. The sentence regarding moderate but insignificant impacts resulting from no improvement in oil spill response or protection of lands has no bearing on land ownership and does not belong in this section. Additionally, since there is no increase or decrease in response capabilities under Alternative 1 the impact on protection of lands would not result in a moderate impact based on Table 4.1-1.

p. 4-9, section 4.2.1.8

What is the statement “that because a dedicated dock and additional staging area would not be provided, the time needed to load vessels and reach a spill could be longer than necessary” based on?. The current spill response plans and exercises have already demonstrated meeting the mandatory statutory requirements (see 1.5.2 and 1.5.4.3.3). “longer than necessary” is not defined and there is no comparison of the response times for each alternative.

p. 4-13, section 4.2.3.6.2

The statement that a lack of a dedicated response facility could increase the response time therefore increase the area and species affected in the event of a spill is misleading. The lack of a dedicated response facility (alternative 1, no action) will not increase the existing response time it will simply not provide for a decrease (improvement) in the existing response time capability. Note that the location of the preferred alternative will contribute to an increase in response times (greater distance) for Tier I and II response vessels.

p. 4-16, section 4.3.1.5

The Environmental Consequences section for Socioeconomic Resources for Alternatives 2, 3, 4, and 5 in the EIS reports that the NVE and City of Cordova may jointly establish a Port Authority. The establishment of a Port Authority and a deepwater port facility clearly opens economic development potential for the Cordova community and implies the proposed facility will be a multi-purpose. Economic development and a multi-purpose port facility should be identified in the purpose and need and the impacts disclosed and analyzed.

p. 4-17, section 4.3.1.5

The employment costs reported under employment and wages bullet (\$94,000 - \$188,000) differs from the operation costs reported in Table 4.3-1 (\$47,000 - \$188,000).

p. 4-21, section 4.3.1.8.2

If the extra 0.5 acre for the staging area in Alternative 2 does not provide a quantifiable additional benefit then why is it part of the plan? Reducing the staging area by 0.5 acre would reduce eelgrass impacts as well as reduce project costs. Explain why the existing conditions at Alternative 2 staging area preclude reducing the fill area in size by 0.5 acre.

p. 4-24, section 4.3.2.2.2

The amount of fill required for construction of Alternative 2A (250,000 cy) and Alternative 2B (100,000 cy) are different (200,000 cy and 70,000 cy) than reported in Table 4.3-5.

p. 4-28, Table 4.3-4

The Corps disagrees with footnote 3 regarding marine substrates that are bare and mud as non-biologically important. While these substrates do not have as high a biological function as eelgrass or kelp beds, nevertheless, these substrates do have biological importance as they are used by marine organisms including EFH species and their prey.

p. 4-28, section 4.3.3.3

There is no explanation as to why the conceptual design of the pile supported dock needs to be configured to impact more eelgrass than the fill dock. The pile supported dock can be moved to deeper water and the staging area fill re-oriented similar to the fill dock to reduce the eelgrass impacts.

p. 4-30, section 4.3.3.3

Paragraph 2 indicates that the impacts of Alternative 2A and 2B on eelgrass habitat could minor and moderate respectively, in magnitude and therefore would be considered insignificant. Using Table 4.1-4 (Direct loss of unique or special status habitat and Reduction in habitat function or value) to assess the impact levels the magnitude would be moderate (affects 25% - 10% of local habitat/loss of functions and moderate habitat), extent would be moderate (loss in specific locations/affects habitat in part of region); duration would be major (long term/permanent), and the likelihood would also be major (likely). It is not clear how BIA arrives at a minor impact assessment for 2A and moderate insignificant assessment for 2B. Applying the logic presented in 4.1.1 that as the severity of consequences increase, the level of likelihood needed to reach significance level decreases leads the reviewer to a different conclusion (than BIA).

p. 4-30, section 4.3.3.3

No explanation is given as to why the current conceptual design does not extended Ocean Dock beyond the existing dock alignment to a depth of -32 MLLW to avoid the need for dredging at the dock.

p. 4-34, section 4.3.3.6.2

States that eelgrass impacts under Alternative 2B could be moderate but they are not significant from a regional perspective within PWS. The significance of eelgrass impacts for **all alternatives** should be determined within the defined geographic project area (not the PWS region) the same way rocky intertidal habitat is evaluated. Section 4.8.1.1 (p. 4-105) identifies the cumulative effects assessment is defined within the geographic area of Orca Inlet from Cordova to Shepard Point while section 4.5.5.3 (p-76) references acres of habitat between

Cordova and the head of Nelson Bay as the geographic area. The geographic areas used for comparing project impacts must be defined and used consistently throughout the document so that a meaningful comparison of the alternatives can be made.

p. 4-35, section 4.3.3.6.2

The last paragraph states that major and significant impact to eelgrass habitat from Alternative 2B would occur contrary to statements on Page 4-30 (section 4.3.3.3) describing eelgrass impacts would be moderate and insignificant. The EIS does not present the rationale of how significance was determined for eelgrass.

p. 4-51, Table 4.4-1

The values reported for the Orca alternative do not match the loss of 2.3 acres of forest and a small amount of tall shrub alder reported in section 4.6.3.1.

p. 4-54, section 4.5.1.2

The EIS states that if the dock at Shepard Point provides major economic expansion, subdivision development might be possible in five to ten years and determines that while beneficial, these affects are not significant. There is no rationale for this determination of not significant. Major economic expansion would be significant. Major economic expansion is reasonably foreseeable as the NVE plans to form a Port Authority to operate the proposed facility at Shepard Point (see 4.5.1.5). The establishment of a Port Authority and a deepwater port facility at Shepard Point opens the potential for major economic development for the Cordova community and implies the proposed facility will be multi-purpose. Economic development and a multi-purpose port facility should have been identified in the purpose and need and the impacts disclosed and analyzed in the EIS.

p. 4-55, 4.5.1.2

Discussion of the impacts to recreational users and visitors at the Orca Cannery Lodge indicates that impacts from construction and operation of Alternatives 4A and 4B would be short-term and insignificant. There are the potential additional adverse impacts to recreational users and visitors at the Orca Cannery Lodge from other non-oil spill uses of the facility that need to be identified. Also the EIS states that the visual impact of the road and increased use from pedestrians and vehicle traffic along this shoreline will affect and alter the recreational experience of guided visitors. In addition to visual impacts, alternative 4 will also adversely impact recreational experience of both guided and non-guided visitors. The rationale for determining the impact to recreational experience is insignificant because the development is an extension of an existing road (into a currently undeveloped roadless area) is presumptuous and does not appear to be derived from any information on visitor use or analysis.

p. 4-59, section 4.5.1.6

The subtidal and intertidal habitat lost is reported as 16.5 to 26.0 acres depending on the alignment selected. This is different than the values reported in Tables 4.3-4 and 4.3-5.

p. 4-63, section 4.5.1.8.3

Using the overall rate of oil spills from vessels world wide (0.004%) to rationalize the low probability for a major spill occurrence when the road is blocked during an avalanche to dismiss

the impact of avalanche as minor and insignificant is inappropriate and does not follow the method of impact analysis described in 4.1 and 4.1.1. None of the other impacts analyzed in the EIS was analyzed using this logic of low probability of a spill. Using this rationale then, the low probability cited for a spill would make the entire project unnecessary as there is already a demonstrated and capable response system in place. Referring to section 4.1.1; as the severity of the consequences increase, the level of likelihood needed to reach the significance level decreases, thus avalanche impacts appear to be major and significant.

p. 4-64, section 4.5.1.8.3

Neither the MOA nor Consent Decree actually speaks to improving the contribution of deep-draft vessels responding to a spill contrary to the statement in this section of the EIS. If the "intent" (as stated in the EIS) of the MOA and Consent Decree is to improve the contribution of deep-draft spill response vessels then with regard to alternative 4, the intent of the MOA and Consent Decree is also to adversely impact the contribution of Tier 1 and 2 response vessels. Is the intention to improve the contribution of deep draft response vessels that may call on Cordova at the expense of the current fleet of Tier I and II vessels already in Cordova? The Draft EIS referred to the 1993 PWS Regional Advisory Committee Study findings of sufficient numbers of vessels available to respond and transport equipment however to account for the possibility that larger vessels could be used to transport some equipment it assumes that only one large vessel may need to call on Cordova each day during a SONS.

P. 4-64, section 4.5.1.8.3

No explanation or rationale is given as to how the disparate impacts of location of Alternative 4 on fishing vessels and deep-draft response vessels are combined to conclude the overall consequence for spill response in Cordova is beneficial at minor to moderate magnitude and insignificant.

p. 4-66, section 4.5.2.1

The discussion in the first paragraph dismissing avalanche impacts on road closure as insignificant due to the low likelihood of co-occurrence with an oil spill is not appropriate (see above comments).

p. 4-71, section 4.5.3.2

The first paragraph states that Road Option 3 has decreased tideland fill by about 9.5 acres and 118,000 cy from the Preliminary Alignment. This is less of a reduction than the 15.1 acres and 190,000 cy reported on page 7 of the Executive Summary.

p. 4-71, 4.5.3.3

The last paragraph on the page indicates the minimum acres of marine fill for Road Option 3 and a pile supported dock is 12.3. This value is different than what is reported on Tables 4.5-1 and 4.5-2, which indicates 11.0 acres of marine fill is required for the Road Option 3 and a pile supported dock.

p. 4-73, 4.5.3.3

The second paragraph states the direct and indirect effects of Alternatives 4A and 4B as a result of road construction are moderate and insignificant for intertidal habitats (rocky shoreline?) and

eelgrass habitat. No explanation is provided of how the magnitude, extent, duration, and likelihood were evaluated and how the overall rating of insignificant was determined. It must be recognized that the eelgrass habitat impacts represents only a minimum estimate based on the limitations of the original eelgrass survey (section 3.3.3.2.1) and in reality are likely to be higher. Using the methodology described in 4.1 and 4.1.1 the loss of a minimum of 1.7 to 8.9 acres of eelgrass and 3.7 to 5.3 miles of rocky intertidal shoreline appear to be major and significant.

p. 4-74, section 4.5.3.5

The EIS indicates that construction of 40 – 80 new recreational cabins by 2025 could adversely affect wetlands and/or other waters of the U.S. within the project area but such developments are speculative and difficult to reliably quantify. If it is this development is speculative then what is the 40 – 80 cabins (2 – 4 /year) by 2025 based on? If development of recreational cabins is reasonably foreseeable, then it is not speculative and the impacts to wetlands and waters of the U.S. would not be so difficult to reliably quantify.

p. 4-85, section 4.5.3.7.3

The assessment of impacts on river otters identifies long-term adverse effects from the road for Alternative 4 but states the impact is insignificant given the abundance of alternative beach habitat available in Orca Inlet. What analysis was done to determine how much alternative beach habitat is available to river otters within the project area (Orca Inlet) to determine the impact is therefore insignificant?

p. 4-92, section 4.6.1.8.3

Second paragraph below bullet references Fleming Point Dock. This should refer to Orca Dock.

p. 4-99, 4.6.3.7

Discussion refers to Alternative 5 as causing the loss of about 0.1 acre of upland forest and shrub habitat contrary to section 4.6.3.1 which refers to a loss of 2.3 acres of forest habitat and a small amount of shrub as a result of excavation for fill material and road re-alignment.

4.8 Cumulative Impacts

Note: The threshold for significance is even less clear in this document than it was in the PFEIS. Substitution of Table 4.1-5 with section 4.1.1 did not improve this discussion. Also the change was not carried through the document (see sections 4.8.1 and 4.8.3.1.3 for examples). There is no clear explanation of how cumulative effects are evaluated, what the significance thresholds are, and how they were determined.

p. 4-105, section 4.8.1.1

Need to clearly define and distinguish project area, region and geographic area. There is a confusion of terms throughout the document.

pp. 4-108-109, section 8.2.2

There is no discussion of larger spill response vessels as reasonably foreseeable in the paragraph on oil spill response. The paragraphs on tidelands development, sport hunting and fishing,

recreational boating, camping and cabin facilities, trails, and other commercial activities do not include any discussion of future development.

p. 4-110, section 4.8.3.1.2, par 1

There is a reference in this paragraph to the potential conflicts between oil spill response and expansion of commercial fishing activities in the harbor, such as fish meal production. Has fish meal production been discussed as a potential future activity? It does not appear to be mentioned elsewhere in the FEIS.

p. 4-110, section 4.8.3.1.2, par 5

This is one of several references to the beneficial impacts on oil spill response efficiency, and indirectly other resources or activities (subsistence in this case). What quantitative evaluation has been done to assess the potential increase in efficiency, and how it relates to impacts on the affected environment?

p. 4-111, section 4.8.3.1.2, par 1

Again, what data or analysis supports this statement?

p. 4-111, section 4.8.3.1.2, par 4 and 5

Both paragraphs refer to the addition of a new dock facility that could be used for marine commercial and industrial uses. Paragraph 5 also discusses the facilitation of residential development, but states that neither of these impacts are reasonably foreseeable. It then goes on to estimate development of 2-4 cabins/year (no reference given). These statements all appear to be logically inconsistent. References to the impacts of increased residential development are also mentioned in sections 4.8.3.1.3, 4.8.3.2.1, 4.8.3.2.6, and 4.8.3.3.1.

p. 4-113, section 4.8.3.1.4, par 2

There is an extra word "from" in line 9, and an extra word "are" in line 18. Again, the phrase "threshold of a significant impact" is used, with no definition of what that threshold is.

p. 4-113, section 4.8.3.1.4, par 3

Why is there a low probability of a major oil spill event during a period of road closure caused by an avalanche? What data was used to reach this conclusion?

p. 4-113, section 4.8.3.1.4, par 5

The first sentence in this paragraph is unclear. How can the direct effects of the four build alternatives be taken together with past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions significantly improve oil spill response capabilities? Presumably no more than one of the build alternatives would actually be constructed. This paragraph also states no new enhancements, except the proposed project, are reasonably foreseeable. Does this include the use of more deep-draft vessels? If so, what is the purpose of the project?

p. 4-114, section 4.8.3.1.6,

How was the \$600,000 figure derived? Reference should be cited. How are the impacts described in this section tied to action alternatives?

p. 4-115, section 4.8.3.1.7, par 2

Where is the data used to substantiate this analysis? Again, what is the threshold for significance?

p. 4-116, section 4.8.3.2.1, top of page

Table 4.2-1 should be Table 4.1-2.

p. 4-116, section 4.8.3.2.2

In this section, cumulative impacts appear to be analyzed with respect to Orca Inlet. No rationale is provided for the area of analysis.

p. 4-116-117, section 4.8.3.2.2, par 2

It's not clear why this data is included, since the proposed project is not intended to change ferry traffic. Again, this section does not seem to address the impacts of the alternatives.

p. 4-117, section 4.8.3.2.4

There are no data provided to substantiate the conclusions that none of the alternatives would affect flow patterns or sedimentation in Orca Inlet, or that impacts on the nearshore marine environment would be minor.

p. 4-119, section 4.8.3.3.1

Once again, the estimate of 2-4 cabins/year is mentioned, with projection of 40-80 by 2025, but characterized as speculative and difficult to quantify. What is the source of this estimate?

p. 4-119, section 4.8.3.3.2

Impacts need to be better analyzed. It is not sufficient to state that "There may be effects that are both indirect and cumulative that result from these actions... However, it is unlikely that the effects would be of sufficient magnitude to reduce reproduction over a wide area and cause population-level impacts." Apparently the threshold of significance for this resource is a change in the population. Again, this should be clearly stated.

p. 4-119, section 4.8.3.3.3

There are references here to both geographic area and region, but these areas are not defined. Preparation of a mitigation plan is mentioned, but no specific mitigating measures are proposed.

p. 4-120, section 4.8.3.3.3

States that there may be a significant decline in marine species as an indirect impact, but that it is impossible to predict. Why?

p. 4-120, section 4.8.3.3.5, par 2

Geographic area in this paragraph is defined as the head of Nelson Bay to Cordova. Cumulative impacts in Table 4.8-1 are apparently described as a percentage of the specific Cowardin class affected in this area by past/present and reasonably foreseeable events. The last sentence in this paragraph states that impacts from estuarine and subtidal fill range from 0.1-1.0 acres for Alternatives 2, 3 and 5, but the table shows a range of 1.4-5.2 acres for this category. This

sentence also states that cumulative impacts of subtidal fill in this geographic area are unable to be determined, but does not explain why.

p. 4-120-122, Table 4.8-1

Why are Cowardin Class categories different for different alternatives (e.g. no wetlands category for Alternatives 4A, Road Option 2 and 4B, Road Option 1, category order changed for Alternative 4A, Road Option 3)? Why is project fill for estuarine intertidal and subtidal combined together? Why isn't dredging included in this table? Fill for Alternative 4A, Road Option 2, or for Alternative 4B, Road Options 1 and 2, is not consistent with Table 2-7, p. 2-13.

p. 4-122, section 4.8.3.3.5, par 1

Discussion separates estuarine emergent impacts, but table combines these with subtidal. Again, what is the threshold for significance?

p. 4-122, section 4.8.3.3.5, par 2

States that cumulative impacts to shallow subtidal habitats are unknown. Why?

p. 4-122-123, section 4.8.3.3.6

States that indirect and cumulative impacts are described in section 4.5.3.3. This section does not describe cumulative impacts. The impacts to eelgrass habitat from Alternative 2B are characterized as a significant adverse cumulative impact, However the impacts of Alternatives 4A and 4B are characterized as "not significant from a regional perspective within the geographic area", even though the road would "contribute even more to the cumulative disturbance of marine and freshwater anadromous habitats." This seems contradictory.

5.0 Mitigation

5.1, number 7: ensure any grass seed does not include invasive species such as reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*).

5.2, number 8 (also 5.5 no. 5) : identify specific locations and techniques proposed. Note that this section is labeled Wetlands, and this condition is specific to waters of the U.S.

5.2, number 9 (also 5.4 no. 4 and 5.5 no. 4): identify areas of proposed vegetated buffers.

5.2, number 14: provide a functional assessment of proposed impact areas, for use in determining appropriate mitigation to offset functions that would be lost.

Table 5.2-1: The Corps disagrees that bare intertidal substrate is not considered biologically important (reference Table 4.3-4 footnote 3). Mitigation would be required to offset impacts to these marine waters of the U.S., in addition to those reflected on Table 5.2-1.

A field-verified wetland delineation needs to be performed for Road Options 1 and 3, and mitigation proposals adjusted accordingly.

Figures

Figure 2-1

Elevation +15.7 MLLW is the high tide line for Cordova not the extreme high tide as labeled on the figure.

Navigation Channel Dredging Study Comments (Appendix R)

p. 1-2, section 1.1

The BIA decision to not utilize an economic optimization approach to design the channel and port facilities, has likely eliminated alternatives that would otherwise be practicable (shallower channel) and unnecessarily increased costs and environmental impacts associated with dredging for Alternatives 2, 3, and 5.

Why was the summary of recommendations from the response planners previously found in Appendix R of the Draft EIS and Preliminary Final EIS deleted in the Final EIS? This information is critical in evaluating the need for the proposed project. With the exception of the NVE, the response planners recommended:

- no pressing need to bring larger vessels into Cordova
- some delays acceptable for larger vessels since the max delay would be up to six hours
- channel does not need to accommodate absolutely every vessel at all times
- tide delay for the largest vessels is acceptable

Why was reference to the 1993 PWS Regional Advisory Committee study assumption that only one large vessel may need to call on Cordova during a SONS removed from Appendix R of the Final EIS?

p. 2-1, section 2.0

For a good comparison of the options with and without dredging, access to the various sites for the selected design draft and the existing vessels should be compared with occurrence of actual water levels. This needs a graph showing the percentage of time various water depths are available at the Eastern Channel, therefore the percentage of time vessels of various drafts are delayed waiting for an adequate tide. Since the lowest low tides, which are what cause the delays, occur on the same tide cycles as the highest high tides, the delays should exist for no more than about 6 hours. Then show the same information with dredging. This provides the decision-maker with real information about the delays that currently occur, and the advantages of using the Shepard Point location or dredging, and how much dredging would be needed. This would also show why the alternative is being considered; otherwise it makes as much sense to consider dredging to 100' or expanding the airport to accommodate 747s as there is no connection to the project purpose.

p. 2-2, section 2.2

The design vessel draft and channel depth criteria referenced in Section 2.1.4 need additional explanation. Why use the -5 ft MLLW for design when there are no predicted tides that low in

the next 50 years. If a ship is going through a tight area, do they typically run at moderate speed and have 3' of squat? Show some rationale for these design depths that is based on real water depths and vessel transit conditions (squat vs. speed in Orca Inlet).

p. 2-3, section 2.4

Eastern channel is stated not to need maintenance dredging because of its alignment. What is this based on? Is there another site or situation where this has proven to be true? Otherwise, wouldn't it be assumed that material is dropped and/or moved around to that location because of currents and tides, and that the existing depth is an equilibrium condition to which it will tend to return over time?

p. 2-5, section 2.5.1

See comments above for Section 2.2.7.3.1.

p. 4-4, section 4.2.3.1

The discussion indicates that while no data are available on sediment composition at the dredging or disposal sites the majority of the sediments are expected to be coarse sand with a small fraction of finer sediments. This is contrary to what is reported in section 4.2.3.2 which reports that the 1979 dive surveys at the disposal site observed sediments ranging from loose sand-silt to compact sand. Section 3.4.1 reported that previous dive surveys near Shepard Point and Orca Cannery are considered representative of the northern and southern boundaries of the dredged area and sediments observed were silt and gravel.

p. 4-1, Tables 11 and 12

See comments above regarding 4.0 Environmental Consequences p. 4-1 thru 4-7, Tables 4.1-1 thru Table 4.1-4.

p. 4-1, sections 4.1, 4.1.1 and Table 12

See comments above on assessment of significance for p. 4-1 thru 4-7 and Tables 4.1-1 thru 4.1-4

Response to Comments (Appendix S)

p. 10

ALT22: The response indicates a pile supported dock for the BIA preferred alternative is not practicable. The FEIS clearly demonstrates it is practicable. Table 2-7 (p. 2-15) indicates this alternative is practicable.

p. 11

ALT24 and ALT27: The response indicates the terms of the Consent Decree and MOA identify a deepwater oil spill response facility with road access to Cordova as a needed improvement in oil spill response capabilities and further references the need to have all-tide 24-hour access for response vessels in order to fulfill the terms of the Consent Decree and MOA. This response is not accurate. The Consent Decree only makes reference to the facilities as intended to enhance capability to respond [9(a)] and makes no mention of needed improvements in oil spill response.

Appendix B of the Consent Decree makes reference to an existing proposal to construct a deepwater port at Shepard Point and makes no reference to a deepwater port dedicated for spill response as identified in the FEIS project purpose. Appendix B states that it would be useful to have the option of utilizing Cordova for staging response efforts and also recognizes the benefits of the deepwater port and road for lightering tourists into Cordova from tour vessels. The terms of the Consent Decree do not mention any need to have all-tide 24-hour access. Section 9(c) of the Consent Decree identifies the projects as subject to state and federal permitting requirements that have yet to be resolved and contains provisions for the funding if the state is unable to obtain appropriate permits.

The MOA makes no mention of needed improvements in oil spill response and identifies the purpose as development of a deepwater port and oil spill response equipment storage facility with an access road to Cordova. The MOA makes no mention of the deepwater port dedicated to oil spill response as the FEIS purpose indicates. The MOA makes no mention of all-tide 24-hour access however it does identify the minimum requirements as -35 MLLW at the dock face and "clear channel" to PWS to -35 MLLW.

p. 19

ECN10: The response indicates that there are other important factors to consider other than cost. The FEIS indicates Alternative 3 does meet the project purpose and need, is the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative, and is also the least costly.

p. 22

ECN27: see comments on response to ALT24 and ALT27.

p. 56

PDCO1: see comments on response to ALT24 and ALT27.

p. 59

PER01: The response indicates additional information was added to the Corps Section 10/404 permit application to better define the project and demonstrate that it is the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative. To date the BIA has not formally submitted an application to the Corps for a permit decision. The Corps has only reviewed a draft application and has no application from the BIA with the referenced additional information.

p. 59

PER02: The response fails to recognize that the Corps regulations describing the public interest review clearly prohibits authorizing a permit if the discharge of fill would not comply with the Environmental Protection Agency's 404(b)(1) guidelines even where the Corps could find the activity is not contrary to the public interest [33 CFR 320.4(a)(1)].

p. 59

PER03: The response states "the Corps follows the 404(b)(1) guidelines which suggest that for impacts to special aquatic sites, a permit can only be issued for the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative." The response misinterprets the application of the 404(b)(1) guidelines which do not suggest but require that no discharge of dredged or fill material shall be

permitted in any waters of the U.S. if there is a practicable alternative. The requirements of the 404(b)(1) guidelines to permit only the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative are not limited to special aquatic sites.

p. 60-64

PNN: see comments to ALT 24 and ALT 27 above.

p. 73

WET06: The response incorrectly states the area of wetlands affected by Alternative 4 to be <0.3 acre. The FEIS indicates the impacts to wetlands for Alternative 4 to be between 0.3 and 1.6 acres depending on the road alignment. The total acres of waters of the U.S. including wetlands ranges between 12.6 and 28.5 acres depending on the road alignment (Table ES-1, 4.5-1, and 4.5-2)

References

Demirbilek, Z., and Sargent, F. (1999). "Deep-draft coastal navigation entrance channel practice," Coastal Engineering Technical Note CETN I-63, U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center, Vicksburg, MS.

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USACE. (1999). "Coastal Engineering Manual, Part 5, Chapter 5," Washington DC (draft, in review).



August 12, 2015

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RE: FMATS' Comments on the 2016 – 2019 STIP

Dear Mr. Vigue:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the new 2016 – 2019 STIP. Below are the comments from the Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System (FMATS) Policy Committee, approved on August 12, 2015. Generally, FMATS is concerned with the amount of Illustrative project phases in the STIP. Almost all of the Fairbanks metropolitan area projects are Illustrative for future funding except for the Steese/Johansen Interchange, 3rd Street Widening project (22441) and the Aurora Drive – Noyes Slough Bridge (26076). For those, we are thankful, but it seems like there is little chance for any of these Fairbanks area projects to be funded in the short-term. The Northern Region is seeing as little as 15% of NHPP funds in one year of the STIP even though they are responsible for 70% of the NHS lane miles and 60% of the state maintained highways. In all four years of the STIP, the Northern Region is receiving 28% of the NHPP funds. It seems that deferring projects on the majority of the NHS routes in the state is a risky position. FMATS requests that the distribution of funds be more evenly distributed to tackle the needs of every region of the state.

As stated in the introduction to the STIP, if a project is selected from the Illustrative list to move ahead, it must receive formal approval action from the FHWA or FTA before work can proceed. How does the DOT&PF decide which Illustrative project should move forward? We list the Illustrative projects of concern below.

Further, and of great concern, are two projects, Need IDs 25596 and 26080, that are in the currently approved 2012 – 2015 STIP Amendment 15 that were to be started this fiscal year and were rejected when they arrived in Juneau. The preliminary engineering phase for each project is programmed in FFY15 in the approved STIP. These should be started this fiscal year and the new STIP that we are commenting on does not address FFY15. Therefore, the state is arbitrarily and significantly impacting the project initiation date of these projects without a proper amendment to FFY15 and without a transparent public process. These projects, while not within the FMATS boundary, are important projects in the area transportation network and

FMATS concern is the lack of public process in making these significant changes to the approved STIP. Is this setting a new precedent whereby the state may make changes to the approved plan without following the proper amendment process? An amendment is required, by 23 CFR 450.104, when there is a “major change to a project included in a metropolitan transportation plan, TIP, or STIP, including the addition or deletion of a project or a major change in project cost, project/project phase initiation dates...” Amendments require public review and comment. Modifying the project initiation date in a future STIP after rejecting a project start this year without public comment appears misaligned with the regulation.

Additionally, the two projects referenced above were high enough in score to be initiated in the STIP in FFY15. Are other lower scoring projects being funded in FFY15 – FFY18? One cannot tell as project scores are not shown in the draft STIP.

FMATS also has the following comments on the draft STIP:

1. STP project scores should be shown in the STIP for clarity.
2. Need ID 3821, University Avenue Widening: This is a former FMATS project. The utility phase is being funded in FFY16 but the construction phase for Segment I, under Need ID 29655, is shown as Illustrative in FFY18, as is Segment II, Need ID 29656. These are very important Fairbanks area project, especially considering the safety issues at the intersection with the Johansen Expressway, the most dangerous intersection in Fairbanks, as well as the crash history at Airport Way. The bridge over the Chena River is also deficient and very dangerous to cross on foot or on a bicycle. Why is the GO Bond funding not shown in the STIP on Segment I? It seems that there would be significant funding remaining to bring this project to construction in FFY18 with a smaller share of NHPP funds.
3. Need ID 3843. Airport Way/South Cushman Intersection Reconstruction: This project was a long standing Northern Region project that was closed, re-scoped and opened again in February 2015. FMATS is concerned in that this project is now Illustrative in the STIP. This is the last link along Cushman Street that requires construction south of the Chena River. FMATS has already funded and constructed four projects on Cushman Street/Illinois Street and the State GO Bonds have funded the new Helmericks Avenue link all the way to the Old Steese Highway. This project links all of these efforts and is the pinch point. This is a very important project for congestion reduction and safety. This intersection is the fifth highest in the metropolitan area for crash frequency. The crash rate at this intersection, 1.94, is above the statewide crash rate of 1.47 for similar intersections and it exceeds the critical crash rate as well. There was also a fatality at this intersection in 2011. FMATS would appreciate actual funding be placed on this project for all phases.
4. Need ID 15685, Airport Way (West) Improvements: FMATS sees that the construction funding is identified in FFY17 but it is Illustrative. This is of great concern in that the Fairbanks North Star Borough just recently passed a resolution in support of a land transfer for excess property obtained by the project. There has been ongoing and extensive interagency cooperation regarding this project for several years. This is an important project for the revitalization of Airport Way, the main gateway to the City of Fairbanks and the Fairbanks North Star Borough. FMATS respectfully requests that the community efforts regarding this project be recognized by funding this project for construction.

5. Need ID 30150, Steese Highway MP 4.5 (CHSR) Off-Ramp Bypass Lane: Thank you for including this project start in the STIP to complement the HSIP project in that location.
6. Need ID 2130, Richardson Highway MP 353 – 357 Access/Safety Improvements: Thank you for including this funding for construction in FFY17. This is a very important safety project. FMATS was hoping that the adjoining project, Need ID 30069, from MP 353 – 350, would be initiated in this STIP. It does not even appear as an Illustrative project.
7. Need ID 24518, Elliott Highway MP 0 – 12 Rehabilitation: This project is shown as Illustrative and for this, we are concerned as this is the primary freight route to the North Slope and the only access for Haystack and other Murphy Dome subdivisions. FMATS asks that this project be funded.
8. Need ID 25596, Rosie Creek Road Improvements: This is one of the projects that is supposed to start this fiscal year. FMATS respectfully requests that the DOT&PF abide by the current approved STIP and honor this project start. Many people have spent a great deal of time and effort in initiating this project and funding the non-federal share. Match agreements are in place and unless this action is “beyond your control” these project starts should be honored, as stated above. That being said, significantly changing the project initiation date without a public process is an extremely questionable practice, given the regulations.
9. Need ID 25598, Richardson Highway MP 356 – 362 Bicycle/Pedestrian Path: This is an extremely important connectivity project for the Fairbanks and North Pole area and FMATS is glad to see this project moving forward to construction next year.
10. Need ID 26076, Aurora Drive – Noyes Slough Bridge Rehabilitation or Replacement: FMATS is pleased to see this structurally deficient bridge is in the STIP for design. There is an error in how the match and federal share are distributed in the draft STIP and FMATS believes the state would be responsible for the non-federal share as they own Aurora Drive.
11. Need ID 26080, Gold Mine Trail Upgrade: This is one of the projects that is supposed to start this fiscal year. FMATS respectfully requests that the DOT&PF abide by the current approved STIP and honor this project start. Many people have spent a great deal of time and effort in initiating this project and funding the non-federal share. Match agreements are in place and unless this action is “beyond your control” these project starts should be honored, as stated above. That being said, significantly changing the project initiation date without a public process is an extremely questionable practice, given the regulations.
12. Need ID 28069, Richardson Highway MP 359 Grade Separated Facility: This is a very important safety project resulting from the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study that is being completed this year. Will the project lose the streamlining benefit of doing a PEL study with delays to this and other Steese and Richardson Highway projects?
13. Need ID 29232, Committed Measures for the Fairbanks SIP: This is a necessary effort but FMATS questions why it must be split into a separate project. Is it correct that the funding identified under Need ID 24756, Fairbanks Fine Particulate Matter Mitigation will be the funding that the CMAQ Project Evaluation Board (PEB) will make the recommendations to distribute? The PEB, as a part of its policies, funds SIP control measures first. Should the PEB restructure its priorities since the committed measures will be funded under Need ID 29232?

14. Need ID 29881, Airport Way Drainage: It is important to resolve the drainage issues on Airport Way and FMATS asks that this project be accelerated in the STIP.
15. Need ID 20256, Knik Arm Crossing Toll Financed Bridge Facilities and Need ID 20255, Knik Arm Crossing Anchorage Access Connections: Have the \$253 million in bond funds already been issued? Are the \$225 million in advanced construction funds going to be repaid with NHPP funds from future STIP years? If so, that appears to be more than 65% of the annual NHPP funding, jeopardizing the construction of any other regionally significant projects in future years. It appears that the reason many of the important regional projects are illustrative is due to the advanced construction of these two projects. It is also evident that many of the new starts on the Steese and Richardson Highways have been put on hold as a result and the percentage of NHPP in the Northern Region drops to 15% in FFY19. Worse yet, the AC is not being repaid until an unidentified year beyond FFY19. University Avenue is also being adversely impacted. It is also concerning that these projects are being funded when even AMATS has expressed "their reservations regarding the need, impact and cost of the Knik Arm Crossing project" in a unanimous resolution passed on July 23, 2015 while approving an interim MTP.

It appears that if these projects were financially feasible, the effort to have an innovative public-private partnership would be successful and be the appropriate financing method, not taking future years' allocations and putting them in these two projects in one year.

16. Need ID 17662: FMATS CTP Program Allocation: FMATS is pleased that it can retain its current funding level, particularly in this fiscal climate.
17. Need ID 17663: FMATS CMAQ Allocation: FMATS is pleased that the state will once again be funding the non-federal share for this allocation.
18. Need ID 6448, Urban Planning Program: This project is for local government transportation planning and special studies including AMATS and FMATS. This totals \$2.03 million. The current AMATS and FMATS URPL allocation totals \$1.63 million. Does this mean a new distribution formula is being prepared for FFY16 – 19 so that the MPOs may utilize this funding in a timely manner? FMATS did not receive its FFY15/FFY16 allocation consultation until August 2014, at the same time we had to submit our UPWP for approval. It would be helpful to have advance time to prepare and prioritize our planning efforts.
19. The Discretionary Urban Planning Program is something that the MPO heard about through consultation with the DOT on the Metropolitan Planning Distribution formula. The MPO is concerned that the DOT has reserved \$659,311 from FFY13 – FFY15 for this program but has not announced a method for applying for these funds. The issue is that this funding is not being made available and there are time limits on the availability of those funds. Please explain the time constraints for the use of those funds and provide an update on the status of the DUPP. FMATS does not see where the DUPP program is being funded in future years.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on 2016 – 2019 STIP.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Bryce Ward", written in a cursive style.

Mayor Bryce Ward
FMATS Policy Committee Chair

CC: FMATS Policy Committee
Marc Luiken, Commissioner, ADOT&PF
Margaret Carpenter, ADOT&PF Northern Region Planning



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

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December 23, 2015

Mayor Bryce Ward
FMATS Policy Committee Chair
FMATS
800 Cushman Street
Fairbanks, AK 99701

RE: Response to STIP Public Comment Period

Dear Mayor Ward:

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

In this fiscal climate, it is important that the Department maintain a statewide perspective when programming projects to ensure the highest possible return on investment. The Department does not operate on a regional allocation system and has not done so for many years. Additionally, when looking at the distribution of funds across regions, it is highly likely that the funding disparity between regions is the result of several large-scale projects in Central Region finally nearing readiness for construction. That being said, the STIP is a four-year, fiscally constrained planning and programming document that is continuously revised to adjust for project schedules and funding categories as projects identified in the 2016-2019 STIP develop. We will work closely with the regions to monitor project delivery schedules and will adjust the 2016-2019 STIP accordingly.

This STIP includes additional projects that could proceed if additional funding becomes available. The additional projects constitute the "illustrative" list of projects allowed under federal regulation 23 CFR 450.216(l). Should a scheduled project encounter delays and be unable to advance as proposed, if actual project bids come in lower than what we have estimated, or if sufficient funds are identified for other reasons, the Department selects projects from the illustrative list that best serve the interests of the state in the maintenance and operation of our surface transportation system.

This section will respond to the specific bullet items in your original letter.

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1. Project Evaluation Board (PEB) scores: We will make an effort to include these scores in the future. In the meantime, you can view the most recent CTP PEB ranking results here: http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/cip/stip/projects/Assets/peb_final.pdf.
2. NID 3821-University Avenue: The GO Bond funding was erroneously identified as OSF (Other State Funds) in the Draft 2016-2019 STIP as a result of the Alaska State Legislature converting to GO Bond authority to state general funds. We have corrected the funding category to reflect the funds as GO Bonds. \$14.8 million of the GO Bond funds are programmed on the first segment of construction from Thomas Street to the Chena River, Need ID 29655.
3. NID 3843 – Airport Way/South Cushman Intersection Reconstruction: Thank you for your support of this important congestion mitigation and safety project. Maintaining fiscal constraint in the STIP has limited the number of projects that can be constructed in a given year. We will continue to monitor the regional needs and provide for projects as funding allows.
4. NID 15685 – Airport Way West Improvements: The Department has funded and is continuing to advance this project to construction. Design, right-of-way acquisitions and utility relocation project work is currently under way. Maintaining fiscal constraint in the STIP has limited the number of projects that can be constructed in a given year. We will continue to monitor the regional needs and provide for projects as funding allows.
5. NID – 30150 – Steese Highway MP 4.5 (CHSR) Off-Ramp Bypass Lane: Thank you for your support of this project.
6. NID 2130 – Richardson Highway MP 353-357 Access/Safety Improvements: Thank you for your support for this project. Concerning your request to include Richardson Highway MP 350-353 in the STIP, maintaining fiscal constraint in the STIP has limited the number of new projects that can be initiated. We will continue to monitor the regional needs and provide for new projects as funding allows.
7. NID 24518 – Elliott Highway MP 0-12 Rehabilitation: The Department agrees that the Elliott Highway is the primary freight route to the North Slope. The Department is in the process of finalizing the design of this rehabilitation and shoulder widening project. Maintaining fiscal constraint in the STIP has limited the number of projects that can be constructed in a given year. We will continue to monitor the regional needs and provide for projects as funding allows.
8. NID 25596 – Rosie Creek Road Improvements: Commissioner Luiken notified the Fairbanks North Star Borough Mayor, Luke Hopkins on July 28, 2015 confirming the Department's commitment to fund this project and make the necessary changes to the Draft 2016-2019 STIP and fund the project. Federal funding for design of this project was forwarded to FHWA for obligation in FFY2015.
9. NID 25598 – Richardson Highway MP 356-362 Bicycle/Pedestrian Path: Thank you for your support of this project.
10. NID 26076 – Aurora Drive Noyes Slough Bridge Rehabilitation: Thank you for your support of this project. We have corrected the required match to reflect the state is responsible for the match on this project.

11. NID 26080 – Gold Mine Trail Upgrade: Commissioner Luiken notified the Fairbanks North Star Borough Mayor, Luke Hopkins on July 28, 2015 confirming the Department’s commitment to fund this project and make the necessary changes to the Draft 2016-2019 STIP and fund the project. Federal funding for design of this project was forwarded to FHWA for obligation in FFY2015.
12. NID 28069 – Richardson Highway MP 359 Grade Separated Facility: Thank you for your support for this project. This project received federal funding to begin the design in the summer of 2015. Maintaining fiscal constraint in the STIP has limited the number of projects that can be constructed in a given year. We will continue to monitor the regional needs and provide for projects as funding allows.
13. NID 29232 – Committed Measures for the Fairbanks SIP: Thank you for catching our duplication of effort. Both Need IDs (29232 and 24756) are aimed at committed measures for the SIP; however our intention was to have one Need ID. Accordingly, we have removed Need ID 24756 ‘Fairbanks Fine Particulate Matter Mitigation’ from the 2016-2019 Draft STIP. Need ID 29232 ‘Committed Measures for the Fairbanks SIP’ was identified as a separate project in the STIP to differentiate funding for SIP committed measures that are not subject to the Congestion Mitigation And Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) Project Evaluation Board. The CMAQ Project Evaluation Board was established under the agreement required by 23 CFR 450.314(b). That agreement only applies to projects outside the MPO area but within the nonattainment or maintenance area. To date, the SIP Committed Measures are planned to occur within the MPO, which are outside the purview of the agreement and the CMAQ Project Evaluation Board. Regarding the PEB’s policies, no change needs to occur, but you should be aware that should future CMAQ funding become available for use in Fairbanks, the PEB will only be involved if the projects under consideration are outside the MPO but within the non-attainment area.
14. NID 29881 – Airport Way Drainage: This project is scheduled to begin the design process in FFY 2108. Maintaining fiscal constraint in the STIP has limited the number of new projects that can be initiated. We will continue to monitor the regional needs and provide for new projects as funding allows.
15. NID 20256 – Knik Arm Crossing Toll Financed Bridge Facilities and NID 220255 – Knik Arm Crossing Anchorage Access Connections: Regarding your comments on Knik Arm Crossing (Need IDs 20255 and 20256), we understand that you have concerns related to this project. Per the Governor’s direction under Administrative Order 271, the Department is currently moving forward with completing the permitting processes and securing financing for the project. Upon completion of these activities, a final determination on the viability of constructing this project will be decided.
16. NID 17662 – FMATS Community Transportation Program (CTP) Program Allocation: You are welcome.
17. NID 17663 – FMATS CMAQ Allocation: You are welcome.
18. NID 6448 – Urban Planning Program: FMATS was notified on September 16, 2015 of its FFY2016 Metropolitan Planning (PL) anticipated funding level. A new distribution formula has

not been prepared for FFY17-19 as we were under a continuing resolution and have only received the first 65 days, or 18% of our anticipated federal funding for FFY 2016.

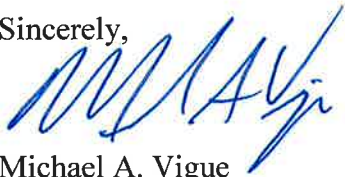
19. Discretionary Urban Planning Program: FMATS was notified on September 16, 2015 that the Department anticipates resuming work to develop the Discretionary Urban Planning Program this fall. The intent of this program is to make funding available for planning projects in the smaller urban communities as well as the two MPOs. We will consult with FMATS, our Regional Planners and representatives from the smaller urban communities as we develop the program.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Northern Region, Shelley Potter at 907-451-2375 or shelley.potter@alaska.gov

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the Knik Arm Crossing project, please do not hesitate to contact the Knik Arm Crossing Project Director, Judy Dougherty, at 907-269-6698 or judy.dougherty@alaska.gov

Again, we thank you for sharing your comments on the 2016-2019 STIP.

Sincerely,



Michael A. Vigue
Division Director

cc: Marc Luiken, Commissioner, ADOT&PF
Judy Chapman, ADOT&PF Northern Region Planning
Margaret Carpenter, ADOT&PF Northern Region Planning



Fairbanks North Star Borough

Office of the Mayor

809 Pioneer Road • PO Box 71267 • Fairbanks, AK 99707

(907) 459-1300 FAX 459-1102

August 26, 2015

Also Sent Electronically

State of Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development, Attn: STIP
PO Box 112500
Juneau, AK 99811-2500

RE: Comments on the Draft 2016 – 2019 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

To Whom It May Concern:

The Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) appreciates the opportunity to submit comments regarding the Draft 2016 – 2019 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Please accept this letter as the FNSB Administration's public comment.

Per communications with Commissioner Luiken, it is my understanding that the **Gold Mine Trail Road Upgrade project** and the **Rosie Creek Road Improvements project** will obligate the design phase in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2015. I appreciate the willingness of the Department to work with the FNSB on these projects. Accordingly, the design phase for these two projects should now be removed from the 2016 – 2019 STIP and the construction phase should be escalated.

The FNSB is pleased that a few other projects are moving forward that have already received local planning authority approval from the FNSB, including the **Richardson Highway MP 353 – 357 Access/Safety Improvement project**, the **Richardson Highway MP 356 – 362 Bicycle/Pedestrian Path project**, and the **Steese Highway and 3rd Street Widening project**. Additionally, it was promising that several other projects were incorporated in the draft STIP, including the **Steese Highway/Johansen Expressway Interchange project**, **Old Nenana/Ester Hill Rehabilitation**, **Fairbanks Fine Particulate Matter Mitigation**, **Committed Measures for the Fairbanks SIP**, **FMATS CTP Program Allocation**, **FMATS CMAQ Allocation**, and several **Parks Highway** and **Richardson Highway** projects.

However, the FNSB is particularly concerned about the lack of transparency in the process used to develop the 2016 – 2019 STIP. In past STIP development processes, there have been nomination periods that local communities or members of the public could nominate projects for inclusion in the STIP; it does not appear that this has occurred with this STIP development. Local governments are most keenly aware of the transportation needs of their own communities and therefore should be given a period in which to nominate projects rather than just seeing them "appear" in the draft STIP.

For example, the local community of Salcha has approached the Department multiple times requesting that a bicycle and pedestrian pathway in the community be constructed. After this project did not progress beyond a needs list, the FNSB held multiple community meetings in the area, culminating in a resolution of support from the FNSB Assembly. A project such as this,

with a tremendous amount of community support, did not have an opportunity to be including in the STIP because it was not brought forward by the Department and a local nomination period was not initiated.

Additionally, the way in which National Highway System (NHS) projects “appear” within a STIP also lacks transparency and input from local government agencies and the public. While the FNSB acknowledges that, according to the Alaska DOT, there is a “back-log of 7-10 years’ worth of federal-aid projects that are progressing towards construction” there are very important projects in Interior Alaska that are not currently included in the STIP. The FNSB requests that the DOT&PF hold a nomination period for additional capital projects in the STIP.

Generally, the FNSB is also concerned because it appears that the Northern Region is receiving significantly less funding through the 2016 – 2019 STIP than other regions. The Northern Region is by far the largest region in the State of Alaska with the most National Highway System road miles. Yet, the region is receiving less than one-third (1/3) of the funding that the Central Region is expected to receive through the 2016 – 2019 STIP.

The FNSB is further concerned because projects such as the **Knik Arm Crossing Toll Financed Bridge Facilities** and the **Knik Arm Crossing Anchorage Access Connections** remain funded with high amounts of Federal funding commitments, including \$226 million in Advanced Construction (AC) funding. The FNSB is concerned about the impacts for the Northern Region, now and in the future, stemming from committing such a large amount of federal funds on just two projects. As a result, the FNSB requests that the DOT&PF provide additional information about the impacts to projects in the Northern Region as a result of such high amounts of federal funding being placed on these two projects.

Additionally, in this draft STIP there appears to be a heavy reliance upon the “Illustrative” funding code, which can be very misleading to the public who may not realize that there is not dedicated funded. This is particularly true in the Northern region where there are, by my calculations, 26 projects with Illustrative funding, including some very important projects like the

- **MP 359 Railroad Grade Separated Facility Project;**
- **Airport Way (West) Project;**
- **Airport Way/South Cushman Intersection Reconstruction Project;**
- **Sheep Creek Road Upgrades Project;**
- **University Avenue Widening Projects** (and associated segments); and
- **MP 0-12 Rehabilitation (Fox to Haystack) Project**

On a larger scale, the FNSB is very concerned with the number of **Dalton Highway projects** that are not funded through the STIP. It appears that several projects either lost funding from levels of the 2012 – 2015 STIP or are not planned for any additional funding. Of the 15 Dalton Highway projects shown in the STIP, 13 are either Illustrative or have no construction funding. This is a concern, especially with the potential for a natural gas trucking project and the high cost associated with just maintaining a functional roadway to Prudhoe Bay. In response to the above-listed concerns, the FNSB formally requests that construction funding be placed on the following projects:

- **Airport Way (West);**
- **University Avenue Widening;** and
- The priority **Dalton Highway** Projects

The FNSB further requests that additional funding be placed on the following important projects in an effort to keep them moving forward:

- **MP 359 Railroad Grade Separated Facility; and**
- **Airport Way/South Cushman Intersection Reconstruction project.**

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Respectively submitted,



Luke Hopkins
Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough

LH/lml

CC: David Miller, Regional Director, DOT & PF Northern Region



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

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October 1, 2015

Mayor Luke Hopkins
Fairbanks North Star Borough
809 Pioneer Road
PO Box 71267
Fairbanks, AK 99707

Dear Mayor Hopkins,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

Federal funding for design of both the Gold Mine Trail Road Upgrade (Need Identification [NID] 26080) and the Rosie Creek Road Improvements (NID 25596) was forwarded to Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for obligation in FFY2015. Your request to escalate the construction phase of both these projects in the 2016-2019 STIP cannot be accommodated at this time. Maintaining fiscal constraint in the STIP has limited the number of projects that can be constructed in a given year. We will continue to monitor the regional needs and provide for projects as funding allows.

We appreciate your continued support for projects included in the 2016-2019 STIP that provide funding for the Richardson Highway, Steese Highway, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) projects and the annual Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System (FMATS) Community Transportation Program (CTP) allocation.

The ADOT&PF is required to carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive statewide transportation planning process that includes a stringent public involvement process to afford public involvement opportunities and provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of the STIP. It is unfortunate that you find the development of the STIP to be a planning process that is not transparent based on the lack of project nomination periods for local communities or members of the public to nominate projects for inclusion in the STIP.

There may be additional opportunities to nominate the Harding Lake/Salcha Drive Bike Trail CTP project for inclusion in a future STIP document. At this time it is uncertain when the Department will issue a new call for CTP project nominations. Your comments have been shared

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with the Northern Region Planning Division so that they may continue to work with you on transportation development in your borough and we will make special note to notify the community of Salcha and the Fairbanks North Star Borough when the Department issues a new call for CTP project nominations.

Your understanding in the way in which National Highway System (NHS) projects “appear” in the STIP without input from local government agencies and the public requires some clarification. The Department is authorized under 17 AAC 05.175 (a) to select projects on the NHS and Alaska Highway System (AHS), and under 17 AAC 05.200 (a) (14) include any project or activity related to surface transportation which is considered to be in the state’s best interest.

In this fiscal climate, it is important that the Department maintain a statewide perspective when programming projects to ensure the highest possible return on investment. The Department does not operate on a regional allocation system and has not done so for many years. Additionally, when looking at the distribution of funds across regions, it is highly likely that the funding disparity between regions is the result of several large-scale projects in Central Region finally nearing readiness for construction. That being said, the STIP is a four-year, fiscally constrained planning and programming document that is continuously revised to adjust for project schedules and funding categories as projects identified in the 2016-2019 STIP develop. We will work closely with the regions to monitor project delivery schedules and will adjust the 2016-2019 STIP accordingly.

Regarding your comments on Knik Arm Crossing (NIDs 20255 and 20256), we understand that you have concerns related to this project. Per the Governor’s direction under Administrative Order 271, the Department is currently moving forward with completing the permitting processes and securing finances for the project. Upon completion of these activities, a final determination on the viability of constructing this project will be decided.

This STIP includes additional projects that could proceed if additional funding becomes available. The additional projects constitute the “illustrative” list of projects allowed under federal regulation 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 450.216(l). Should a scheduled project encounter delays and be unable to advance as proposed, if actual project bids come in lower than what we have estimated, or if sufficient funds are identified for other reasons, the Department selects projects from the illustrative list that best serve the interests of the state in the maintenance and operation of our surface transportation system.

The Department understands your concerns with the number of Northern Region and Dalton Highway projects that are not funded through the STIP. Maintaining fiscal constraint in the STIP has limited the number of projects that can be constructed in a given year. We will continue to monitor the regional needs and provide for projects as funding allows.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Northern Region, Shelley Potter at 907-451-2375 or shelley.potter@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,



Michael A. Vigue
Division Director



Forest
Service

Chugach
National
Forest

161 E 1st Avenue
Door 8
Anchorage, AK 99501-1639

File Code: 7710

Date: August 27, 2015

Route To:

Subject: DOT&PF 2016-2019 Draft STIP Comments

To: State of Alaska, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Program
Development

This memo responds to your request for public comment on the DOT&PF 2016-2019 Draft Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). We appreciate the opportunity to provide comment on behalf of the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

In reviewing the STIP, we identified the following projects we wish to engage in further:

- Seward Highway Milepost 17-22.5: Continued coordination between the Forest Service and DOT&PF as the project moves forward.
- Seward Highway Milepost 25-36: The Forest Service requests a meeting to discuss the project scope, scale, and Forest Service involvement.
- Seward Highway Milepost 75-90: Further coordination is needed between the Forest Service and DOT&PF, particularly with respect to Section 4(f), Easements, right-of-way, and maintenance agreements.
- Sterling Highway Milepost 45-60: Continued coordination between the Forest Service and DOT&PF as the project moves forward.
- Copper River Highway: The Forest Service requests a meeting to discuss DOT&PF's plan for Bridge 339 and the proposed plan for maintenance of the highway beyond Bridge 339.

If you have any questions, please contact me by phone at (907) 743-9442 or via e-mail gqberg@fs.fed.us.

Griff Berg
Forest Engineer

cc: Sam Carlson
Tom Lockhart
Terri Marceron
Peter Keller
Tim Charnon
Robert Skorkowsky
Chris Lampshire
Heather Gott





THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

3132 Channel, Suite 200
PO Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500
Main: 907.465.4070
Fax: 907.465.6984
TTY/TDD: 907.465.3657
dot.state.ak.us

October 15, 2015

Griffith Berg
Forest Engineer
Chugach National Forest Service
161 E 1st Avenue, Door 8
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-1639

RE: Draft 2016-2019 STIP Comments Dated 8/27/15

Dear Mr. Berg,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the DOT&PF mission.

Continuous coordination with our agency partners is vital to the success of the Department's projects. For this reason, the contact information for each project's respective manager is provided below and each of these managers has been cc'd on this correspondence.

Project Manager	Telephone	Email
Seward Highway MP 17-22.5 Rehabilitation		
Carla Smith	(907) 269-0544	carla.smith@alaska.gov
Seward Highway MP 25-36 Rehabilitation		
Cynthia Ferguson	(907) 269-0589	cynthia.ferguson@alaska.gov
Seward Highway MP 75-90 Road and Bridge Rehabilitation		
Eric Miyashiro	(907) 269-0610	eric.miyashiro@alaska.gov
Sterling Highway MP 45-60 Sunrise Inn to Skilak Lake Road Construction		
Kelly Petersen	(907) 269-0546	kelly.petersen@alaska.gov

The Copper River Highway Bridge 339 project was closed earlier this calendar year, but the Department is committed to working cooperatively to find an agreeable solution for the maintenance of the highway beyond MP 36. You may contact the Northern Region Maintenance Chief, Steve Potter, at (907) 451-2295 or steve.potter@alaska.gov about efforts to maintain the Copper River Highway beyond Bridge 339.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Kenai Area Planner for Central Region, Joselyn Biloon at 907-269-0508 or joselyn.biloon@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,



Sara Mason

Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs
Division of Program Development

cc: Chris Lampshire, USFS
Heather Gott, USFS
Peter Keller, USFS
Robert Skorkowsky, USFS
Sam Carlson, USFS
Terri Marceron, USFS
Tim Charnon, USFS
Tom Lockhart, USFS
Carla Smith, Project Engineer, Central Region, DOT&PF
Cynthia Ferguson, Project Engineer, Central Region, DOT&PF
Eric Miyashiro, Project Engineer, Central Region, DOT&PF
Kelly Peterson, Project Engineer, Central Region, DOT&PF
Steve Potter, Maintenance Chief, Northern Region, DOT&PF

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 2:36 PM
To: dot.stip
Cc: Potter, Shelley M (DOT)
Subject: FW: STIP Comment

FYI

-----Original Message-----

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 1:21 PM
To: 'Frances Mallory'
Subject: RE: STIP Comment

Ms. Mallory,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Department appreciates your comments regarding the Shepard Point Road project. Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

Currently ADOT&PF's role in the Project is that of a cooperating agency; this role is a contributing role to the overall project. The responsibilities of ADOT&PF are as follows:

- Program federal aid highway funds to the road project construction via the STIP.
 - These funds will only be utilized when the construction phase of the project is authorized to begin. Until that time the federal highway funding amount of \$5.5 million will be annotated in the current federal fiscal year. This is a single contribution of \$5.5 million towards the project.
- Function as the pass-through agency for the expenditure of Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) Investment Fund allocations for the project, currently managed by the Alaska Department of Revenue.
 - These funds are required to be expended towards a project located at Shepard Point by the Alyeska Consent Decree issued by the U.S. District Court in 1992. ADOT&PF is required to act on this fund as a fiscal agent only; we do not have the authority to amend nor rescind this fund.
- The Shepard Point Road project listed in the STIP is not managed by ADOT&PF.
 - Any concerns regarding project feasibility and development should be directed to the Federal Highway Administration, Western Federal Lands (WFL) division at (360) 619-7700 or wfl.fhwa@dot.gov. (Your STIP comment will be shared with WFL by ADOT&PF.)

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding our role in this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Duane Hoskins at 451-2382 or duane.hoskins@alaska.gov.

Best,

Sara

Sara E. Mason
Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Phone: 907.465.2065 | E-mail: sara.mason@alaska.gov

-----Original Message-----

From: Frances Mallory [<mailto:malloryf@gci.net>]

Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2015 9:13 PM

To: dot.stip

Subject: STIP Comment

TO: ALASKA DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION

In my opinion the Shepherd Point Road should not be built by State of Alaska. The state is broke. And to use oil spill concerns as a reason, is not a true picture. There are places closer to Cordova for oil spill concerns.

Sincerely,

Frances A Mallory

P.O. Box 1383

Cordova, Alaska 99574

Comment
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Proposed 2016 - 2019 STIP

From: Gerry Hope, Transportation Director for Sitka Tribe of Alaska

- 1) Need ID 23915; Title: SIT – Public Transportation Bus and Maintenance Facility. Place Name; Sitka. Funding after 2015 is set at; \$7,825,925.00. Comment; much appreciated.
- 2) Need ID 27410; Title: Sitka – Katlian Bay Road Construction. Place Name; Sitka. Comment; supportive.
- 3) Need ID 18922; Title: Pavement and Bridge Rehabilitation. Place Name; Southcoast Region. Comment; Sitka roads need an increase in funds and effort. Some areas of the recent road improvements on Halibut Point Road have major puddles in some areas that were not properly addressed, such as; Shelikof Way and Davidoff Street, and the vacant lot where the “old City shops”. Also, there’s erosion on Sawmill Creek Road, outbound near the Indian River Bridge that causes vehicles to swerve around it.
- 4) Need ID 24056; Title: Statewide Bus and Bus Facility Enhancements. Place Name; Statewide. Comment; the budget shows no funding after 2015; this needs minimal funding of around \$1M.
- 5) Need ID 27969; Title: Bus and Bus Facilities. Place Name; Statewide. Comment; funding was cut in half for after 2015, at minimum the funding should be \$2M.
- 6) Need ID 19119; Title; Enhance Mobility for Seniors and Individuals With Disabilities. Place Name; Statewide. Comment; funding after 2015 is \$580,000.00, keep this level of funding. Is very important.
- 7) Need ID 19120; Title; Rural Transit and Rural Transit Assistance Program. Place Name; Statewide. Comment; This is a very important program, keep funding level as proposed.
- 8) Need ID 21954; Title; Alaska Mobility Coalition – Statewide Bus and Bus Facilities. Comment; funding after 2015 is “0”, at minimum funding should be \$150,000.00. This is a very important need.
- 9) General Statement; Alaska Marine Highway System operating funds should remain at the SFY14 level. Keep the Capital funding level as needed in order to keep safe vessels.
- 10) General Statement; pursue the road across Baranof Island, eastern side.
- 11) General Statement; work with Tribes in Tribal Transportation Projects.



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

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Fax: 907.465.6984
TTY/ITD: 907.465.3657
dot.state.ak.us

September 24, 2015

Gerry Hope
Transportation Director
Sitka Tribe of Alaska
456 Katlian Street
Sitka, AK 99835

Dear Gerry Hope,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

We appreciate your comment in support of the Public Transportation Bus and Maintenance Facility (Need Identification [NID] 23915). We agree that this is a much needed facility in Sitka and we are glad to have been able to partner with the Sitka Tribe of Alaska (STA) to make it happen. Also, thank you for your support on Katlian Bay Road Construction project (NID 27410). It is important to note that this project will not display in the Draft 2016-2019 STIP, as this project will be funded solely with state funds.

We also note that you have brought up some maintenance and safety concerns regarding problems with recent road projects in Sitka. STA's request for an increase in funds and efforts for Sitka's roads through the Pavement and Bridge Rehabilitation (NID 18922) has been noted. Your concerns will be reviewed by the Southcoast Maintenance Specialist and the Sitka Foreman, and if appropriate, will be resolved through general maintenance efforts or use of the funds available in the Pavement and Bridge Rehabilitation Need ID.

Both of the Statewide Bus and Bus Facility Enhancements projects, (NID 24056 and 21954) were funded by Federal Transit Authority (FTA) earmarks. While we agree that this funding is very important, there will not be any replacement funding once these grants are fully-expended. We suggest that transit systems watch for new funding opportunities that replace the traditional earmark, such as TIGER and Ladders of Opportunity. These will be posted on the Alaska Community Transit website (<http://www.dot.alaska.gov/transit>) as they become available.

"Keep Alaska Moving through service and infrastructure."

The Bus and Bus Facilities (NID 27969) funding is new with MAP-21 legislation. While it does appear as though the funding was cut in half between FFY2016 and FFY2017, it wasn't. FTA technical guidance had to be issued and sub-recipients had to have an asset management plan before the monies could be accessed. As a result, FFY2016 reflects three years of funding. The \$1,250,000 available annually was determined by Congress, with each State DOT receiving the same amount for rural systems.

We agree that FTA funded programs for enhanced mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities (NID 19119) and rural public & intercity transit as well as technical assistance and training (NID 19120) are very important to the residents of Sitka. Both of these programs are provided for in the current MAP-21 legislation. We will keep you informed of future funding as Congress works toward development of long-term surface transportation legislation.

Thank you for your comment regarding pursuing the road across the eastern side of Baranof Island. While this project is considered a priority, as noted in the long range planning process, it is not currently prioritized for funding in the STIP. This project will continue to be considered in ongoing evaluations for future STIP amendments.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Southcoast Region, Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1775 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov. For transit related questions please contact Debbi Howard at 907-465-2883 or debbi.howard@alaska.gov.

The Department thanks you for your comments on behalf of STA. We have enjoyed our past working partnerships and look forward to future opportunities to work with STA and other tribes on tribal transportation projects.

Sincerely,



Sheila Good
Transportation Planner I

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Joel Azure <jazure@KICTRIBE.onmicrosoft.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2015 10:37 AM
To: dot.stip
Cc: Bonnie Newman; Arlene Dilts-Jackson; Heidemann, Marie E (DOT); Seth Brakke
Subject: Comment on Draft STIP
Attachments: NEED ID 21114 Ketchikan - S. Tongass Hwy Improvements.pdf

I am writing to document the Ketchikan Indian Communities comments regarding the projects proposed in the state STIP. Specifically these comments pertain to Need ID 21114; S. Tongass Hwy Improvements Deermount to Saxman. Of interest to KIC and the community regarding this section of road is the intersection of Deermount St. and Stedman. This intersection is heavily utilized by both motor vehicles and pedestrians and its current configuration lends itself to a disproportionate share of accidents and near accidents for all users.

By way of reference the intersection is abutted by a major grocery store, a University of Alaska Southeast satellite campus, a day care and social services center, a drycleaner, bus stop, and storage facilities. Nearby are canneries and other forms of employment and the cross walk at this location is heavily utilized by pedestrians and bicyclists alike. The dangers of this intersection are magnified because it is near the transition from the S.Tongass speed zone to Stedman speed zone and has four two-way turn out locations from adjacent parking lots. These turn-out locations present a challenge for motorists attempting to turn off of deermount onto Stedman due to the difficulty in recognizing either a driver's intent to pull into, or out of the adjacent parking area simultaneously as they are attempting to merge onto Stedman. Compounding the hazard is the heavily used and poorly marked cross walk that injects pedestrians into this melee. There are numerous documented accidents and uncounted near misses that make the safety improvements we are suggesting of critical importance to KIC.

Our suggestions are illustrated on the attached map and include:

1. The removal of the parking lot access point nearest deermount street and the expansion of the access point farthest from deermount. (illustrated by red and green lines on the attached map.
2. The addition of an island with a crosswalk cutout in the middle of Stedman street. (marked by green and red crossed box).
3. Increased crosswalk signage that includes flashing lights when pedestrians are crossing.

These modifications would have the following effects:

1. Increase the distance between traffic merging onto Stedman street from deermount and the extremely nearby existing grocery parking lot access point thereby allowing greater recognition times for realizing other drivers intentions.
2. Provide a safety buffer for pedestrians crossing as well as increased visibility for motorists to see bicyclists and pedestrians utilizing the crosswalk.
3. Increase available parking for the grocery store while preventing the existing two access points being regularly used as a "turnaround".

I believe these suggestions will benefit the safety of all users transiting thru this section of roadway. Please feel free to contact me with any comments.

Sincerely,

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Joel Azure <jazure@KICTRIBE.onmicrosoft.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2015 10:48 AM
To: dot.stip
Cc: Bonnie Newman; Arlene Dilts-Jackson; Seth Brakke; Heidemann, Marie E (DOT)
Subject: Comment on Draft STIP

I am writing to document the comments of the Ketchikan Indian Community regarding the draft STIP. Specifically these comments pertain to Need ID 27766; Tongass Ave and Water St Viaduct and Tunnel Improvements. Of interest to KIC is the section of road from Third Avenue to Carlanna. This section of road has both the Ketchikan General Hospital and KIC Health Clinic located on it and access to these facilities as well as pedestrian access from the adjacent bus stop are currently insufficient and present a safety concern.

Our suggestions are as follows:

1. Reduce the number of lanes from 4 to 3
2. Move the existing crosswalk from the 3rd avenue intersection to where the current Bus stop is located.
3. Include a small pedestrian island at new crosswalk location as well as increased signage with lighting.
4. Expand the existing access point for the KIC health Clinic
5. Replace the existing "angled" crosswalk near the hospital with a standard 90 degree crosswalk.

These project enhancements would greatly increase the safety of users as well as increase the utilization of crosswalks by pedestrians.

Please feel free to contact me with any comments.

Sincerely,

Joel Azure
Ketchikan Indian Community
429 Deermount st
Ketchikan, AK 99901
907-228-9431



Results

Map Contents

☐ 5' Topography

☒ 5' Topography (North)

☒ 5' Topography (City & South Er

☐ 100' Topography

☒ 100' Topography (USGS)

☒ Annotation

☒ Parcels

☐ Labels

☐ Buildings

☒ Roads

☒ Municipal Boundary

☒ Borough Limits

☐ Zoning

☒ ZONING

☒ Aerials

☐ Air Photos

☒ Base

☒ Lakes

☒ Land

☒ Ocean

☒ kgbtopo

☒ kgbtopohill



Good, Sheila D (DOT)

Subject: Comment on Draft STIP- KICTRIBE

Dear Mr. Azure,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

Regarding your comments on the two Ketchikan projects, Tongass Ave and Water St Viaduct and Tunnel Improvements (Need ID 27766) and Tongass Hwy Improvements Deerment to Saxman (Need ID 21114), both listed in the Draft 2016-2019 STIP your detailed comments and suggestions have been shared with the Southcoast Region Planning Division and the appropriate Project Managers. We appreciate that you have taken the time to provide us with your firsthand knowledge of traffic issues in the area. Pedestrian and road safety is a chief concern of ADOT&PF and we will consider your recommendations to improve the safe movement of vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Southcoast Region, Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1775 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov.

Sheila Good

Transportation Planner I
Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development
3132 Channel Drive | P.O. Box 112500 | Juneau, AK 99811

T (907) 465-6392 | F (907) 465-6984



Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Joel Betts <joel.t.betts@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 25, 2015 8:33 PM
To: wwmas@muni.org; amatsinfo@muni.org; GOV All Legislators; dot.stip; Post, David E (DOT); Heidemann, Marie E (DOT); Lyonch@muni.org; Boyle, James D (DOT); djgardino@ci.fairbanks.ak.us; Carpenter, Margaret (DOT)
Subject: Please address bike infrastructure in the STIP
Attachments: RequestforAction_BikelanesSTIP_AKGAP.pdf

Hello,

My name is Joel Betts, I am a bicycle commuter in Anchorage, and member of an advocacy group called AKGAP. I am interested in the STIP (Statewide Transportation Improvement Program) because it affects my safety every day, as well as the safety of my neighbors. I ask that you do everything in your power to include bicycle infrastructure in the STIP, which currently lacks mention of Bike infrastructure.

I have attached a document that outlines the opinion of my group, AKGAP, which is my own opinion as well. I feel that although some strides have been made in the right direction, Alaska in general greatly lacks bicycle infrastructure. My daily ride to work involves riding on some roads without bike lanes or paths. Riding designated trails would mean miles added to my already lengthy commute. In some areas I feel forced to ride sidewalks, which I prefer not to do because it can threaten the safety of pedestrians. I was hit by a car just this week, a driver who didn't see me in the lane-an event that likely would not have happened had there been a bike lane or path on that road. I am alright but do often feel unsafe when I ride.

Please do what you can to promote bicycle infrastructure, via changes in the STIP and by other means!

Thank you for your service to the public!
Joel Betts

Alaska Grassroots Activists for the People (AKGAP)

AKGAP907@gmail.com

To Whom It May Concern,

We represent a volunteer organization known as Alaska Grassroots Activists for the People, or AK GAP. Our organization is dedicated to improving our state by improving our communities through positive and inclusive action. Recently we participated in the multi-organizational rallies in support of Medicaid expansion, which will lead to implementation in the near future.

As we assess safety in our Alaskan communities, our attention is drawn from healthcare to road conditions. Upon viewing the current STIP plans for 2016-2019, we assert that the scopes of these projects that are in the STIP are too narrow, and they should be more inclusive of alternative modes of transportation, specifically bicycling.

There is currently nothing in the STIP to expand infrastructure supporting bicyclists in Anchorage. A plan addressing this oversight is sorely needed. Organizations such as Bike Anchorage have compiled significant data to create an inclusive proposal, which was unanimously approved by the Anchorage assembly. We agree that each plan should include bicycle infrastructure in its scope.

The current plan states it will “Rehabilitate or improve various City Streets or roads. May include widening, paving, resurfacing, drainage improvements, and ditching.” All construction, redevelopment and upgrades to roadways should include not only passing lanes but also bike lanes. In areas where a bike lane cannot be included on the roadway safely, a separate bike path should be created alongside the roadway. Steps need to be taken to ensure continuous access for safe travel via bicycle in areas in which bike paths or bike lanes are segmented, disjointed, or abruptly discontinued. This will increase driver and biker safety and decrease traffic congestion, as well as improve traffic flow.

We believe infrastructure for bicyclists is necessary to achieve the goal of safe and efficient transportation for both bikes and cars. Overlooking bicycle infrastructure is detrimental to both driver and bicycle safety. We are dedicated to participating in and contributing to implementing bike infrastructure in any way we can. AKGAP eagerly anticipates doing our part to keep our city safe by making a bike friendly city a reality. How can we work together to assist you to expand the STIP to be inclusive of bike-friendly infrastructure?

Sincerely,

AKGAP

Good, Sheila D (DOT)

From: Good, Sheila D (DOT)
Sent: Thursday, October 01, 2015 3:05 PM
To: 'joel.t.betts@gmail.com'
Cc: dot.stip; Post, David E (DOT); Moulton, Marcheta A (DOT)
Subject: Please address bike infrastructure in the STIP

Mr. Betts,

We appreciate you taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

The Department recognizes the health, environmental, and air quality benefits of cycling both for recreation and as a mode of transportation, and continues to strive to provide suitable accommodation for all modes of travel. We applaud the Alaska Grassroots Activists for the People (AKGAP) commitment and dedication to participate and contribute to better Integrate appropriate bicycle and pedestrian considerations into routine system and project planning.

Regarding AKGAP's recommendation that all construction, redevelopment and upgrades to roadways should include not only passing lanes but also bike lanes, bicycling and pedestrian elements are considered and wherever practical, incorporated into road rehabilitation and reconstruction projects. Projects are evaluated on a case-by-case basis with consideration of the suitability, safety, and right of way impacts of such non-motorized features. While not commonly a part of a basic repaving project, our road rehabilitation and reconstruction projects routinely incorporate separated pathway facilities, sidewalks, or bike lanes. For example, the Glenn Highway/Muldoon Road Interchange project will include a separated pathway, widened shoulders, and sidewalks to provide a long-term solution to address safety concerns associated with the increase in vehicular and pedestrian traffic at this interchange.

AKGAP can assist the Department in developing policies and procedures to strengthen and promote a consistent approach for balancing the objectives of bicycle and pedestrian needs with other transportation modes, and promote the selection of investments to meet those objectives by participating in the update of the Alaska Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and development of the federally funded Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP).

The Department anticipates soliciting requests for proposals this fall to update the Alaska Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan in an effort to better Integrate appropriate bicycle and pedestrian considerations into routine system and project planning in both rural and urban settings to include; connectivity, mobility, safety, accessibility, and other statewide goals such as healthy, livable communities and safe routes to schools. For more information please contact Marcheta Moulton at 907-465-8769 or marcheta.moulton@alaska.gov

The TAP, once implemented, will provide funding for programs and projects defined as *transportation alternatives*, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation; recreational trail projects; safe routes to school projects; and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former divided highways.

Finally, please be aware that the State is a partner in both the Anchorage and Fairbanks Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). The non-motorized transportation plans and programs within these metropolitan areas are developed by the MPOs. The MPO's Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) are incorporated into the STIP by amendment. Information on these programs are available at the following websites:

<http://www.muni.org/departments/ocpd/planning/amats>

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Central Region, David Post at 907-269-0512 or david.post@alaska.gov

Sincerely,

Sheila Good

Transportation Planner I
Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development
3132 Channel Drive | P.O. Box 112500 | Juneau, AK 99811

T (907) 465-6392 | F (907) 465-6984



Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: John Murphy <john.murphy14@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2015 2:34 PM
To: Carpenter, Margaret (DOT); djgardino@ci.fairbanks.ak.us; Boyle, James D (DOT); lyonch@muni.org; Hagan, Christa M (DOT); Heidemann, Marie E (DOT); Post, David E (DOT); Potter, Shelley M (DOT); dot.stip; GOV All Legislators; amatsinfo@muni.org; wwmas@muni.org
Subject: Bike Infrastructure in the STIP
Attachments: AK GAP Support of Bike Lanes.pdf

To Whom it May Concern,

As a driver in Anchorage and a member of the growing and committed bicycle community, I was dismayed to see that there was no consideration of the much needed expansion of Anchorage bicycle infrastructure in the STIP document.

Currently, biking for transportation in Anchorage is hazardous at best. No major east-west corridor exists outside of the trails, which are happily populated by pedestrians and recreational users. Many roadside trails have truly dangerous pavement breaks.

Alternatively, biking along the roads brings the perils of sharing lanes with drivers who may not be aware of the biker's rights to share those lanes.

The Anchorage Bike Plan discusses a number of the needed improvements, including bike-specific lanes, associated signage, and a variety of alternatives depending on the specifics of the road in question.

I'm glad that the transportation in Alaska is always being upgraded, but I urge you to include the expansion of Anchorage's bicycle infrastructure in the STIP.

Please see the attached letter from AK GAP echoing these sentiments and representing a growing desire among Anchorage residents for bike lanes and generally improved bike infrastructure.

Sincerely,

John Murphy

Good, Sheila D (DOT)

From: Good, Sheila D (DOT)
Sent: Thursday, October 01, 2015 3:08 PM
To: 'john.murphy14@gmail.com'
Cc: dot.stip; Post, David E (DOT); Moulton, Marcheta A (DOT)
Subject: Bike Infrastructure in the STIP

Mr. Murphy,

We appreciate you taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

The Department recognizes the health, environmental, and air quality benefits of cycling both for recreation and as a mode of transportation, and continues to strive to provide suitable accommodation for all modes of travel. We applaud the Alaska Grassroots Activists for the People (AKGAP) commitment and dedication to participate and contribute to better Integrate appropriate bicycle and pedestrian considerations into routine system and project planning.

Regarding AKGAP's recommendation that all construction, redevelopment and upgrades to roadways should include not only passing lanes but also bike lanes, bicycling and pedestrian elements are considered and wherever practical, incorporated into road rehabilitation and reconstruction projects. Projects are evaluated on a case-by-case basis with consideration of the suitability, safety, and right of way impacts of such non-motorized features. While not commonly a part of a basic repaving project, our road rehabilitation and reconstruction projects routinely incorporate separated pathway facilities, sidewalks, or bike lanes. For example, the Glenn Highway/Muldoon Road Interchange project will include a separated pathway, widened shoulders, and sidewalks to provide a long-term solution to address safety concerns associated with the increase in vehicular and pedestrian traffic at this interchange.

AKGAP can assist the Department in developing policies and procedures to strengthen and promote a consistent approach for balancing the objectives of bicycle and pedestrian needs with other transportation modes, and promote the selection of investments to meet those objectives by participating in the update of the Alaska Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and development of the federally funded Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP).

The Department anticipates soliciting requests for proposals this fall to update the Alaska Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan in an effort to better Integrate appropriate bicycle and pedestrian considerations into routine system and project planning in both rural and urban settings to include; connectivity, mobility, safety, accessibility, and other statewide goals such as healthy, livable communities and safe routes to schools. For more information please contact Marcheta Moulton at 907-465-8769 or marcheta.moulton@alaska.gov

The TAP, once implemented, will provide funding for programs and projects defined as *transportation alternatives*, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation; recreational trail projects; safe routes to school projects; and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former divided highways.

Finally, please be aware that the State is a partner in both the Anchorage and Fairbanks Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). The non-motorized transportation plans and programs within these metropolitan areas are developed by the MPOs. The MPO's Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) are incorporated into the STIP by amendment. Information on these programs are available at the following websites:

<http://www.muni.org/departments/ocpd/planning/amats>

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Central Region, David Post at 907-269-0512 or david.post@alaska.gov

Sincerely,

Sheila Good

Transportation Planner I

Department of Transportation & Public Facilities

Division of Program Development

3132 Channel Drive | P.O. Box 112500 | Juneau, AK 99811

T (907) 465-6392 | F (907) 465-6984



Alaska Grassroots Activists for the People (AKGAP)

AKGAP907@gmail.com

To Whom It May Concern,

We represent a volunteer organization known as Alaska Grassroots Activists for the People, or AK GAP. Our organization is dedicated to improving our state by improving our communities through positive and inclusive action. Recently we participated in the multi-organizational rallies in support of Medicaid expansion, which will lead to implementation in the near future.

As we assess safety in our Alaskan communities, our attention is drawn from healthcare to road conditions. Upon viewing the current STIP plans for 2016-2019, we assert that the scopes of these projects that are in the STIP are too narrow, and they should be more inclusive of alternative modes of transportation, specifically bicycling.

There is currently nothing in the STIP to expand infrastructure supporting bicyclists in Anchorage. A plan addressing this oversight is sorely needed. Organizations such as Bike Anchorage have compiled significant data to create an inclusive proposal, which was unanimously approved by the Anchorage assembly. We agree that each plan should include bicycle infrastructure in its scope.

The current plan states it will “Rehabilitate or improve various City Streets or roads. May include widening, paving, resurfacing, drainage improvements, and ditching.” All construction, redevelopment and upgrades to roadways should include not only passing lanes but also bike lanes. In areas where a bike lane cannot be included on the roadway safely, a separate bike path should be created alongside the roadway. Steps need to be taken to ensure continuous access for safe travel via bicycle in areas in which bike paths or bike lanes are segmented, disjointed, or abruptly discontinued. This will increase driver and biker safety and decrease traffic congestion, as well as improve traffic flow.

We believe infrastructure for bicyclists is necessary to achieve the goal of safe and efficient transportation for both bikes and cars. Overlooking bicycle infrastructure is detrimental to both driver and bicycle safety. We are dedicated to participating in and contributing to implementing bike infrastructure in any way we can. AKGAP eagerly anticipates doing our part to keep our city safe by making a bike friendly city a reality. How can we work together to assist you to expand the STIP to be inclusive of bike-friendly infrastructure?

Sincerely,

AKGAP

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Julie Reynolds <alaskiejulie@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2015 4:53 PM
To: dot.stip
Subject: citizen comments re: Shepard Point, Cordova, AK STIP

Name: Julie Reynolds

Address: P.O. Box 1936

Cit, State, Zip Code: Cordova, AK 99574

Telephone (Optional): 907-424-5141

I am writing in opposition to building a road to Shepard Point for an Oil Spill Response Facility or any other purpose for the following four reasons:

1. **Needless harm:** Building the 4.5 mile road necessary to access Shepard Point would cause an enormous amount of needless harm to the fragile wildlife, salmon spawning streams and surrounding forest. The additional development casually mentioned in the planning of the Shepard Point Oil Spill Response Facility would also cause excessive needless harm to the sensitive and unique ecosystem at Shepard Point. I say needless harm because SERVS, the principal oil spill response coordinating entity, has said that they would *not* use a facility if it were built at Shepard Point. And further they have said the deep-water port proposed in the Shepard Point project is *not* necessary for oil spill response and that the depth of the existing Ocean Dock is more than adequate to allow access of oil spill response vessels fully equipped to respond to a spill. Fully loaded with oil, these vessels will never return to the Ocean Dock, thus not warranting the dredging of a channel explained in the EIS.
2. **Excessive cost:** The nearly 40 million dollars estimated to build a road to Shepard Point does not take into account the considerable cost of installing and maintaining utilities and infrastructure, maintaining the road, and clearing the road from regular seasonal avalanches and potential rock slides. Enhancing the current Ocean Dock would be a substantially less expensive option and would not require the habitat-destroying channel dredging because the current dock is deep enough as-is to accommodate all vessels required during a spill and at their fully loaded drafts.
3. **Lack of 24/7 access:** Avalanches are common in this region and a road built to Shepard Point could be frequently closed due to avalanches from November to May. The EIS even stated, “a complex matrix of interconnected avalanche paths leading to Shepard Point with multiple start zones and run out zones represents one of the most exposed and difficult avalanche areas in the study area.” Not to mention rock

slides are also possible in this area restricting access by land to what is proposed to be the only oil spill facility not providing the 24/7 access required by SERVS.

4. **Conflict of interest:** The “Project Purpose and Need” states that the “dedicated oil spill facility...would reduce or eliminate the time and expense required to select and prepare a non-dedicated dock during an oil spill.” However, the Native Village of Eyak has clearly stated in their original application that they have additional plans for this site including logging, coal mining, tour ships, and residential development. There would be considerable additional costs and time involved to clear these activities in the event of an oil spill making me believe that calling the Shepard Point Project an “Oil Spill Response Facility” is just a red herring to use pre-appropriated monies to build private industry on private land for private profit that would not benefit the rest of the community in Cordova and would not be of greater assist in the event of an oil spill.

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 2:35 PM
To: dot.stip
Cc: Potter, Shelley M (DOT)
Subject: FW: Comment on Draft STIP re: Whitshed Road, Cordova, AK



FYI

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 1:03 PM
To: 'Julie Reynolds'
Subject: RE: Comment on Draft STIP re: Whitshed Road, Cordova, AK

Ms. Reynolds,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Department appreciates your comments regarding the Whitshed Road Bike and Pedestrian Path project (as currently scoped, this project addressed the lack of non-motorized facilities between the Copper River Highway and the area near Orca Inlet Drive); public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission. Based on public comment received for the Draft 2016-2019 STIP, the Department is working to accelerate the project development timeline for this project and we welcome your further participation as this project moves forward.

Speed limit determination is directed by ADOT&PF policy and a function of the region's Traffic and Safety section. There has been a series of speed studies conducted on May 16, 2011; September 10 and 11, 2012; and September 10, 2013. The studies concluded that the current 35 MPH speed limit aligns with DOT&PF policy. Any additional studies can be requested by the City of Cordova.

Road safety is a chief concern of ADOT&PF and we appreciate your comments. If you have additional questions or concerns regarding this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Duane Hoskins at 451-2382 or duane.hoskins@alaska.gov.

Best,

Sara

Sara E. Mason

Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive
Juneau, Alaska 99801
☎: 907.465.2065 | ✉: sara.mason@alaska.gov

From: Julie Reynolds [<mailto:alaskiejulie@gmail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2015 2:25 PM
To: dot.stip
Subject: Comment on Draft STIP re: Whitshed Road, Cordova, AK

To Whom It May Concern,

Thank you for soliciting comments from the public and for taking your time to read mine.

I am writing to request safety improvements to Whitshed Road in Cordova, AK. It is a very windy road, with steep banks on the water side and a narrow to nil shoulder for cyclists or walkers. Also, especially in the winter, limited light and lots of rain make the road very unsafe for bicycles and foot traffic.

First, lowering the speed limit from 35 to 25 mph, at least for the first 1-2 miles of Whitshed Road would go a long way to increasing the safety of bikers and pedestrians on this busy road.

Additionally, please help us build a bike path to create a safe space for the cyclists and pedestrians who use this road for recreation, exercise and daily commute to town. It isn't a long very distance, but one used by many on foot and by bike. Please help us improve this road's safety by lowering the speed limit to 25 mph and incorporating a bike path.

Sincerely,

Julie Reynolds

Cordova resident since 2003

(907) 424-5141

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: kara Johnson <hippychiquita@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2015 2:54 PM
To: dot.stip
Subject: Cordova Shepard Point plan and Whitshed Road Bike Path plan

Dear DOT,
thank you for soliciting input from the residents of Cordova about two projects proposed for our area.

I am writing to tell you that **I am opposed to the Shepard Point road plan proposed by the Native Village of Eyak**. This road is to supposed to reach a deep water port area to facilitate oil spill response capability.

The Native Village of Eyak is using the excuse of oil spill response to get money and push development for a deep water port so they can bring in logging and other industries. This road is not necessary to facilitate proper and sanctioned oil spill response. We already have significant equipment and training in place. Though additional oil spill response capacity is always welcome, we don't need a new road to make this happen. **There are multiple places already on the current road system that would be more appropriate. The proposed road crosses multiple avalanche shoots that will threaten winter response and divert personnel from response duties.**

I am in complete support of the Whitshed Road Bike Path. This project will create a safe way for our citizens to access the city baseball fields and popular hiking destinations close to town. A safe bike path will facilitate healthier citizens, promote use of our outdoor parks and recreation resources, and allow for safer travel for students to walk or bike to school.

thank you for hearing my concerns,
Kara Johnson
105 Bluff Trail
PO Box 954
Cordova AK 99574
907-429-3711

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 2:35 PM
To: dot.stip
Cc: Potter, Shelley M (DOT)
Subject: FW: Cordova Shepard Point plan and Whitshed Road Bike Path plan



FYI

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 1:17 PM
To: 'kara Johnson'
Subject: RE: Cordova Shepard Point plan and Whitshed Road Bike Path plan

Ms. Johnson,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Department appreciates your comments regarding the Shepard Point Road and Whitshed Road Bike and Pedestrian Path projects. Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

Currently ADOT&PF's role in the Project is that of a cooperating agency; this role is a contributing role to the overall project. The responsibilities of ADOT&PF are as follows:

- Program federal aid highway funds to the road project construction via the STIP.
 - o These funds will only be utilized when the construction phase of the project is authorized to begin. Until that time the federal highway funding amount of \$5.5 million will be annotated in the current federal fiscal year. This is a single contribution of \$5.5 million towards the project.
- Function as the pass-through agency for the expenditure of Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) Investment Fund allocations for the project, currently managed by the Alaska Department of Revenue.
 - o These funds are required to be expended towards a project located at Shepard Point by the Alyeska Consent Decree issued by the U.S. District Court in 1992. ADOT&PF is required to act on this fund as a fiscal agent only; we do not have the authority to amend nor rescind this fund.
- The Shepard Point Road project listed in the STIP is not managed by ADOT&PF.
 - o Any concerns regarding project feasibility and development should be directed to the Federal Highway Administration, Western Federal Lands (WFL) division at (360) 619-7700 or wfl.fhwa@dot.gov. (Your STIP comment will be shared with WFL by ADOT&PF.)

Regarding the Whitshed Road Bike and Pedestrian Path project; based on comments received during the Draft 2016-2019 STIP public comment period, the Department is working to accelerate the project development schedule of this project and we welcome your continued participation as this project moves forward. Road safety is a chief concern of ADOT&PF and we appreciate your comments.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Duane Hoskins at 451-2382 or duane.hoskins@alaska.gov.

Best,

Sara

Sara E. Mason
Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs

Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive
Juneau, Alaska 99801
☎: 907.465.2065 | ✉: sara.mason@alaska.gov

From: kara Johnson [<mailto:hippychiquita@gmail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2015 2:54 PM
To: dot.stip
Subject: Cordova Shepard Point plan and Whitshed Road Bike Path plan

Dear DOT,
thank you for soliciting input from the residents of Cordova about two projects proposed for our area.

I am writing to tell you that **I am opposed to the Shepard Point road plan proposed by the Native Village of Eyak**. This road is to supposed to reach a deep water port area to facilitate oil spill response capability.

The Native Village of Eyak is using the excuse of oil spill response to get money and push development for a deep water port so they can bring in logging and other industries. This road is not necessary to facilitate proper and sanctioned oil spill response. We already have significant equipment and training in place. Though additional oil spill response capacity is always welcome, we don't need a new road to make this happen. **There are multiple places already on the current road system that would be more appropriate. The proposed road crosses multiple avalanche shoots that will threaten winter response and divert personnel from response duties.**

I am in complete support of the Whitshed Road Bike Path. This project will create a safe way for our citizens to access the city baseball fields and popular hiking destinations close to town. A safe bike path will facilitate healthier citizens, promote use of our outdoor parks and recreation resources, and allow for safer travel for students to walk or bike to school.

thank you for hearing my concerns,
Kara Johnson
105 Bluff Trail
PO Box 954
Cordova AK 99574
907-429-3711

KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH

RESOLUTION NO. 2605

A Resolution of the Assembly of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Providing Comments Regarding Specific Projects Presented in the Draft 2016-2019 State Transportation Improvement Program

RECITALS

- A. WHEREAS**, the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities has published a draft of the 2016-2019 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which dictates future improvements that will be funded with federal and State funding; and
- B. WHEREAS**, the proposed STIP outlines when each project is scheduled for implementation and how each project will be funded; and
- C. WHEREAS**, the Borough has concerns regarding timelines for certain projects proposed for the Ketchikan area, in addition to missing elements from certain projects; and
- D. WHEREAS**, the Assembly requests the First and Second Waterfall Creek Bridge project for the 2016-2019 STIP be expedited since these two bridges are critical facilities for emergency services, as expressed in Resolution No. 2603 that was submitted during the 2012-2015 STIP Amendment 16 comment period; and
- E. WHEREAS**, the Assembly requests the timetable for the South Tongass Highway Improvement Project – Deermount to Saxman – be expedited because of the current road surface conditions, and for the project to be coordinated with South Tongass Service Area utility improvement; and
- F. WHEREAS**, the Assembly requests the South Tongass Highway Improvement Project – Saxman to Surf Street – be funded as soon as possible due to the current condition of the road surface, and not be funded with the illustrative tool; and
- G. WHEREAS**, the Assembly requests the Herring Cove Bridge project include repairs and realignment of the Wood Road and South Tongass Highway intersection in order to improve the safety and usability of the intersection; and
- H. WHEREAS**, the public comment period for the 2016-2019 STIP closes on August 27, 2015 at 5:00 p.m.

NOW, THEREFORE, IN CONSIDERATION OF THE ABOVE FACTS, IT IS RESOLVED

BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH as follows:

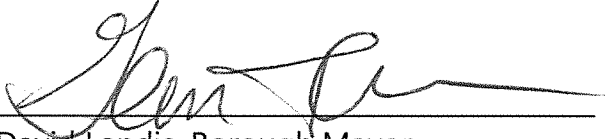
Section 1. The Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly requests that ADOT&PF:

- Expedite the timetable for the First and Second Waterfall Bridge Project (Need ID 27621);
- Expedite the timetable for the South Tongass Highway Improvement Project – Deermount to Saxman (Need ID 21114);
- Fully fund the South Tongass Highway Improvement Project – Saxman to Surf Street – and not with the illustrative fund (Need ID 23455); and
- Include realignment and repairs to the Wood Road and South Tongass Highway intersection to the Herring Cove Bridge Improvement project (Need ID 28810).

Section 2. The Borough Clerk is directed to send a copy of this resolution to the State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Division of Program Development.

Section 3. Effective Date. This resolution is effective immediately upon adoption.


ADOPTED this 17th day of August, 2015.


David Landis, Borough Mayor, Vice Mayor, for

ATTEST:


Kacie Paxton, Borough Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Scott A. Brandt-Erichsen, Borough Attorney



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**

GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

3132 Channel, Suite 200
PO Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500
Main: 907.465.4070
Fax: 907.465.6984
TTY/TTD: 907.465.3657
dot.state.ak.us

October 14, 2015

Dave Landis, Borough Mayor
Ketchikan Gateway Borough
1900 1st Ave
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Dear Mayor Landis,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the DOT&PF mission.

Requests to expedite projects will be taken under consideration with deference to project schedule constraints. If the project process allows for an expedited schedule, the region will work with Statewide Program Development to consider whether there is adequate funding availability in the STIP to move the projects to an earlier federal fiscal year and/or convert funding from the illustrative tool to real program funds. This may require delaying other projects and, as such, will require careful analysis and consideration.

Improvements to the intersection of Wood Road and South Tongass Highway are currently included as part of the Herring Cove Bridge Improvement Project. The project development process will determine if realignment of the intersection is the appropriate improvement based on an analysis of the area. Should significant changes to the project description and budget be necessary, modifications to the program will occur in future STIP amendments.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Highways Planner for Southcoast Region, Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1775 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Sara Mason".

Sara Mason
Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs
Division of Program Development



Kodiak Island Borough

OFFICE of the MANAGER

710 Mill Bay Road

Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Phone (907) 486-9302

E-mail: bcassidy@kodiakak.us

August 27, 2015

State of Alaska Department of Transportation
Division of Program Development
Attn: STIP
P.O. Box 112500
Juneau, AK 99811-2500

Dear Sirs:

Please accept this letter as our comments on the 2016-2019 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Kodiak Island Borough (KIB) understands the difficult budget deficit environment DOT is working under and appreciates your efforts and supports the STIP projects identified for Kodiak Island. KIB equally recognizes the importance of federalizing our projects in order that they are constructed. With the expected decreased in state revenues, identifying federal funding is prudent. Though there is less state money, the transportation needs of Kodiak continue.

The Kodiak Island Borough projects that are on the STIP list are important to the communities on the island for a number of reasons; the most important of them is safety; safety of students walking to North Star Elementary School as part of the Otmeloi Way project and safety for motorists as the Chiniak highway is very dangerous and treacherous in the locations identified for repair. The economy of the island is tied directly to regular ferry service to Kodiak Island. Construction of a replacement ferry in a timeframe that does not create a lapse in service should be a goal to strive for.

OTEMELOI WAY

This important project has received \$3.3 million dollars from a state general fund appropriation. Unfortunately this is not enough to complete the project; a project that upgrades this substandard state owned road and brings it up to an acceptable standard by providing realignment, rectifying drainage and grade issues, providing lighting and creating a safe access route to an elementary school. This will all take place in a part of Kodiak that is developing. Along with these road improvements is the transfer of ownership of the road as well as future maintenance responsibility to the Kodiak Island Borough.

CHINIAK HIGHWAY EROSION

The Chiniak Highway is an important highway linking the city of Kodiak to the Kodiak Rocket Launch Facility as well as to the Chiniak and Pasagshak neighborhoods. The harvesting of spruce occurring in this area relies on the Chiniak Highway to deliver logs to the transfer station in Womens Bay. Also, this highway sits on the cliff located above Chiniak Bay with many sites continuing to erode. This erosion has made parts of this highway dangerous for all traffic.

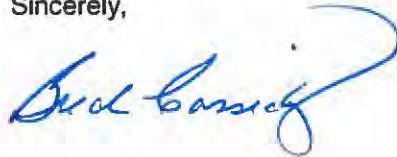
TUSTUMENA REPLACEMENT VESSEL.

A connection to the mainland by the existing ferry system is important to the lives of many on Kodiak Island. Much local commerce is conducted using the ferry system by small businesses located on Kodiak Island. Seafood processors also ship product off of Kodiak Island via the Tustumena. The need to fund the construction of a new ferry that will serve Kodiak Island and other communities in the Western Gulf is vital. It is our highway system and replacement of our aging ferry is a high priority to all ports and communities serviced by the Tustumena.

The Kodiak Island Borough appreciates what DOT performs with its limited time and resources and supports the STIP projects identified for Kodiak Island.

Should you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bud Cassidy", with a large, sweeping flourish extending from the end of the name.

Bud Cassidy
Borough Manager



THE STATE
of ALASKA

GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

3132 Channel, Suite 200
PO Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500
Main: 907.465.4070
Fax: 907.465.6984
TTY/TTD: 907.465.3657
dot.state.ak.us

October 14, 2015

Bud Cassidy, Borough Manager
Kodiak Island Borough
710 Mill Bay Road
Kodiak, AK 99615

Dear Mr. Cassidy,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the DOT&PF mission.

We agree that safety to the traveling public is important and that the two road projects you have indicated support for will provide for significant improvements. Despite the Otmeloi Way project not having sufficient general fund appropriation to complete the entire project, the Department is moving forward with design using the general funds and has placed the project in the STIP as an illustrative project.

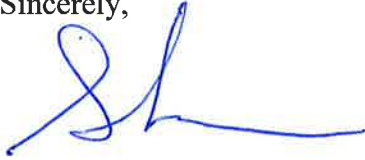
The Chiniak Highway Erosion project is moving forward as a Department priority. This project will include a variety of different solutions to the multiple locations where erosion is occurring. Because of the nature of these different solutions and the varying environmental considerations, this project will likely be split into two or more projects so that solutions can be implemented as quickly as possible. Your comments have been shared with appropriate Southcoast regional staff and DOT&PF will continue to keep you updated on the project's progress.

Although funding for construction of the Tustumena Vessel Replacement project is currently shown in the STIP's "After 2019" column, amendments to the STIP will occur as funding strategies are developed and projects are prioritized. The Tustumena Replacement Vessel is expected to have final design complete in January 2016. While the project design is still being developed, the Department will continue to seek and assess funding opportunities for this project.

"Keep Alaska Moving through service and infrastructure."

We appreciate the time you have taken to convey to us the importance of these projects for your community. If you have additional questions or concerns regarding these projects or other projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1755 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov or the Alaska Marine Highway Transportation Planner, Christa Hagan, at 907-228-6801 or christa.hagan@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Sara Mason', with a stylized 'S' and 'M'.

Sara Mason
Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs
Division of Program Development

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Larry Dearborn <lldearborn@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2015 10:49 PM
To: dot.stip
Subject: Knik Arm Bridge Crossing Comments Attn: STIP

COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED KNIK ARM BRIDGE – ANCHORAGE

AUGUST 26, 2015

We deeply believe that the Alaska DOT & PF should immediately remove the proposed new Knik Arm Bridge crossing Government Hill, Anchorage from the 2016-2019 STIP because:

1. Toll revenues will not be sufficient to build and operate the bridge, so paying for the bridge will adversely impact transportation funding for Anchorage, likely for decades. Official DOT/Knik Arm Bridge estimates of near-future users of the proposed bridge – and thus numbers of toll bridge users – are unrealistically high compared to estimates developed by other governmental entities.
2. A very nice, up-scale neighborhood immediately to the west of this route will likely be significantly impacted by multi-year construction, and subsequent upkeep projects.
3. In the present time of low oil prices, and thus lower state revenues, the state needs to stop the hemorrhaging of money for this costly and unnecessary project so our share of federal transportation money will be available for higher priority projects, such as upgrading the existing state transportation infrastructure.
4. Residential and business properties in Government Hill have already been adversely affected through state DOT's acquisition and modification of bridge-related rights-of-way. Significantly more Hill infrastructure will be lost if this project is built.

We drive the Glenn Highway into the Mat-Su Valley and back, 2 to 4 days a week most months. Improvements in this highway over the past several years have greatly improved driving safety, and has reduced the time of travel. Until there are better economic reasons to cross Knik Arm at Anchorage with a super expensive bridge, most of us tax paying residents in the Anchorage Bowl can think of more useful public projects.

Sincerely,

Larry L. Dearborn

M. Irene Fitzgerald

603 Vine Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99501
907-929-2230

Good, Sheila D (DOT)

From: Good, Sheila D (DOT)
Sent: Thursday, October 01, 2015 4:49 PM
To: 'ldearborn@gmail.com'
Cc: dot.stip; Post, David E (DOT)
Subject: Knik Arm Bridge Crossing Comments Attn: STIP

Mr. Dearborn and Ms. Fitzgerald,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

Regarding your comments on Knik Arm Crossing (Need IDs 20255 and 20256), we understand that you have concerns related to this project. Per the Governor's direction under Administrative Order 271, the Department is currently moving forward with completing the permitting processes and securing financing for the project. Upon completion of these activities, a final determination on the viability of constructing this project will be decided.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the Knik Arm Crossing project, please do not hesitate to contact the Knik Arm Crossing Project Director, Judy Dougherty, at 907-269-6698 or judy.dougherty@alaska.gov or if you have questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Central Region, David Post at 907-269-0512 or david.post@alaska.gov

Sincerely,
Sheila Good

Transportation Planner I
Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development
3132 Channel Drive | P.O. Box 112500 | Juneau, AK 99811

T (907) 465-6392 | F (907) 465-6984



Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 12:47 PM
To: Linda Crider; Brantner, Maren H (DOT); Crabb, Mike (DOT); Good, Sheila D (DOT); Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Cc: Chapman, Judy (DOT); Hoskins, Duane S (DOT); Laurie, Robert B (DOT)
Subject: RE: Comment on Draft STIP

Ms. Crider,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Department appreciates your comments regarding the Whitshed Road Bike and Pedestrian Path project. Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission. Based on public comment received for the Draft 2016-2019 STIP, the Department is working to accelerate the project development timeline for this project and we welcome your further participation as this project moves forward.

Speed limit determination is directed by ADOT&PF policy and a function of the region's Traffic and Safety section. There has been a series of speed studies conducted on May 16, 2011; September 10 and 11, 2012; and September 10, 2013. The studies concluded that the current 35 MPH speed limit aligns with DOT&PF policy. Any additional studies can be requested by the City of Cordova.

Road safety is a chief concern of ADOT&PF and we appreciate your comments. If you have additional questions or concerns regarding this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Duane Hoskins at 451-2382 or duane.hoskins@alaska.gov.

Best,

Sara E. Mason
Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive
Juneau, Alaska 99801
Phone: 907.465.2065 | Email: sara.mason@alaska.gov

-----Original Message-----

From: Linda Crider [<mailto:lbcridr@aol.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, August 18, 2015 9:09 AM
To: dot.stip
Cc: Chapman, Judy (DOT); Hoskins, Duane S (DOT); Laurie, Robert B (DOT)
Subject: Comment on Draft STIP

Thank you very much for allowing me to comment on the STIP for Alaska DOT & PF and making it so easy to do so. Thanks as well to Judy, Duane and Jeff for coming yesterday to Cordova to give us an overview and explain the STIP process and what projects Cordova, Alaska has and where they are on the overall list.

Comments: The community of Cordova, Alaska has been long awaiting the safety bicycle/pedestrian pathway for the 3/4mile of the Whitshed Road that links the recreational ballfields and RV park to town, via a winding narrow dangerous road. Recently that road was resurfaced and we were all holding our breath, hoping there would be added at least some paved shoulders. Unfortunately, the type of project did not allow it, even tho we were able to ask for (and got) 10ft.

travel lanes with a 1 foot shoulder and two "Bike/Ped safety 25mph recommended" speed signs. It was helpful but not sufficient. We had been asking for a speed reduction to 25 mph on this road for many years (stacks of correspondence and petitions from city, police chief, etc.) but to no avail. This community is desperately trying to make this stretch of road safer before the "inevitable horrible crash" none of us wants to see happen.

With that said, we feel the placement on the STIP with dedicated funding (moved up from status as "Illustrative") is imperative, as a safety & prevention project. This has been looked at by your engineering staff and determined that at present there is insufficient roadway surface to accommodate a path, unless a road alignment is done, which would include carving out some of the hillside and/or cantilevering in some of the pinch points. Thus the project called for a road reconstruction with bicycle/pedestrian pathway which put the price up to 12million\$ and currently us out of the possibilities for the near future.

We believe that some creative design utilizing road shoulders when necessary, could still achieve a viable project and are requesting that you consider moving the design phase up to 2016 in order to be able to look at several different options for this road that might make the cost more feasible and still make for a safer road. Perhaps some of the "left over" funding or FLAP \$ could serve to fund this design alternatives portion. The many stakeholders for this project are in agreement and supportive that something needs to be done, ASAP. Thank you for your consideration.

Dr. Linda Crider, Bicycle/pedestrian transportation safety consultant
P.O.Box 2013 Cordova, Alaska 99574 (352)359-0623 lbcrider@aol.com

August 27, 2015

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
2016-2019 Draft STIP Comments
Via email: dot_stip@alaska.gov

To Whom This Concerns:

Thank you for considering the following comments on the *2016-2019 Draft STIP* (known as the Draft STIP hereafter). Please note that I am an Alaska-licensed engineer, I served on the AMATS Technical Advisory Committee for six years, and I have been engaged in Alaska and Anchorage transportation issues for over a decade.

Solely State-Funded Projects: As someone who tracks Alaska DOT & PF project decision-making closely to help the public weigh-in on the STIP, and as I commented previously in my role as Director of the non-profit Alaska Transportation Priorities Project on the 2010-2013 Draft STIP on October 16, 2009, it is very difficult to both follow and provide public input into projects that are solely state-funded because they are not contained in the STIP. Additionally, because Alaska's STIP includes only projects with federal funding, members of the public do not have a complete picture of Alaska DOT & PF project decision-making and planning. This situation adversely affects the public's ability to comment on relevant transportation projects and how they fit together within the state's transportation system.

This lack of transparency includes major projects without federal funding but likely to cost hundreds of millions of dollars such as the proposed roads to Ambler and Umiat. Please include major, wholly state-funded projects in the 2016-2019 Final STIP to ensure that the public and federal decision-makers have a complete picture of the state's transportation choices. And in the future, please allow public comment on wholly state-funded projects.

The Draft STIP is Inconsistent with State Budget Realities. As discussed in the introduction to the Draft STIP on page 1, "Projects in the STIP must be consistent with, and implement, the policies of Let's Get Moving 2030, the Statewide Long Range Transportation Policy Plan (this plan is currently being updated)." With the dramatically lower current price of oil, the State of Alaska is anticipated to have serious, short- to mid-term budget deficits. Given these new budget realities, the Let's Get Moving 2030 Long Range Transportation Policy Plan (LRTPP) document is wholly out of date. It is unclear how the state will fully fund maintenance and operations much less pursue mega-projects like the Knik Arm Bridge and Juneau Access. These items are all included in the existing LRTPP. *Because the LRTPP is out of date and the state is behind schedule in completing an update, the federal government should carefully scrutinize the consistency of the Draft STIP with the state's long-range transportation planning.*

Knik Arm Crossing, projects 20255 and 20256. The Draft STIP contains over \$915 million for the Knik Arm Crossing. The key reasons the state should remove this project from the Final STIP are:

1. During a period of low crude oil prices and thus low state revenues, the state needs to stop hemorrhaging money for this costly, unnecessary project, and should instead use

federal transportation money for higher priority projects like upgrading existing state transportation infrastructure including the large number of highway bridges needing upgrades.

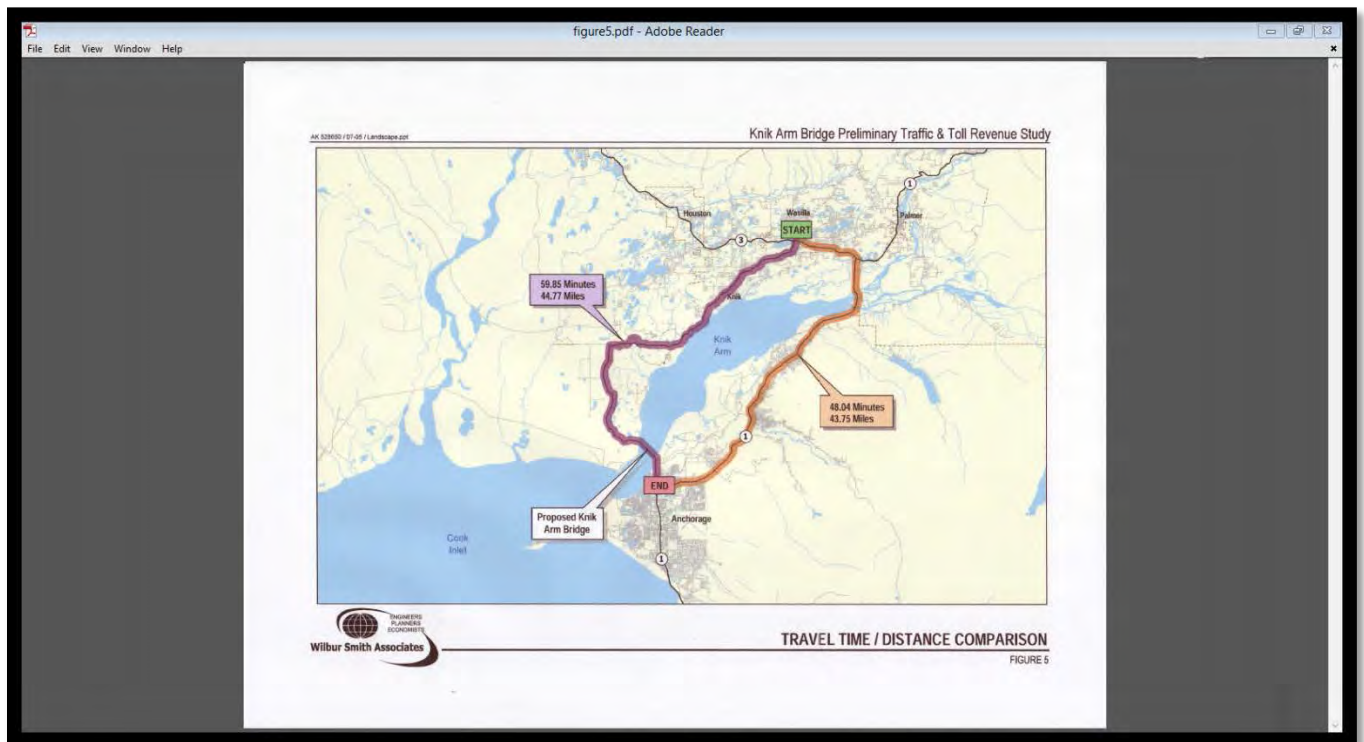
2. Other system development projects with broad public support would be better uses of funds currently intended for the Knik Arm Crossing. These projects include connecting the Seward Highway to International Airport Road and the proposed Wasilla Bypass.
3. Toll revenues will not be sufficient to build and operate the bridge, so paying for the bridge will adversely impact transportation funding for Anchorage, likely for decades. As the state's largest community by far, Anchorage can ill-afford to spend a significant proportion of its federal and state transportation dollars on what's likely to be a lightly-used bridge. Official DOT/Knik Arm Bridge estimates of the future population living near the bridge in the Mat-Su Borough – and thus the numbers of toll bridge users – are very high compared to estimates developed by AMATS and the Mat-Su Borough.
4. It is a shorter distance and would take less time to travel to Anchorage via the toll-free Glenn Highway from Wasilla and Palmer than to take the proposed toll bridge. This means the bridge will have relatively few users for many years, and perhaps forever. See the Attachment, developed by a Knik Arm Bridge and Toll Authority contractor.
5. On July 23, 2015, the AMATS Policy Committee passed a unanimous resolution expressing its "reservations regarding the need, impact and cost of the Knik Arm Crossing Project, and ask that the project be revisited as part of the 2040 MTP update process." This state and local near-rejection of the proposed project should be taken into consideration by DOT & PF prior to allocating substantial sums to the project in 2016-2019.

Thank you very much for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Lois Epstein, P.E.

Attachment
Longer Distance and More Time to Get to Anchorage Via the Proposed Bridge



Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Brantner, Maren H (DOT)
Sent: Monday, November 23, 2015 2:24 PM
To: 'Lois Epstein'; dot.stip
Cc: john.lohrey@dot.gov
Subject: RE: 2016-2019 Draft STIP comments

Ms. Epstein,

We appreciate you taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

The Department recognizes the importance of balancing preservation and maintenance of the State's transportation system with the need to plan for future expansion of the system. The Draft 2016-2019 STIP directs over \$100 million per year to three regional programs focused on addressing pavement and bridge preservation. Additionally, there is funding directed to existing infrastructure that needs more extensive work than would qualify for those three regional programs. The increased emphasis on preservation has already shown to result in improving pavement conditions within the state based on pavement data gathered as part of our Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS).

Regarding your comments on Knik Arm Crossing (Need IDs 20255 and 20256) and Juneau Access (Need ID 19214) listed in the Draft 2016-2019 STIP, we understand that you have concerns related to these projects. Per the Governor's direction under Administrative Order 271, the Department is currently moving forward with completing the permitting processes for the Knik Arm Crossing and securing financing for the project. Upon completion of these activities, a final determination on the viability of constructing this project will be decided. In addition, the Department intends to complete the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS), including the Record of Decision for the Juneau Access project. The SEIS will provide guidance on a future course of action. With regards to the Ambler Mining District Industrial Road, this is an AIDEA project and the Department does not have discretion over its funding.

The Department will be considering a southbound Glenn Highway expansion project from Hiland Road to Artillery Road in future STIP amendments, but this initial draft STIP was conservatively focused on carrying forward existing projects and limiting new projects primarily to preservation and maintenance of the existing transportation system.

Lastly, thank you for your suggestion about easily sortable STIP project information files. We are currently using FHWA staff as a resource in developing a more user-friendly STIP tool and your comments will help guide this effort.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Surface Transportation Planning Manager for Central Region, David Post at 907-269-0512 or david.post@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

Maren Brantner

STIP Planner III, DOT&PF

T (907) 465-2744 | F (907) 465-6984

"Keep Alaska Moving through service and infrastructure."

From: Lois Epstein [mailto:loisepstein@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2015 4:28 PM

To: dot.stip <dot.stip@alaska.gov>

Cc: john.lohrey@dot.gov

Subject: 2016-2019 Draft STIP comments

Sorry, I hit the Send button instead of the attachment button. My comments are attached.

On Thu, Aug 27, 2015 at 4:25 PM, Lois Epstein <loisepstein@gmail.com> wrote:

Thank you for your interest in addressing the attached 2016-2019 Draft STIP comments. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Lois Epstein, P.E.

[907 748-0448](tel:9077480448)

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: mardell and mark <mardiz@aptalaska.net>
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2015 10:59 AM
To: dot.stip
Subject: Comment on Draft STIP

I am asking that the Dept. of Transportation seriously consider the Alternate Plan 4C (All Marine Alternative) for the Juneau Access road project. The ferry system is a reliable year round, all weather, safe, comfortable method of moving people & equipment.

The road proposed from Juneau toward Skagway may not meet those same criteria.
Please consider the Alternate 4C (All Marine Alternative) in your decision making for the Juneau Access road Project.

Thank you for your consideration,
Mark S. Kistler Haines, Ak 99827

Sent from my iPad

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Good, Sheila D (DOT)
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2015 2:08 PM
To: mardiz@aptalaska.net
Cc: dot.stip; Heidemann, Marie E (DOT)
Subject: Comment on Draft STIP

Mr. Kistler,

We appreciate you taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

Thank you for the comments you provided regarding Juneau Access (Need ID 19214) listed in the Draft 2016-2019 STIP. We understand that you prefer Alternative 4C (all marine alternative) for the Juneau Access project . Per the Governor's direction under Administrative Order 271, the Department intends to complete the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS), including the Record of Decision. The SEIS will provide guidance on a future course of action. We appreciate and look forward to your continued involvement in the STIP process.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Southcoast Region, Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1775 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov

Sincerely,

Sheila Good

Transportation Planner I
Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development
3132 Channel Drive | P.O. Box 112500 | Juneau, AK 99811

T (907) 465-6392 | F (907) 465-6984



Good, Sheila D (DOT)

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 2:36 PM
To: dot.stip
Cc: Potter, Shelley M (DOT)
Subject: FW: 6617 - Shepard Point Road

Categories: Red Category



FYI

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 1:26 PM
To: 'mary bishop'
Subject: RE: 6617 - Shepard Point Road

Ms. Bishop,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Department appreciates your comments regarding the Shepard Point Road project. Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

Currently ADOT&PF's role in the Project is that of a cooperating agency; this role is a contributing role to the overall project. The responsibilities of ADOT&PF are as follows:

- Program federal aid highway funds to the road project construction via the STIP.
 - o These funds will only be utilized when the construction phase of the project is authorized to begin. Until that time the federal highway funding amount of \$5.5 million will be annotated in the current federal fiscal year. This is a single contribution of \$5.5 million towards the project.
- Function as the pass-through agency for the expenditure of Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) Investment Fund allocations for the project, currently managed by the Alaska Department of Revenue.
 - o These funds are required to be expended towards a project located at Shepard Point by the Alyeska Consent Decree issued by the U.S. District Court in 1992. ADOT&PF is required to act on this fund as a fiscal agent only; we do not have the authority to amend nor rescind this fund.
- The Shepard Point Road project listed in the STIP is not managed by ADOT&PF.
 - o Any concerns regarding project feasibility and development should be directed to the Federal Highway Administration, Western Federal Lands (WFL) division at (360) 619-7700 or wfl.fhwa@dot.gov. (Your STIP comment will be shared with WFL by ADOT&PF.)

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding our role in this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Duane Hoskins at 451-2382 or duane.hoskins@alaska.gov.

Best,

Sara

Sara E. Mason
Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive

Juneau, Alaska 99801

☎: 907.465.2065 | ✉: sara.mason@alaska.gov

-----Original Message-----

From: mary bishop [<mailto:bishopmary@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, August 25, 2015 9:58 PM

To: dot.stip

Subject: ID: 6617 - Shepard Point Road

The Prince William Sound Audubon Society is based in Cordova Alaska and represents a membership primarily from Cordova, but also from throughout the Prince William Sound region.

We are providing you with our comments on the Draft 2016-2019 STIP, and specifically as it applies to project 6617, Shepard Point Road.

Audubon is concerned that the the draft shows that this bogus road project will receive \$5 million in STP funds and \$496,317 in state match (SM).

Project 6617 Shepard Point Road needs to be taken off the books for good. Justification for the road has always been in order to build a oil spill response facilities for deep draft spill response vessels.

However, nowhere in the existing state and federal spill response strategies for Prince William Sound are deep draft vessels listed nor is the need for deep draft spill vessels. There are viable alternative sites for the Cordova oil spill response facility that would be less expensive, easier to reach, on the current road system, safer and are available.

We respectfully request that NO STATE MATCH BE PROVIDED and NO STP funds be provided for FY2016-2019.

And we request that no more funding be provided for this proposed road.

Thank you very much for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Mary Anne Bishop, President

Prince William Sound Audubon Society

PO Box 2396

Cordova, Alaska 99574



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

Planning and Land Use Department

Planning Division

350 East Dahlia Avenue • Palmer, AK 99645

Phone (907) 861-7833 • Fax (907) 745-9876

www.matsugov.us

August 25, 2015

State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Mr. Mike Vigue

Director, Division of Program Development

P.O. Box 112500

Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500

RE: Matanuska Susitna Borough Comment on 2016-2019 Draft STIP

Dear Mr. Vigue:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 2016-2019 Draft STIP. The Matanuska Susitna Borough Planning Division (MSB) is pleased to see the Glenn Highway Erosion Protection project, Need ID 30249, was added to the STIP and funded with a total of \$5.6 million for federal fiscal year 2016. The erosion issues along the Matanuska River are an on-going priority concern for our communities, given the continual deterioration of DOT&PF facility assets within the MSB. The MSB would like to express support to DOT&PF for funding this project and would support additional funding, if it becomes available in future years, for continuous erosion prevention projects along the Glenn Highway, a statewide roadway asset to *Keep Alaska Moving*.

Respectfully,

Eileen Probasco, Director
Planning and Land Use



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

3132 Channel, Suite 200
PO Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500
Main: 907.465.4070
Fax: 907.465.6984
TTY/TTD: 907.465.3657
dot.state.ak.us

October 16, 2015

Eileen Probasco
Director, Planning and Land Use Department
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
350 E Dahlia Avenue
Palmer, Alaska 99645

RE: Matanuska Susitna Borough Comment on 2016-2019 Draft STIP

Ms. Probasco,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

The Glenn Highway is an important interstate route connecting Alaska's most populated region with Canada and the Lower 48, and the Department is committed to maintaining this asset and enhancing safety within the corridor. We are glad to hear that the Matanuska-Susitna Borough supports the Glenn Highway Erosion Protection project.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding our role in this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Allen Kemplen at 269-0513 or allen.kemplen@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Sara", written over a horizontal line.

Sara Mason
Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs
Division of Program Development

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 2:37 PM
To: dot.stip
Cc: Potter, Shelley M (DOT)
Subject: FW: DOT STIP 2016-2019



FYI

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 1:48 PM
To: 'Matt Sprau'
Subject: RE: DOT STIP 2016-2019

Mr. Sprau,

Thank you for taking the time to comment on the Draft 2016-2019 STIP. We appreciate your support of the Gold Mine Trail Road Upgrades project. Based on comments received, the Department is working to accelerate the project development schedule of this project. Please be sure to review the 2016-2019 STIP, upon approval, for changes to the project.

Regarding your concerns for the speed limits on this road, please be assured we will design it to meet current standards for the posted speed limit. Your concern has been shared with Northern Region's Traffic & Safety Engineer and they will commit to gathering before and after speed data to see what changes, if any, have occurred.

Road safety is a chief concern of ADOT&PF and we appreciate your comments. If you have additional questions or concerns regarding this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Margaret Carpenter at 451-2252 or margaret.carpenter@alaska.gov.

Best,

Sara

Sara E. Mason

Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive
Juneau, Alaska 99801
☎: 907.465.2065 | ✉: sara.mason@alaska.gov

From: Matt Sprau [<mailto:matt.sprau@gmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, August 18, 2015 12:57 PM
To: dot.stip
Cc: Erin Trochim
Subject: DOT STIP 2016-2019

Hi,

I wanted to show my support for the Gold Mine Trail Road Upgrade (Need ID 26080). I would also suggest raising its priority, if possible, as the two 90 degree turns at the bottom are pretty dangerous and the wash-boarding on the dirt section can catch a driver off-guard. While I support this project, the road should be designed to account for a possible increase in excessive driving speeds. We are fairly new to Gold Mine Trail

but can attest that quite a few people travel at speeds greater than 30mph as it currently is, and paving/straightening may lead to more speeding. I'm not sure what all could be done other than adding more speed limit signs but wanted to bring it up.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment.

Thanks,
Matt Sprau

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: hhancock12@alaska.net
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2015 11:17 AM
To: dot.stip
Cc: skesler@gci.com
Subject: KNIK Arm Crossing

This is to recommend that the state of Alaska put the KNIK Arm Crossing project on the "back burner" for the present. No other funds should go into it, nor should any further planning go into it for the following reason:

As it is now planned, it DOES NOT shorten the distance from Anchorage to Palmer or Wasilla. It's greatest use would be manifested if there were a straight road north from Point MacKenzie to the intersection of Parks Highway and Big Lake Road. There being no plans for such a road, it is not useful to build the KNIK ARM Crossing at the time.

Mavis Hancock, At-Large member, Government Hill Community Council

Good, Sheila D (DOT)

From: Good, Sheila D (DOT)
Sent: Thursday, October 01, 2015 4:47 PM
To: 'hhancock12@alaska.net'
Cc: dot.stip; Post, David E (DOT)
Subject: KNIK Arm Crossing

Ms. Hancock,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

Regarding your comments on Knik Arm Crossing (Need IDs 20255 and 20256), we understand that you have concerns related to this project. Per the Governor's direction under Administrative Order 271, the Department is currently moving forward with completing the permitting processes and securing financing for the project. Upon completion of these activities, a final determination on the viability of constructing this project will be decided.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the Knik Arm Crossing project, please do not hesitate to contact the Knik Arm Crossing Project Director, Judy Dougherty, at 907-269-6698 or judy.dougherty@alaska.gov or if you have questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Central Region, David Post at 907-269-0512 or david.post@alaska.gov

Sincerely,
Sheila Good

Transportation Planner I
Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development
3132 Channel Drive | P.O. Box 112500 | Juneau, AK 99811

T (907) 465-6392 | F (907) 465-6984



Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Maxwell Mercer <maxwellmercer@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 22, 2015 10:28 AM
To: dot.stip
Subject: Comment on Draft STIP

Hello:

My name is Maxwell Mercer and I live at 600 Main Street in Ketchikan. I ride my bike as primary transportation from Ketchikan on S. Tongass Highway through Saxman on a daily basis. I am strongly in favor of the pedestrian upgrades planned for S. Tongass Highway from Ketchikan to Surf Street. Please get to work on these projects, as biking in that area is very dangerous and the highway shoulders are virtually nonexistent.

Thank You.

Maxwell Mercer

mercerconsulting

Maxwell Mercer, M.S., L.P.C
907-617-2994

https://www.linkedin.com/profile/public-profile-settings?trk=prof-edit-edit-public_profile

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Good, Sheila D (DOT)
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2015 10:41 AM
To: maxwellmercer@hotmail.com
Cc: dot.stip; Heidemann, Marie E (DOT)
Subject: Comment on Draft STIP

Mr. Mercer,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

We appreciate the comment you provided regarding the two South Tongass Highway projects from Ketchikan through to Surf Street (Need IDs 21114 and 23455) listed in the Draft 2016-2019 STIP. Your comment has been shared with the Southcoast Region Planning Division and the appropriate Project Manager. Pedestrian and road safety is a chief concern of ADOT&PF. Design of both projects has commenced with a focus on improving the safe movement of vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian traffic along the South Tongass Highway.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Southcoast Region, Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1775 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

Sheila Good

Transportation Planner I
Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development
3132 Channel Drive | P.O. Box 112500 | Juneau, AK 99811

T (907) 465-6392 | F (907) 465-6984





Municipality of Skagway

GATEWAY TO THE KLONDIKE

P.O. BOX 415 SKAGWAY, ALASKA 99840

(PHONE) 907-983-2297 – Fax 907-983-2151

WWW.SKAGWAY.ORG

SENT VIA EMAIL

August 14, 2015

State of Alaska, DOT&PF
Program Development
P.O. Box 112500
Juneau, AK 99811-2500
dot.stip@alaska.gov

RE: Comments on 2016 – 2019 Draft STIP

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the 2016 – 2019 draft STIP.

The Municipality of Skagway continues to support the replacement of the Captain William Henry Moore Bridge in Skagway (Need ID 6059). The new bridge will be a reliable link on the Klondike Highway and will provide increased weight capacity for the projected increase in visitor, commercial and heavy haul truck traffic. The bridge is historically significant due to its unique design, and the Municipality supports a future discussion regarding options for the old bridge's preservation.

The Municipality of Skagway also fully supports projects related to the Alaska Marine Highway System. In particular, the Municipality supports the refurbishment of the ferry float in Skagway (Need ID 13883), though we have commented in the past that it is ideal for the float to eventually be replaced.

The Municipality welcomes the opportunity to work together with the department on these projects in the future.

Thank you,

Scott A. Hahn
Borough Manager
s.hahn@skagway.org



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**

GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

3132 Channel, Suite 200
PO Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500
Main: 907.465.4070
Fax: 907.465.6984
TTY/TTD: 907.465.3657
dot.state.ak.us

September 24, 2015

Scott Hahn, Borough Manager
Municipality of Skagway
P.O. Box 415
Skagway, AK 99840

Dear Mr. Hahn,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

We appreciate your indication of support for the Captain William Henry Moore Bridge project and those projects related to the Alaska Marine Highway System. Please note that discussions regarding options for the old Captain William Henry Moore Bridge are actively occurring. We appreciate and look forward to your continued involvement in the STIP process.

Additionally, your comment has been shared with the Captain William Henry Moore Bridge Project Manager, Darryl Lester. If you wish to contact him with questions or concerns, you may call him at 907-465-4421 or email him at darryl.lester@alaska.gov. If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Southcoast Region, Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1775 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sheila Good".

Sheila Good
Transportation Planner I



Municipality of Skagway

GATEWAY TO THE KLONDIKE

P.O. BOX 415 SKAGWAY, ALASKA 99840

(PHONE) 907-983-2297 – Fax 907-983-2151

WWW.SKAGWAY.ORG

August 20, 2015

SENT VIA EMAIL

State of Alaska DOT&PF
Program Development
P.O. Box 112500
Juneau, AK 99811-2500
dot.stip@alaska.gov

The mechanical issues experienced by the MV Columbia and other Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) vessels this summer serve as an urgent reminder of the pressing need to replace and refurbish our aging ferry fleet.

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities' (DOT&PF) 2014 Draft Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan recognizes the need to replace or retire the aging vessels by 2024. In reviewing the Draft FY 2016-2019 STIP there appears to be \$16.5 million budgeted for the next three years and \$26.4 million budgeted for after FY 2019 for "Design/Construct/Lease/Purchase Ferryboats & Terminals." This level of funding will not be sufficient to fund replacement of one or more mainline vessels.

The Municipality of Skagway recognizes the unexpected fiscal challenges facing the State and is prepared to work with DOT&PF to identify ways to increase revenue and reduce AMHS costs. However, we believe it would be a wise use of resources to leverage the federal funds that are available to the State of Alaska for capital construction projects to develop new, more efficient vessels that will cost the State less to operate and repair.

For more than fifty years, the M/V Taku, Malaspina and Matanuska have connected eleven communities between Skagway and Bellingham, fostering economic development and providing a reliable, affordable link between Alaska and the lower 48. The ongoing mechanical issues jeopardize not only our economies and ability to travel between communities, but could, under adverse weather circumstances, result in a maritime disaster.

We urge you to prioritize replacement of a mainliner vessel by including adequate funding in the FY 2016-2019 STIP.

Sincerely,

Mark Schaefer, Mayor
Municipality of Skagway
mpschaefer@skagway.org



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

3132 Channel, Suite 200
PO Box 112500
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dot.state.ak.us

October 13, 2015

Mark Schaefer, Mayor
Municipality of Skagway
P.O. Box 415
Skagway, Alaska 99840

RE: Draft 2016-2019 STIP Comments

Mayor Schaefer,

We appreciate you taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the DOT&PF mission.

The recent M/V Columbia service outage was not caused by an aging fleet problem, rather a problem with one of the newly installed engines during her repower. Regardless, we do have aging fleet issues which most often appear as ships delayed coming out of scheduled maintenance periods due to discovery work. The State of Alaska supports new build projects and considers the federal program as it relates to funding new build vessels, as well as the use of available State funds. While the STIP reflects federal funding in the "After 2019" column, it does not mean that construction of the Tustumena Replacement Vessel will not have obligated funds prior to that time. Amendments to the STIP will occur as funding strategies are developed and projects are prioritized.

The M/V Tustumena Replacement is expected to have final design complete in January 2016. The State is also currently building two new Alaska Class Ferries using State funding resources to serve Northern Lynn Canal. This will eliminate the need for a mainliner as we seek to recapitalize and downsize the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) fleet to a more affordable/sustainable size. All AMHS vessels are inspected by the USCG and maintained in a safe operating condition, or else they do not sail.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Southcoast Highways Planner, Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1775 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov or the Marine Highway System Planner, Christa Hagan, at 907-228-6801 or christa.hagan@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Sara Mason".

Sara Mason
Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs
Division of Program Development

FIRST THINGS FIRST

ALASKA FOUNDATION

P.O. Box 240605
Douglas, AK 99824

907.586.1254 phone
907.463.3433 fax
ftffoundation.org

27 August 2015

Neil MacKinnon
President

Rosemary Hagevig
Vice President

Joseph Kahklen
Secretary

Frank Bergstrom
Treasurer

Directors

Corey Baxter
Richard Burns
Naomi Hobbs
John Sandor
Scott Spickler
Karen Taug

Denny DeWitt
Executive Director

State of Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development
ATTN: STIP
PO BOX 112500
Juneau, AK 99811-2500
dot.stip@alaska.gov

Comment on The 2016-2019 Draft STIP - Juneau Access: Glacier Highway MP
40.5-91.9

First Things First Alaska Foundation is pleased to see that Juneau Access remains part of the 2016 – 2019 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) with funding for construction in the 2017 fiscal year. We are concerned that there is no allocation for fiscal years 2018 and 2019. This is a project that will link Juneau to the state's highway system and support significant economic development.

We appreciate that the administration has allowed the SEIS process to continue. It should be completed in the 2016 fiscal year. Moving ahead with the Juneau Access project not only provides Alaskans better access to their state Capital, it provides an opportunity to reduce transportation costs for Juneau and much of Southeast Alaska. This addition to the road system will relieve pressure on the Marine Highway System and allow it to better serve other communities in Southeast Alaska.

The construction project will be long and significant and will provide much needed jobs in the construction industry for several years, including a significant opportunity for Alaska-based construction firms and their Alaskan employees. The road will be extremely beneficial to Juneau's growing fishing industry. Even with a short ferry shuttle link, it will provide a 24/7 transportation corridor for delivering fresh seafood to market. Simply, the Juneau Access project will enhance Southeast Alaska's economy and benefit citizens and businesses throughout our region including our neighbors to the north.

First Things First Alaska Foundation (FTFAF) is dedicated to preserving the economic viability and future of Alaska through education. There is a clear need to educate the public on the benefits of responsible economic development and natural resource management.

While we understand the difficulty of including added funding for the Juneau Access project until the final EIS is completed and there is a Record of Decision (ROD), we expect to see a STIP amendment after the ROD to continue with construction in fiscal years 2018 and 2019.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Neil MacKinnon', followed by a long horizontal line.

Neil MacKinnon
President

cc: Representative Cathy Munoz
Senator Dennis Egan
Representative Sam Kito III



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**

GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

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October 16, 2015

Neil MacKinnon, President
First Things First Alaska Foundation
P.O. Box 240605
Douglas, AK 99824

Dear Mr. MacKinnon,

Thank you for the comments you provided regarding Juneau Access (Need ID 19214) listed in the Draft 2016-19 STIP. We understand that you support this project and would like to see it move forward.

At this time, the Department intends to complete the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. Please note that the funding listed in Federal Fiscal Year 2018 is for Phase 2, final design rather than for construction. The Department is considering all alternatives going forward into a new Record of Decision, which will ultimately guide the funding programmed into future amendments to the 2016-19 STIP and/or future STIP documents.

If you have questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Southcoast Region, Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1775 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov. For additional information on the Juneau Access project, please contact Gary Hogins at 907-465-8143 or gary.hogins@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Sara Mason".

Sara Mason
Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs
Division of Program Development

North Slope Borough

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

P.O. Box 69
Barrow, Alaska 99723
Phone: 907 852-2611 or 0200
Fax: 907 852-0337 or 2595
email: charlotte.brower@north-slope.org



Charlotte E. Brower, Mayor

July 14, 2015

Commissioner Marc Luiken
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
PO Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500

Subject: Ahkovak Street upgrades ID# 16177, (please see page 29 of 55 of STIP)

Dear Commissioner Luiken:

This letter is to request assistance in keeping the Ahkovak Road project in Barrow on schedule for a 2017 construction date. The new 2016 – 2019 Draft STIP is proposing to move the project to 2019 for construction. This is too long and unnecessary.

Funding and appropriations for the Ahkovak Road project have already been authorized. Design work has commenced this year, and preconstruction design is scheduled to commence by the end of next year. It is reasonable to continue moving forward with a goal of seeing construction begin in 2017.

As the entire world begins looking towards the Arctic for future development, our community is seeing increased pressure upon the entire airport facility. Commercial air services for passengers and cargo are seeing steady demand, and there is increasing use from the US Coast Guard, research institutions, offshore development companies, and our own search & rescue. Ahkovak Road is the road connecting the airport, and it needs to be fixed in order to help begin longer term efforts to facilitate expansion and development.

Please take a closer look at this issue, and make every effort to expedite the project on the STIP for construction in 2017.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express appreciation and thanks to the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities for all the hard work getting the Dalton Highway opened up during the flooding. Much of the public attention was focused on the impact to the oil industry, but overlooked the fact that the Dalton is our only surface connection for local residents in our villages. We appreciate the effort your department made.

Thank you for looking into this matter and providing any assistance possible.

Sincerely,


Charlotte Brower
Mayor



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

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September 15, 2015

Charlotte E. Brower, Mayor
North Slope Borough
P.O. Box 69
Barrow, Alaska 99723

Subject: STIP 2016-2019 Comment – Ahkovak Street Upgrade, Need ID #16177

Dear Mayor Brower:

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Department appreciates your comments regarding the Ahkovak Street Upgrade project in Barrow, Alaska. Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the Departments' mission.

Your comments urging construction for the project to be moved from FFY 2019 to FFY 2017 will be taken under advisement as the 2016-2019 STIP is finalized. Please keep in mind that as this four year program period moves along we will have opportunities to modify the funding schedule for construction through STIP amendments, as the project development progresses. The Department shares your interest in keeping the project on schedule and—with limited STIP funding in mind—we are working with regional staff to ensure that projects are delivered for construction as they are ready.

While the project did receive federal legislative authority in the amount of \$7,500,000 in the SFY16 capital budget, this is only one facet involved with project funding; the other being the availability of the federal funds for which authority to expend was granted.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Alexa Greene at 451-2388 or alexa.greene@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sheila Good".

Sheila Good
STIP Manager

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Patricia Phillips <pacific@hughes.net>
Sent: Thursday, August 06, 2015 12:09 PM
To: dot.stip
Subject: Comment on Draft STIP

This is to support and add comments on the following projects in the STIP:

Project 18358: Ferry Refurbishment – given the age of the AMHS fleet – the amount of money to refurbish the AMHS fleet may be enough for identified conditions surveyed items; it is the unknown conditions that drive up the cost of refurbishment. May not be enough dollars to supports identified and unidentified condition refurbishments.

Project 18359: Design/construct/Lease/Purchase Ferryboats and Terminals – need to begin the replacement process for the M/V LeConte; that services the remote rural communities; including Pelican.

Install shoreside power at Pelican for the overnight mooring of the M/V LeConte at Pelican. Pelican has abundant hydroelectric power and the M/V Leconte can plug into shore power; reducing carbon emissions by utilizing renewable clean energy.

Project 3028: – Kake Access – this has been a long identified energy/road corridor and will provide a corridor for economic development and clean energy transmission.

Project 19214 Juneau Access: Glacier Highway MP 40.5-91.1 Complete the design, preliminary engineering, environmental documents, permitting process so that the construction phase can be completed.

Project 28811: Pelican Main Street Bridge (No. 1268) – The \$600,000 is not enough to complete the refurbishment. AK DOT completed a Condition Assessment for the Pelican Main Street Bridge (Boardwalk) and design documents; the City of Pelican and AK DOT partnered successful award of Denali Commission Transportation Funds; the construction completed the less difficult sections of the Pelican Main Street Bridge; however the remaining portion is over the tidal area of the Pelican Harbor and has areas of deterioration that will require setting new posts and complete stringer replacement; thus requiring additional funds for refurbishment.

I see no reference to Harbor Improvements in the STIP. The City of Pelican has E Float that needs significant refurbishment – the City took over ownership of the Pelican Harbor with the understanding that the State would provide funds for major repairs; the State's condition assessment underestimated the condition of the docks and the City ended up replacing portions of the dock that were in most disrepair.

Not identified in the STIP and should be is the Elfin Cove outer float including the seaplane float, the ramp does not meet handicap access requirements and is dangerous to walk up or down on during a significant minus tide.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,

Patricia Phillips

PO Box 109

Pelican, Alaska 99832

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Good, Sheila D (DOT)
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2015 3:31 PM
To: pacific@hughes.net
Cc: dot.stip; Heidemann, Marie E (DOT); Hagan, Christa M (DOT)
Subject: Comment on Draft STIP

Ms. Phillips,

We appreciate you taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

The funding identified in Need ID 18358: Ferry Refurbishment is obligated on an as-needed basis to projects that are developed using annual surveys, condition assessments and critical need assessments. The dollar amount will fluctuate as we obligate vessel specific projects from this Need ID in a given year. We have completed the Columbia Repower project and have just obligated the Matanuska Repower project, Need ID 29409 in the 2012-2015 STIP. Providing service to the coastal communities of Alaska is the priority of the Alaska Marine Highway System and new builds are being supported; the Tustumena Replacement vessel (Need ID 30189) is in final design and the two Alaska Class Ferries are under construction.

Thank you for your project suggestions to install shoreside power at the Pelican dock for overnight mooring of the M/V LeConte from Need ID 18359: Design/construct/Lease/Purchase Ferryboats. Much like the Ferry Refurbishment funding identified above, the funding associated with this Need ID is also obligated for projects on an as-needed basis based on annual surveys, condition assessments and critical need assessments.

Thank you for your support to complete Juneau Access (Need ID 19214). Per the Governor's direction under Administrative Order 271, the Department intends to complete the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS), including the Record of Decision. The SEIS will provide guidance on a future course of action. The Department is also currently in the process of developing an Environmental Impact Statement for Kake Access (NID 3028), which will provide guidance on a future course of action.

The Pelican Main Street Bridge project (Need ID 28811) is showing in the Draft 2016-19 STIP with \$600,000 in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2016 to begin design work. There is additional funding listed in the later years to continue to move the project forward. The Phase 4 (construction) estimate currently listed is \$15M in FFY19; however this is a preliminary estimate. It is entirely possible that this estimate is too high given both statewide priorities and the community's ability to provide match. As the project moves forward the construction estimate will be refined after a full assessment of the refurbishment needs and associated costs are determined. We anticipate refurbishing the bridge sufficiently to have it be removed from the bridge deficiency list, but likely will not be able to do a full replacement. The Department and the City of Pelican will need to agree on a final scope of work given the bridge needs and funding availability. In addition, the City of Pelican will need to agree to pay the 9.03% required match.

Regarding the Pelican Harbor and the Elfin Cove, harbor improvements not associated with Alaska Marine Highway System are typically not included in the STIP. Further, the City of Pelican took the harbor over in an "as is" condition and the Alaska Legislature appropriated \$1,451,142 in deferred maintenance funds as part of the transfer of ownership. I am pleased to inform you that the Department is designing a state funded project that will address the deficiencies that you have identified. After the project is constructed in 2016, the Elfin Cove Outer Float gangway will be compliant with the ADA standards.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Southcoast Region, Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1775 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov or Alaska Marine Highway Planner, Christa Hagan at 228-6801 or christa.hagan@alaska.gov

Sincerely,

Sheila Good

Transportation Planner I
Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development
3132 Channel Drive | P.O. Box 112500 | Juneau, AK 99811

T (907) 465-6392 | F (907) 465-6984



Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Patzy Finney <bfnz2004@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 30, 2015 8:44 AM
To: dot.stip
Subject: Re. Ketchikan Project 27621

To whom it may concern,

I attended the community meeting hosted by Andy Hughes and Marie Heidemann here in Ketchikan on July 27th. Even though I spoke towards Project 27621 they have encouraged me to also write a letter with my thoughts on the upcoming project.

I would first like to say how wonderful it is to have the full 34 miles of our mainline highway paved as of this spring. I've lived in Ketchikan most of my life and traveled both ends of our highway as a gravel surface. Kudos went out to our local DOT staff that had to maintain those ends of the highway and keep up with all their other duties. As you may know Ketchikan will receive almost a million visitors just off the cruise ships this summer. The negative effect all the traffic has had on our infrastructure is only balanced with the fact that the visitors are a necessary component of the economy of Ketchikan now.

I would however like to address the deterioration of 1st Waterfall Bridge since moving to the North end in 1996:

Our gravel road was upgraded to a chip seal surface and the bridges were passed over for reasons you will know.

Then our chip seal was upgraded to an asphalt surface and the bridges were passed over for reasons you will also know.

The pavement has lead to higher travel speeds by the general public that don't understand they are also accelerating the speed at which our bridge is deteriorating.

The bridge inspections the past couple years have lead to:

- A) Lowering the load limit
- B) Narrowing the travel lanes to basically 1 and half lanes with cones set up on the downstream side to shift travel to the upstream side of the bridge where it is stronger.
- C) Which has quickly lead to deterioration of the bridge deck surface to the point that DOT Maintenance has covered one area with a steel plate because cold patch will not stay in the pot hole in the rubberized surface.
- D) Weekend vandals/hooligans would chuck the cones over the side of the bridge so DOT tried nailing them to the surface, this has just lead to me as a citizen resetting the cones on my way to work so the public stays safe. DOT doesn't have time to keep coming out to check if the cones are in order.

My concerns as a citizen that lives just North of this bridge are:

- 1) I would like safe access to my property.
- 2) I would like our North Tongass Fire Department to have safe access to provide service to residents.
- 3) I would like DOT Maintenance to be able to efficiently do their job ie. fully loaded sand truck when they need to plow or sand across these bridges during the winter months.
- 4) My neighborhood deserves to come and go safely, freely to work and play.

- 5) We have a fishing resort although a seasonal operation is probably of the largest tax benefit to our borough government.
- 6) We also have a state park at the end of the highway with a trail system. These are used by members of my community and visitors alike, they need safe access.
- 7) There is still room for Home Development in my neighborhood, the bridges need to be strong enough to bring equipment and supplies across.

1st Waterfall Bridge is just around a corner in the road at mile 16. My suggestion to help with decreasing the speed of deterioration til you can start the project would be to post a lower speed limit across the bridge. I stood on the bridge setting up the cones while a passenger vehicle crossed and felt the vibration, it was scary. Imagine the effect of much larger vehicles traveling at to high a speed. Andy Hughes explained and concurred it's like a wave effect and not good. I also stated my concerns that come winter a steel plate is going to attract cold first even before a bridge deck it's all an accident waiting to happen. Let alone an overloaded dump truck or any other heavy piece of equipment that doesn't obey the load limit.

I appreciate the lengthy process from a community's wish list of projects, to decision making as to who gets what, and actual award and completion of project. I just don't think the community understands how long that process is as there were only a total of 6 members of the community at the local meeting, not including the communications staff and your staff. The community members were 4 in construction with an understanding of what a STIP is, a borough assemblyman, and a legislative aide. I was told that they did meet with city, borough and KIC officials though. But I'm not sure they would or could have conveyed my strong feelings on 'MY' bridge.

I Thanked Andy and Marie for coming and provided them with pictures of what the setup looks like on 1st Waterfall that I've looked at and used for the past 2 years. Cones set along the edge increased this year to half a lane. 1st Waterfall Bridge should just be labeled a one lane bridge because safely that's what it is. Alders grow fast and even though there is an orange sign that says road narrows even signs require maintenance . Our DOT guys are working hard to clear the ditches closer to town, it all takes time, please help them.

I will Thank You also if you have read my letter and my input. I understand the wish list is long and anything we get on that list will be an improvement I just hope the bridges make the cut.

Sincerely,

Patricia Finney
16317 North Tongass Highway
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901
907-225-4701
bfnz2004@kpunet.net

Good, Sheila D (DOT)

From: Good, Sheila D (DOT)
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2015 2:45 PM
To: 'bfnz2004@gmail.com'
Cc: dot.stip; Heidemann, Marie E (DOT)
Subject: Re. Ketchikan Project 27621

Ms. Finney,

We appreciate you taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

Thank you for the comment you provided regarding the Ketchikan First and Second Waterfall Creek Bridges project (Need ID 27621) listed in the Draft 2016-19 STIP. Please know that this project has funds available in the coming federal fiscal year (FFY16), the earliest year that funding can be made available. The timing of the actual obligation and subsequent construction will depend on the project schedule. Your comments have been shared with the Southcoast Region Planning Division and the Project Manager, Keith Karpstein, so that they may consider whether the project can be expedited given the concerns you and others have raised regarding these bridges.

We also note that you have brought up some maintenance and safety concerns. We have shared your comments with the Maintenance Foreman for the Ketchikan area and the Regional Traffic and Safety Engineer. They will consider your recommendations and proceed appropriately. Please note that our Bridge section has confirmed that the speed limit for the bridge does not need to be reduced at this time. However, advance warning of narrow bridge is warranted and we will confirm whether the existing sign needs maintenance or replacement. In the meantime, while we appreciate your efforts, we do not recommend that you continue to replace cones that have been displaced on the bridge given the safety concerns you have mentioned including poor sight distance as a driver is approaching the bridge and high speeds. Our maintenance crew has appropriate safety gear and vehicles to perform this work safely.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Southcoast Region, Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1775 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

Sheila Good

Transportation Planner I
Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development
3132 Channel Drive | P.O. Box 112500 | Juneau, AK 99811

T (907) 465-6392 | F (907) 465-6984



Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Paul M Oliva <paulmoliva@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 19, 2015 9:47 PM
To: dot.stip
Subject: Comment on draft STIP

The scope of the projects in the STIP are too narrow, and they should be more inclusive of alternative modes of transportation, specifically bicycling.

There is currently nothing in the STIP to expand infrastructure supporting bicyclists in Anchorage. A plan addressing this oversight is sorely needed. Organizations such as Bike Anchorage have compiled significant data to create an inclusive proposal, which was unanimously approved by the Anchorage assembly. I agree that each plan should include bicycle infrastructure in its scope.

All construction, redevelopment and upgrades to roadways should include not only passing lanes, but also bike lanes. In areas where a bike lane cannot be included on the roadway safely, a separate bike path should be created alongside the roadway. Steps need to be taken to ensure continuous access for safe travel via bicycle in areas in which bike paths or bike lanes are segmented, disjointed, or abruptly discontinued. This will increase driver and biker safety and decrease traffic congestion, as well as improve traffic

Infrastructure for bicyclists is necessary to achieve the goal of safe and efficient transportation for both bikes and cars. Overlooking bicycle infrastructure is detrimental to both driver and bicycle safety.

--

Paul Oliva, President, UAA College Democrats
Anchorage, AK
PaulMOliva@gmail.com

Good, Sheila D (DOT)

From: Good, Sheila D (DOT)
Sent: Thursday, October 01, 2015 3:10 PM
To: 'paulmoliva@gmail.com'
Cc: dot.stip; Post, David E (DOT); Moulton, Marcheta A (DOT)
Subject: Comment on draft STIP

Mr. Olivia,

We appreciate you taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

The Department recognizes the health, environmental, and air quality benefits of cycling both for recreation and as a mode of transportation, and continues to strive to provide suitable accommodation for all modes of travel. We applaud the Alaska Grassroots Activists for the People (AKGAP) commitment and dedication to participate and contribute to better Integrate appropriate bicycle and pedestrian considerations into routine system and project planning.

Regarding AKGAP's recommendation that all construction, redevelopment and upgrades to roadways should include not only passing lanes but also bike lanes, bicycling and pedestrian elements are considered and wherever practical, incorporated into road rehabilitation and reconstruction projects. Projects are evaluated on a case-by-case basis with consideration of the suitability, safety, and right of way impacts of such non-motorized features. While not commonly a part of a basic repaving project, our road rehabilitation and reconstruction projects routinely incorporate separated pathway facilities, sidewalks, or bike lanes. For example, the Glenn Highway/Muldoon Road Interchange project will include a separated pathway, widened shoulders, and sidewalks to provide a long-term solution to address safety concerns associated with the increase in vehicular and pedestrian traffic at this interchange.

AKGAP can assist the Department in developing policies and procedures to strengthen and promote a consistent approach for balancing the objectives of bicycle and pedestrian needs with other transportation modes, and promote the selection of investments to meet those objectives by participating in the update of the Alaska Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and development of the federally funded Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP).

The Department anticipates soliciting requests for proposals this fall to update the Alaska Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan in an effort to better Integrate appropriate bicycle and pedestrian considerations into routine system and project planning in both rural and urban settings to include; connectivity, mobility, safety, accessibility, and other statewide goals such as healthy, livable communities and safe routes to schools. For more information please contact Marcheta Moulton at 907-465-8769 or marcheta.moulton@alaska.gov

The TAP, once implemented, will provide funding for programs and projects defined as *transportation alternatives*, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation; recreational trail projects; safe routes to school projects; and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former divided highways.

Finally, please be aware that the State is a partner in both the Anchorage and Fairbanks Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). The non-motorized transportation plans and programs within these metropolitan areas are developed by the MPOs. The MPO's Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) are incorporated into the STIP by amendment. Information on these programs are available at the following websites:

<http://www.muni.org/departments/ocpd/planning/amats>

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Central Region, David Post at 907-269-0512 or david.post@alaska.gov

Sincerely,

Sheila Good

Transportation Planner I

Department of Transportation & Public Facilities

Division of Program Development

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Hi, my name is Peter Solberg and I live in Cordova, Alaska with my brother Leif and My mom and dad. I LOVE to bicycle and I ride almost everyday. The road I ride on has curves and I want the cars to slow down and be able to see me and go around me. Maybe there could be gates that would let the bikes go first, and then the cars go.

It would be nice to have a bicycle path that would make it safer for me to ride and I wouldn't have to worry about the cars so much. My brother Leif rides on the back of my mom's bike, but one day when he's bigger like me, he'll have his own bike too.

Thank you for reading this letter. I hope you can make it safer for us to ride on Whitshed Road..

From,,

PETER



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

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TTY/TTD: 907.465.3657
dot.state.ak.us

September 13, 2015

Peter Solberg
P.O. Box 2052
Cordova, Alaska 99574

Subject: Draft 2016-2019 STIP Comments on the Whitshed Road Bike and Pedestrian Path Project

Dear Peter,

Thank you for your letter. The Department appreciates you taking the time to write us regarding the Whitshed Road Bike and Pedestrian Path project. Based on comments like the one you sent us, the Department is working to speed up the project development process for this project; so please be on the lookout for project schedule changes in the upcoming STIP(s). Road safety is important to us and we are doing what we can to make Alaska's roads safe!

If you have any additional questions or concerns, you can contact your area planner Duane Hoskins at 451-2382 or duane.hoskins@alaska.gov.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Sara Mason".

Sara Mason
Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs

Session:
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Alaska House of Representatives
David Guttenberg



District 4

Interim:
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(907) 456-8172
(907) 456-2490 Fax

Mr. Mike Vigue
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
PO Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500

Re: Comments on the 2016 STIP

Dear Mr. Vigue:

August 27, 2015

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 2016 STIP. I hadn't realized that the previous STIP was complete. I stopped counting after the 16th amendment.

The STIP is a shrouded process that needs a great deal of work to fulfill the goal of transparency. I have attended FMATS meetings and talked with department personnel, and after doing so have realized the DOT's processes are not transparent. It was after attending these meetings that I understood the confusion that FMATS members have. This is a planning process that is hidden and often times seems to be intentionally obscured. I've spent much of my life working on construction projects in Alaska and I wonder how contractors are able to plan, both short term and long term, without a clear understanding of what projects they can expect to bid on. Not all contractors are in Anchorage, Fairbanks or Juneau.

At the recent DOT STIP open house in Fairbanks I had hoped to gain greater clarification but was disappointed. The staff could not explain how projects are added and taken off the STIP, or how some long term projects disappear into the category of illustrative. Why doesn't the northern region get a proportionate amount of funds per Federal Highways System road miles?

Although projects are rated, you don't publish the rating and how they track in the STIP from one year to the next. What is the result of dedicating large amounts of Federal Highway funds to certain projects and what influence does that have on moving existing projects to out years or to projects that become "illustrative."?

I ask that you please consider the public when considering how you organize and present the plans for our road systems to us. The DOT is charged with keeping the best interests of Alaskans in mind, and in doing so, it is pertinent that they do not talk over our heads or present plans that are not transparent.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Guttenberg".

Faxed: (907) 465-6984

Ester Farmers Loop Goldstream 1 & 2 Steese East/Gilmore Steese West University Hills
rep.david.guttenberg@akleg.gov



THE STATE
of ALASKA

GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

3132 Channel, Suite 200
PO Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500
Main: 907.465.4070
Fax: 907.465.6984
TTY/TTD: 907.465.3657
dot.state.ak.us

September 29, 2015

Representative David Guttenberg
1292 Sadler Way, Suite 308
Fairbanks, AK 997010-3171

Dear Representative David Guttenberg,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

The STIP is a four-year, fiscally constrained planning and programming document that is continuously revised to adjust for project schedules and funding categories as projects identified in the STIP develop. We closely monitor project delivery schedules and make financial and scheduling adjustments to the projects identified in the STIP through formal amendments when scheduled projects encounter delays and are unable to advance as proposed, if actual project bids come in lower than what we have estimated, or if sufficient funds are identified for other reasons.

The ADOT&PF is required to carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive statewide transportation planning process that includes a stringent public involvement process to afford continuous public involvement opportunities and provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of the STIP. It is unfortunate that after attending an ADOT&PF STIP open house in Fairbanks and attending Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (FMATS) public meetings that you find the STIP to be a planning process that is hidden and often times seems to be intentionally obscured. We will make an effort to re-evaluate the content, organization, and presentation of transportation plans for our road systems in an effort to efficiently deliver our program, minimize false expectations, and begin to build confidence with the legislature and the public on our ability to be transparent, accountable and consistent in the management and investment of its financial resources for the benefit of all Alaskans.

I applaud you for your concerns regarding contractor community's ability to plan, both short term and long term, on identifying and evaluating which projects to bid on based exclusively on the STIP. I have included a web link to the ADOT&PF's Tentative Advertising Schedule which includes a listing of all projects the ADOT&PF plans to advertise within the next 12 months, regardless of funding source or transportation mode. <http://dot.alaska.gov/procurement/bidding/schedule/index.shtml>

"Keep Alaska Moving through service and infrastructure."

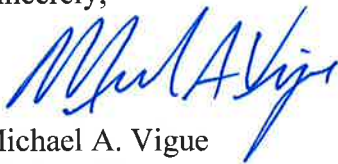
In this fiscal climate, it is important that the Department maintain a statewide perspective when programming projects to ensure the highest possible return on investment. The Department does not allocate funding based on the proportionate amount of Federal Highway System road miles nor do we operate on a regional allocation system. Additionally, when looking at the distribution of funds across regions, it is highly likely that the funding disparity between regions is the result of several large-scale projects in Central Region finally nearing readiness for construction.

We will make an effort to include the Community Transportation Program (CTP) Project Evaluation Board (PEB) scores in future versions of the STIP. In the meantime, you can view the most recent CTP PEB ranking results here: http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/cip/stip/projects/Assets/peb_final.pdf

Finally, this STIP does include projects that could proceed if additional funding becomes available. The additional projects constitute the “illustrative” list of projects allowed under federal regulation 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 450.216(l). Should a scheduled project encounter delays and be unable to advance as proposed, if actual project bids come in lower than what we have estimated, or if sufficient funds are identified for other reasons, the Department selects projects from the illustrative list that best serve the interests of the state in the maintenance and operations of our surface transportation system.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Northern Region, Shelley Potter at 907-451-2375 or shelley.potter@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,



Michael A. Vigue
Division Director

cc: Marc Luiken, Commissioner, ADOT&PF
Judy Chapman, ADOT&PF Northern Region Planning
Margaret Carpenter, ADOT&PF Northern Region Planning
David Miller, Assistant Commissioner, ADOT&PF Northern Region

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE LES GARA
SENATOR JOHNNY ELLIS

August 26, 2015

716 W. 4th Ave #311
Anchorage, AK 99501

Re: STIP Comments

Dear Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities:

We are writing to ask that you remove the Knik Arm Bridge from the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan. As the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) Policy Committee stated in the attached resolution, they and we “have serious reservations about the viability and need for the KAC project including but not limited to financial assumptions . . . [and] the impacts to the Government Hill neighborhood.”

The Committee also expressed concerns about the “cost.”

In this current fiscal climate, Alaska cannot afford a project that, with connecting roads and improvements, will cost \$1.7 billion, plus more if there are cost overruns. Much of that road money will take either state funding or federal funding we need for more important projects.

The current legislation only covers roughly \$1 billion of this cost, even with a federal TIFIA loan, and diverts roughly \$300 million in federal road funding, and \$300 more in state financing.

We would also like to note that the state only has limited bonding and bond repayment capacity, at a time when a gasline and possible bonding are of a higher priority. The required bonds for this project - roughly a quarter billion dollars in initial state bonds, and repayment on over a half billion dollars in initial bonds (with nearly \$1 billion of the cost of this project still unfunded under the legislation that passed) - are not in the public's interest.

There is another cost that hasn't been calculated. Traffic, if it ever grows, will require tens of millions of dollars, if not more, on the Anchorage side of the Bridge to deal with the traffic that will exit and enter from the A/C couplet.

We ask that this project be removed. Policymakers can reconsider it when Alaska has erased it's deficit, has enough money to fund vibrant schools and basic services at an acceptable level, completes all needed upgrades and widening on the Glenn Highway North of Anchorage (which

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE LES GARA
SENATOR JOHNNY ELLIS

DOT says will occur whether or not the bridge is built), safety improvements on dangerous sections of the Seward Highway, and completes other state transportation priorities. This project is not affordable, will harm the state budget, and is not a priority in a time when we face significant fiscal problems.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Les Gara", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rep. Les Gara

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Johnny Ellis", with a stylized, cursive script.

Sen. Johnny Ellis



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**

GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

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PO Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500
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dot.state.ak.us

September 29, 2015

Senator Johnny Ellis
Representative Les Gara
716 W. 4th Ave #311
Anchorage, AK 99501

Senator Ellis and Representative Gara:

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

Regarding your comments on Knik Arm Crossing (Need IDs 20255 and 20256), we understand that you have concerns related to this project. Per the Governor's direction under Administrative Order 271, the Department is currently moving forward with completing the permitting processes and securing financing for the project. Upon completion of these activities, a final determination on the viability of constructing this project will be decided.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the Knik Arm Crossing project, please do not hesitate to contact the Knik Arm Crossing Project Director, Judy Dougherty, at 907-269-6698 or judy.dougherty@alaska.gov

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Michael A. Vigue".

Michael A. Vigue
Division Director

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Rob and Rose Welton <robbrose@gci.net>
Sent: Sunday, August 02, 2015 5:59 AM
To: dot.stip
Cc: Rob/Rose Welton; Dave Ringle Home; Frankie Pillifant; Frank Rue; Laurie, Robert B (DOT)
Subject: STIP Comments August 2015

It was a pleasure coming to the public information meeting at Centennial Hall, and meeting Ms. Heidemann and Mr. Hughes. I would like to make a few comments on the STIP for your consideration.

- As I mentioned at Centennial Hall, one glaring omission to projects is a permanent fix to the terrible drainage on the Salmon Creek bike path. During heavy rains parts of the path are underwater. In the winter, overflow ice covers the path, making it very unsafe for bikes and pedestrians. This is the only legal way for bicycles and pedestrians to go between downtown and the valley. Another limitation on this segment is the climb up to what I call “upper wall” is very steep. If we built up the slope and made the path higher down towards the power building, it might help mitigate the drainage issues and improve usability. To me this is the most hazardous bike ped facility in the Borough, and it’s omission from the list is glaring. I would think the path is an extension of Glacier Highway, and so eligible for Federal funding to upgrade drainage and slope. Perhaps this could be added to 26112, the Access to Twin Lakes project?
- Another project I don’t see on the Juneau STIP is adding sidewalks to both sides of Glacier Highway through Lemon Creek. There is a fair bit of pedestrian traffic through here, and a sidewalk on only one side. While I applaud the departments plans to add sidewalks to Industrial Boulevard, I can’t help but think the funds might be better spent improving pedestrian access through Lemon Creek.
- There are some pretty bad uphill drainage problems on Glacier Highway, about a mile from Downtown. Also between the JD bridge and Douglas. These cause overflow ice in the winter. Bikes and cars swerve to avoid it, causing risk for everyone. I’d love to see these problems fixed.
- I think the plan is to add roundabouts to Riverside and Stephen Richards Drive is a good one. They’ve worked well on the Douglas side of the J-D bridge. Please ensure the roundabout is designed with bike ped safety and access in mind. Appropriate signage would help.
- Improving bike ped access from 10th/Egan towards Main Street (23563) is a great idea! Kudos to the department for including this. Riding downtown towards Thane can be nerve wracking when dodging heavy cruise ship traffic, pedestrians on the sidewalk, etc. Pavement there is starting to deteriorate, so plans for improvement are spot on.
- I think Juneau Access is a bad idea, and we should quit pouring money down the hole. While most of the \$\$ is in the out years (over \$500 million), my feeling is a second crossing would be a better option for Juneau. My guess is \$7 million budgeted for FFY17 is to complete the EIS? I won’t beat it to death, but that’s my preference.
- It’s good to see planned improvements to the Haines Highway. Removing curves will make it safer for cyclists and motorists. Also it will help the road withstand flooding better. Naturally the Kluane Bike Relay will benefit from the improvements, though during construction it will pose safety and logistical challenges.
- A grade-separated solution at Egan and Yandukin makes sense. There have been some pretty nasty wrecks there over the years. Crossing traffic at highway speeds is always problematic.
- The pavement and bridge rehabilitation project, (18922) is a very sensible addition.

While it’s not in the scope of the STIP, thanks to DOT for improving bike-ped access as part of the new Brotherhood Bridge project. That was another sketchy section of road before, and will be a great improvement.

I’ve said a mouthful, and my coffee cup is empty. So I’ll stop here. Thank you for providing the opportunity to review and comment on DOT’s plan for transportation enhancements in the 2016-19 time period.

Good, Sheila D (DOT)

From: Good, Sheila D (DOT)
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2015 3:02 PM
To: 'robbrose@gci.net'
Cc: dot.stip; Heidemann, Marie E (DOT)
Subject: STIP Comments August 2015

Mr. & Mrs. Welton,

We appreciate you taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

Southcoast Region completed some ditching and pothole repair to the Salmon Creek multi-use path last year. Additionally, the City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ) has removed pavement in the immediate area of their water treatment building as part of a building expansion project. The deficiencies in the Salmon Creek path were mostly concentrated in the area of the CBJ water treatment building. A side benefit of the CBJ project will be new pavement for the path adjacent to the building. The paved area will be narrower since the building is being expanded, but the path will still meet the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) guidelines for a shared use path with a useable width of ten feet plus two foot shoulders on either side.

If there remains a rehabilitation need after the CBJ project is complete, Southcoast Region plans to pursue a maintenance project. Unfortunately, with these funds we would not be able to do reconstruction work to raise the elevation of the path, which would be a complicated endeavor adjacent to the CBJ water treatment building. Also, such a project could not be added to Need ID 26112 Glacier Highway Improvements: Glacier Highway Access Rd to Twin Lakes Drive as you suggest because it is outside the termini of the project.

I am pleased to inform you that the Glacier Highway Improvements project does include sidewalks on both sides of Glacier Highway through Lemon Creek. We agree that sidewalks on only the one side of the road are not sufficient for the volume of pedestrian traffic, and we look forward to the completion of this project.

Marie Heidemann from Southcoast Region will contact you regarding your comments on the drainage problems on Glacier Highway, so they might better understand those issues. Also, please be aware that the Riverside Dr. and Stephen Richards project will consider both a roundabout and a traffic signal to determine which is a better fit for the area prior to moving forward to construction.

Regarding your comments on Juneau Access (Need ID 19214), we understand that you have concerns related to this project. Per the Governor's direction under Administrative Order 271, the Department intends to complete the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS), including the Record of Decision. The SEIS will provide guidance on a future course of action.

Thank you for your support regarding Thane Road and Haines Highway improvements and the Egan Dr. and Yandukin Intersection improvements, and the numerous pavement and rehabilitation projects. Pavement and system preservation is a central part of the ADOT&PF mission.

We appreciate that you have taken the time to provide us with your firsthand knowledge of maintenance issues. Your detailed comments and suggestions have been shared with the Southcoast Region Planning Division and the appropriate Project Managers. If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in

your area, please do not hesitate to contact directly the Regional Program Development Planner for Southcoast Region, Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1775 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

Sheila Good

Transportation Planner I

Department of Transportation & Public Facilities

Division of Program Development

3132 Channel Drive | P.O. Box 112500 | Juneau, AK 99811

T (907) 465-6392 | F (907) 465-6984



Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Rob Goldberg <artstudioalaska@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2015 12:55 AM
To: dot.stip
Subject: Juneau Access Comments

To: AKDOT&PF
Re: STIP Comments on Juneau Access

I am opposed to an East Lynn Canal Road. I support improvements to the ferry system. I have been following this issue for a long time, and I have submitted many comments to you. I have also spent more time on the ground on the east side of Lynn Canal than perhaps anyone at DOT. Here are my main points:

- The terrain on the east side of Lynn Canal is inhospitable and impractical for a road. The report done by Golder Engineering details dozens of geologic hazards such as sheer cliffs, steep unstable slopes of megaboulders, rockslides, waterfalls and avalanches. The only solution to many of these engineering problems is tunneling.
- The cost of the road would be far more than advertised.
- The road would be dangerous, and people will die. Avalanche danger would be extreme, and it is not well mitigated in the plan. There would be danger of motorists getting swept into the sea, danger of getting trapped between slides, danger to rescue crews, and danger to maintenance crews attempting to keep the road open.
- The road would be closed much of the winter. Rain at sea level means snow up high in the accumulation zone. Many of the cirques are at 5-6000', and avalanches can and do occur when there is no apparent danger down low. Who will decide when the road is too dangerous to drive?
- Ferries will have to be relied on for the months that the road is closed, which begs the question, "If ferries can do the job, why is the road needed?"
- Maintenance and operations costs of the road will be higher than those of the ferries.
- Siting a ferry terminal at the Katzeihin River delta is impractical. There are no services there, and no public transportation to Juneau. How will walk on passengers, who account for nearly half of people traveling, get to Juneau? There is no public transport from the Auke Bay terminal. Why is it expected that one will materialize to serve the Katzeihin?
- If DOT is really serious about improving access to Juneau, here is how to do it. Build crew quarters into the two new ferries currently being built. This will allow them to make the loop between Juneau, Haines and Skagway. The current ferry design is inefficient, being limited to a 12 hour day. Devoting one ship to looping between Haines

and Skagway is a waste of a ship. It will run empty nearly all the time. Two ships with crew quarters can double the vehicle and passenger capacity, and double the frequency of travel in and out of Juneau. Isn't this the goal of Juneau Access? Home port one ship in Juneau and the other in Skagway. Start them both on the loop in the morning. For those of us in Haines and Skagway, this would be a huge economic advantage. People could travel to Juneau in the morning and return the same day, or catch the jet for a trip Outside. As it is now, every trip to Juneau for us means an expensive overnight stay.

Thank you for accepting my comments.

Sincerely,

Rob Goldberg

Rob Goldberg and Donna Catotti
Catotti and Goldberg Art Studio
PO Box 1154 Haines, AK 99827 USA
907-766-2707 artstudioalaska.com

Good, Sheila D (DOT)

From: Good, Sheila D (DOT)
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2015 2:27 PM
To: 'artstudioalaska@yahoo.com'
Cc: dot.stip; Heidemann, Marie E (DOT)
Subject: Juneau Access Comments

Mr. Goldberg,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

Regarding your comments on Juneau Access (Need ID 19214), we understand that you have concerns related to this project. Per the Governor's direction under Administrative Order 271, the Department intends to complete the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS), including the Record of Decision. The SEIS will provide guidance on a future course of action.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Southcoast Region, Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1775 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

Sheila Good

Transportation Planner I
Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development
3132 Channel Drive | P.O. Box 112500 | Juneau, AK 99811

T (907) 465-6392 | F (907) 465-6984



State Dept. of Transportation/Public Facilities
Div. of Program Development
ATTN: STIP
P.O.Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500

August 16, 2015

Dear Sirs,

Our family of six Alaska residents/voters, would like to write and ask the **Richardson Highway MP 115-148 Rehabilitation and Widening** project be put at the top of your list for road improvement projects.

We drive from Fairbanks to Valdez many times each summer and have been quite distressed over the deplorable condition of the Richardson Highway miles 129-147. There is a sign posted that states "Rough Road next 18 miles," which has been there for years. We drove the road this year on July 19 and again on July 22, so have pertinent and timely information as to its condition.

Even though the stated speed limit is 65 mph, a person dares not drive more than 45-50 mph in a normal vehicle. There are multiple, intense dips, crevasses in the middle of the roadway and the many patches applied to fill holes are all deteriorating, creating hazardous driving conditions.

When we pull our boat down to Valdez, this stretch of road always worries us. We have to slow down to 40 mph and carefully approach the many dips. We have watched motorhomes seesaw over these large dips, we've seen campers leave the beds of trucks and we've noticed boats and trailers bouncing off the pavement. This creates very dangerous conditions for potential out-of-control accidents with multiple injuries/deaths.

This is an important reconstruction project as the Richardson Highway is a road traveled by many Alaskans moreso than by tourists. Our tax dollars should be put towards fixing a road used by Alaskans.

I have written to DOT over the past three years asking for repairs on this road. I am including copies of the last two years' worth of letters. I also e-mailed the governor's department of transportation chair person.

Thank you for your consideration of this road improvement project for the betterment of our Alaskan roads.

Yours,

Ruth and Russ Kramer
Randall and Crysti Kramer
Ryan and Karesa Kramer

P.O. Box 55442
North Pole, Alaska 99705
June 4, 2015

Commissioner Patrick Kemp and
Michael J. Coffey-Chief of Statewide Maintenance/Operations
Dept. of Transportation and Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive #300
Juneau, Alaska 99801-7898

Dear Sirs:

This is my third year writing a letter to your office requesting consideration of overdue road repairs to the Richardson Highway, specifically miles 129-147.

As you drive south from Glenallen, you encounter a sign that states "Rough Road Next 18 Miles." Alaskan residents have been waiting years to see this wreckage of a road redone.

Our Richardson Highway is a well-traveled road used primarily by Alaskan residents who need this road to be carefully maintained. Anyone who drives from Fairbanks/North Pole down to Valdez must drive this road as their only option.

Drivers pulling boats on trailers or driving motorhomes/campers are rudely bounced up and down quite severely for an 18 mile stretch on miles 129-147. It is not possible to travel at the 65 mph posted speed limit, let alone even attempt to drive at 55 mph.

The large indented splits in the middle of this portion of the road create a dangerous driving/steering environment. There have been haphazard asphalt patches applied which are all falling apart with holes and loose pieces of pavement.

Large, heavy, double trailer trucks like Big State Logistics tankers are traveling this road, at least seven per day, putting large load stresses on this already weakened stretch of road.

We ask DOT to consider placing this 18 mile stretch of the Richardson Highway on their highest priority list. I will also be contacting the Alaska State Department of Transportation.

Sincerely,

Russ and Ruth Kramer--23 year Alaskan residents/voters

P.O. Box 55442
North Pole, Alaska 99705
July 10, 2014

Commissioner Patrick Kemp and
Michael J. Coffey-Chief of Statewide Maintenance/Operations
Dept. of Transportation and Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive #300
Juneau, Alaska 99801-7898

Dear Sir:

Last year I wrote a letter to your office requesting consideration of overdue road repairs to the Richardson Highway, specifically miles 129-147. The letter I received back said that my request could not be considered as all repair monies for the years 2014/15 had been allotted.

This year, I am writing once again to ask that this stretch of the Richardson Highway, with the sign that says "Rough Road Next 18 Miles," be repaired properly as local Alaskan residents have been waiting years to see this wreckage of a road redone.

I am especially frustrated with what seems like a lack of interest from DOT in what Alaskan residents want with road construction/road repairs. Our Fairbanks News-Miner newspaper reported that DOT will pave 14 miles of the road from Chitina to McCarthy this summer with "\$1.6 million in federal funding from money left over from road repair work in 2012."

Why? It appears that few residents want the gravel road from Chitina paved and the road has few travelers. Couldn't this excess federal money have been put towards a truly worthy 18 mile road repair project instead to benefit more people?

The Richardson Highway is a well-traveled road used primarily by Alaskan residents who need this road to be maintained. Anyone who drives from Fairbanks/North Pole down to Valdez, must drive this road as their only option.

Drivers pulling boats on trailers or driving motorhomes/campers are rudely bounced up and down quite severely for an 18 mile stretch, miles 129-147. It is not possible to travel at the 65 mph speed limit, let alone even attempt to drive at 55 mph. We have seen campers jolting up and down on trucks, denting in their roof tops. And, the indents in the middle of the road create a dangerous driving/steering environment.

Large, heavy, double trailer trucks like Big State Logistics tankers are traveling this road, at least seven per day, putting large load stresses on this already weakened, rocking chair stretch of road.

We ask DOT to consider placing this 18 mile stretch of the Richardson Highway on their highest priority list.

Sincerely,

Russ and Ruth Kramer--22 year Alaskan residents/voters



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

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Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500
Main: 907.465.4070
Fax: 907.465.6984
TTY/ITD: 907.465.3657
dot.state.ak.us

September 15, 2015

Russ and Ruth Kramer
P.O. Box 55442
North Pole, Alaska 99705

Subject: Draft 2016-2019 STIP Comments on the Richardson Hwy MP 115-148 / Rehabilitation & Widening Project

Mr. and Mrs. Kramer,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Department appreciates your comments regarding the Richardson Highway MP 115-148 Rehabilitation and Widening project. Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

The concerns you've expressed about the MP 115-148 section of the Richardson Highway have not fallen on deaf ears. Your letters help reinforce the ongoing interest we've had in this section of road, and as a direct result of that, we initiated a design project in March of this year. The new 2016-2019 STIP addresses the future years of funding. As this four year program period moves along we will have opportunities to modify the funding schedule for construction through STIP amendments, as the project development progresses.

Road safety is a chief concern of ADOT&PF and we appreciate your comments. If you have additional questions or concerns regarding this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Duane Hoskins at 451-2382 or duane.hoskins@alaska.gov.

Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sheila Good".

Sheila Good
STIP Manager



Sent vial email

August 26, 2015

Alaska Dept. of Transportation
Program Development
dot.stip@alaska.gov

re: 2016-2019 Draft STIP

To Whom It May Concern:

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the state's latest 4-year plan for expected surface transportation improvements. We also appreciate DOT's effort to set fiscally constrained funding levels for projects that reflect the level of funding the State can reasonably expect from Congress over the next four years. As a result, the draft STIP gives Alaskans a realistic picture of what can and cannot be funded over that time horizon. Given the inability of Congress to pass a long-term highway bill, the federal highway trust fund continues to teeter on the brink of bankruptcy for the foreseeable future. As a result, it is wise for the State of Alaska to prepare for far less federal funds than in the past.

It would also be helpful if the STIP displayed how projects have changed from one STIP to the next (completed, pushed back, or gone up in cost, for example). As currently presented it is difficult to identify and analyze what has changed and why.

Specific Projects

Need ID: 198359 – Design/Construct/Lease/Purchase Ferryboats & Terminals

The previous STIP (2012-2015) only scheduled \$1 million after 2015 – bumped up to \$5.5 million in the draft STIP – we support any boost in funding this essential service but would like to point out this isn't enough to build a new mainline ferry. More problematic, this level of funding is inconsistent with and frustrates the 2004 Southeast Area Transportation Plan's call to replace two mainline ferries between 2010 and 2018 or the proposal in the draft 2014 SATP to construct a replacement mainline ferry by 2024.

Need ID: 30189 - AMHS Tustumena Replacement Vessel

Why is DOT continuing to drag its feet on replacing this essential service? In addition to delaying expenditures another four years, further delay only ends up costing the State more at the same time as it struggles to deal with on-going breakdowns and delays associated with this fifty-plus year old boat.

Need ID: 2152 -- Haines Highway Reconstruction, MP 3.5-25.3

This proposed project is unnecessary and inconsistent with the primary purpose of Alaska Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve, AS 41.21.610, to protect the bald eagle and critical nesting habitat and salmon on which they depend. The proposed project abuts the Preserve from MP 8.3 to 16.8; the right-of-way divides Preserve property between MP 16.8 and 20.2, and again from MP 23.6 to 25. DOT has been unable to demonstrate a need for this costly and damaging proposal.

Need ID: 3028 – Kake Access

Given the legacy impacts from large-scale clearcut logging across all lands on northern Kupreanof, the Lindenberg Peninsula, and Mitkof Island, the proposed Kake Access Project will result in further loss of valuable deep snow winter habitat and exacerbate existing competition among deer hunters. Given the State's fiscal crisis, this money should be invested to develop local, renewable energy options in Kake, including Gunnuck Creek hydro, wind, and solar options instead of building 27 miles of new single land, unpaved roadway.

Need ID: 19124 -- Juneau Access phase 2 (preliminary engineering)

The description provided is both inappropriate and premature: "Extend Glacier Highway/State Route 7 northward from its current terminus to the north side of the Katzeihin River Delta, in a series of stages, per the preferred alternative in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and construct terminal near Katzeihin River." Has DOT pre-determined the outcome for this controversial project before it releases the FEIS?

We believe it unnecessary for DOT to proceed to a Final EIS. DOT's scare-tactics notwithstanding, Federal Highways' longstanding practice is not to seek repayment if a project is canceled because of concerns raised during the NEPA environmental review process. Spending more federal dollars to finish the NEPA review would not be a worthwhile use of scarce taxpayer funds, particularly if the results of that process so far have convinced the State that this project is not in Alaska's long-term interests. Instead, we recommend the State and Federal Highways agree not to proceed further with the project; federal funds expended have been effectively and properly used to advance the NEPA process and ultimately reach a decision that furthers the public's interest. However, if the State has decided to complete the planning process, it needs to consider the full range of alternatives developed rather than focusing on the Katzeihin road.

Need ID: 22279 – Haines Highway Reconstruction and Chilkat Bridge Replacement

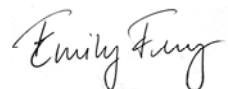
As noted above with # 2152, the highway reconstruction is unneeded and destructive. We do, however, support the proposed bridge replacement.

Need ID: 27829: Haines Highway Reconstruction MP3.5-12.2

For the reasons previously stated for ## 2152 and 22279, we object to funding this proposal

Thank you giving these comments your careful attention.

Best Regards,



Emily Ferry, Deputy Director



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

3132 Channel, Suite 200
PO Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500
Main: 907.465.4070
Fax: 907.465.6984
TTY/TTD: 907.465.3657
dot.state.ak.us

September 29, 2015

Emily Ferry, Deputy Director
Southeast Alaska Conservation Council
224 Gold Street
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Ms. Ferry,

Thank you for the comments you provided on behalf of the Southeast Alaska Conservation Council (SEACC) regarding the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

We understand that SEACC supports additional funding for ferry projects and would prefer to see funding removed from Haines Highway projects (excluding the bridge), Kake Access, and Juneau Access. Please accept the following responses to some of your specific project concerns.

Need Identification (NID) 18359, Design/Construct/Lease/Purchase Ferryboats & Terminals: This is a holding place for our MAP-21 Ferry Boat Program funds so that we can show funding available to invest in future ferry terminal and vessel projects. Funding will be reallocated from this NID to a specific terminal or vessel projects on an as-needed basis that are developed using annual surveys, condition assessments and critical need assessments. The dollar amount in this NID will fluctuate as we obligate vessel specific projects from this NID in a given year.

NID 30189, Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) Tustumena Replacement Vessel: Maintaining fiscal constraint in the STIP has limited the number of projects that can be constructed in a given year. Providing service to the coastal communities of Alaska is the priority of the AMHS and new builds are being supported. This project is being designed with state funds, to federal standards, to ensure the construction phase of the project will qualify for federal funds. Final design is expected to be completed in January 2016. Once funding is identified for the construction phase of this project, and should it be federal, the funding will be programmed to the year in which it is available to obligate.

NIDs 2152, 22279, and 27829, Haines Highway MP 3.5-25.3 projects: The Department is nearing completion of the draft Revised Environmental Assessment (EA) that has been prepared following the comments received on the July 2013 EA. The Department intends to move forward with the project as funding becomes available. The purpose of this project is to address highway deficiencies, bridge deficiencies, recreational access deficiencies, highway instability and temporary closures caused by debris and water flooding. The portion of the highway between Milepost 3.5 and Milepost 25.3 would also be brought up to design standards for a 55 mile-per-hour design speed. The revised EA includes more detail regarding the impacts avoided and minimized as well as a description of mitigation measures that are part of this project. Specific deficiencies are also discussed. The Revised EA is expected to be released to the public in the next month.

NID 3028, Kake Access: This project is currently state funded and supported by the Alaska legislature for design and construction of a road between Kake and Petersburg. The Department is currently in process of developing an Environmental Impact Statement, which will analyze multiple alternatives and potential impacts including those to habitat and hunting resources.

NID 19214, Juneau Access: Thank you for the comments you provided regarding Juneau Access (NID 19214) listed in the Draft 2016-2019 STIP. We understand that you have several concerns related to this project. Per the Governor's direction under Administrative Order 271, the Department intends to complete the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS), including the Record of Decision. The SEIS will provide guidance on a future course of action.

The current description is in line with the Department's past preferred course of action; however the Department is considering all alternatives going forward into a new Record of Decision. The project description can easily be amended if necessary.

We appreciate the time you have taken to convey to us the importance of these projects. If you have additional questions or concerns regarding these projects or other projects in the Southcoast region, please do not hesitate to contact the Southcoast Area Transportation Planner, Marie Heidemann at 907-465-1755 or marie.heidemann@alaska.gov. For Alaska Marine Highway projects, please contact the Alaska Marine Highway System's Transportation Planner, Christa Hagan, at 907-228-6801 or christa.hagan@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,



Sheila Good
Transportation Planner I

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Stephanie Kesler <SKesler@gci.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2015 1:01 PM
To: dot.stip
Subject: Comments on the 2016-2019 STIP

Here are my comments regarding the 2016-2019 STIP:

Please remove the Knik Arm Crossing from the STIP for the following reasons:

1. During a period of low oil prices and thus low state revenues, the state needs to stop hemorrhaging money for this costly, unnecessary project and use federal transportation money for higher priority projects like upgrading existing state transportation infrastructure.
2. The bonding will take up an inordinate amount of Alaska's remaining bond capacity. And it will adversely impact Alaska's bond rating. Which then further impacts bonding for the Natural Gas Pipeline.
3. Bridge debt payments are literally an annual deduction from general revenues and leaves less money for everything else.
4. Toll revenues will not be sufficient to build and operate the bridge, so paying for the bridge will adversely impact transportation funding for Anchorage, likely for decades. Official DOT/Knik Arm Bridge estimates of population living near the bridge in the Mat-Su Borough – and thus numbers of toll bridge users – are (embarrassingly) high compared to estimates developed by other governmental entities.
5. It is a shorter distance and would take less time to travel to Anchorage via the toll-free Glenn Highway from Wasilla and Palmer than to take the proposed toll bridge. This means the bridge will have relatively few users for such an expensive project for many years, and perhaps forever.
6. Residential and business properties, e.g., in Government Hill, continue to be adversely affected through state DOT's acquisition and modification of bridge-related rights-of-way.

Much worthier and financially responsible projects are building a second three-lane Eagle River Bridge on the Glenn Highway so users in both directions will benefit, connecting the Seward Highway to International Airport Road, and bicycle and pedestrian projects.

Thank you,

Stephanie Kesler

Good, Sheila D (DOT)

From: Good, Sheila D (DOT)
Sent: Thursday, October 01, 2015 3:55 PM
To: 'SKesler@gci.com'
Cc: dot.stip; Post, David E (DOT)
Subject: Comments on the 2016-2019 STIP

Ms. Kesler,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

Regarding your comments on Knik Arm Crossing (Need IDs 20255 and 20256), we understand that you have concerns related to this project. Per the Governor's direction under Administrative Order 271, the Department is currently moving forward with completing the permitting processes and securing financing for the project. Upon completion of these activities, a final determination on the viability of constructing this project will be decided.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the Knik Arm Crossing project, please do not hesitate to contact the Knik Arm Crossing Project Director, Judy Dougherty, at 907-269-6698 or judy.dougherty@alaska.gov or if you have questions or concerns regarding the STIP or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Program Development Planner for Central Region, David Post at 907-269-0512 or david.post@alaska.gov

Sincerely,

Sheila Good

Transportation Planner I
Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development
3132 Channel Drive | P.O. Box 112500 | Juneau, AK 99811

T (907) 465-6392 | F (907) 465-6984



Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 2:34 PM
To: dot.stip
Cc: Potter, Shelley M (DOT)
Subject: FW: comments on road projects - Cordova whitshed rd NID 27049



FYI

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 12:35 PM
To: 'Sue Kesti'
Subject: RE: comments on road projects - Cordova whitshed rd NID 27049

Ms. Kesti,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Department appreciates your comments regarding the Whitshed Road Bike and Pedestrian Path project.; public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission. Based on public comment received for the Draft 2016-2019 STIP, the Department is working to accelerate the project development timeline for this project.

When the design phase of the project is initiated, various alternatives will be developed; this is when designs such as widening the road and providing an in-road facility, as you suggest, will be appraised and a preferred alternative selected. The alternative selection process has a large public involvement component and we welcome your further participation as this project moves forward.

While we understand there has been interest expressed by residents to lower the speed limit from 35 MPH to 25 MPH, speed limit determination is directed by ADOT&PF policy and is a function of the region's Traffic and Safety section. There has been a series of speed studies conducted on May 16, 2011; September 10 and 11, 2012; and September 10, 2013. The studies concluded that the current 35 MPH speed limit aligns with ADOT&PF policy. Any additional studies can be requested by the City of Cordova.

In regards to maintaining the Copper River Highway past MP 37- there are significant challenges. You'll be happy to learn that the Department has reached out to the U.S. Forest Service to explore the possibility of maintaining the portion of the Copper River Highway that has been cut off. While an arrangement may take some time, it is our hope that in coordination with our partners we will be able to manage the right of way on the other side of the MP 37 Bridge.

We have also taken note of your suggestion regarding the documentation of comments received during public meetings and will work on a more efficient, streamlined process.

Road safety is a chief concern of ADOT&PF and we appreciate your comments. If you have additional questions or concerns regarding this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Duane Hoskins at 451-2382 or duane.hoskins@alaska.gov.

Best,

Sara

Sara E. Mason

Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive
Juneau, Alaska 99801

From: Sue Kesti [<mailto:skesti@ctcak.net>]

Sent: Monday, August 24, 2015 11:26 AM

To: dot.stip

Subject: comments on road projects - Cordova whitshed rd NID 27049

Dear DOT personnel,

My comments on the Whitshed road project (NID 27049) are as follows:

1) The road needs to be made safe for all modes of transportation and use, not just vehicles. I walk, ride my bike, and drive a truck with a trailer on the road.

2) The shoulder is inadequate for bikes or people with strollers. The amount of payment on the "other side" of the white line is not wide enough to walk or ride a bike on. When two vehicles (especially those with boats on trailers or heavy equipment/ gravel trucks) are passing, you cannot get off the pavement if you are on a bike because the gravel is loose, and most places have a cliff or ditch you might fall down into if your tires skid. Worst case you might fall back into the roadway and get run over.

3) The first mile is the most critical, since that is where most of the traffic is and where the ball field and campground are.

4) A separate path is not needed, simply widen the road so both sides can have a 3 foot wide shoulder similar to that on the Copper River Hwy.

5) It should also be coded as a safety reconstruction before someone gets injured or killed. Calling it a "path" makes it sound like a nice to do project instead of one that addresses safety concerns. DOT should be willing to address safe routes to schools, play, home, and work. Roads would be designed to be safe for all users.

6) Reduce speed limit to 25 MPH for the first mile on both sides of the road (incoming and outgoing). This would also help make it safer. I understand that DOT did a study and determined that the speed limit didn't need to be reduced. However they were not in town when bow pickers and other boats were being towed, gravel and rock being hauled and bikes and walkers were on the road. The speed limit needs to be reconsidered and reduced. PLEASE.

Million Dollar Bridge and Childs Glacier Access:

1) DOT should work with the USFS to maintain the Copper River Hwy from mile 37 to Childs Glacier. It only needs some brushing that might take 2 days. It seems like a perfect collaborative project between the two agencies. It would not cost much (a couple days labor for 2 people plus equipment) and keep access available for a historic site (million dollar bridge) and recreation area.

Concerning the public meeting held in Cordova earlier this month, I would suggest that when DOT holds a meeting, that they be ready to take people's comments and let people know how their concerns/issues will be addressed. Folks who come to the meeting have made an effort to provide input and help planners identify issues, concerns, and potential projects. The people running the meeting should make an effort to record those comments and brainstorm ways that the issues identified can be resolved.

Thank you, I look forward to hearing how the safety issues for whitshed road and maintenance for CRH past mile 37 will be addressed.

Sincerely,
Susan Kesti

Wendy A Ranney
PO Box 21
Cordova, AK 99574

August 17, 2015

To Whom It May Concern;

Please accept the following comments regarding the proposed Shepard Point Oil Spill Response Facility

My name is Wendy Ranney. I live at 2500 Orca Road.

I am against the proposed road and oil spill response facility at Shepard Point. This does not mean, however that I am against ANY oil Spill response facility, just one at Shepard Point. I feel that there are other viable locations that would be cheaper, safer to maintain, and less destructive to the fragile coastline and salmon habitat.

I live on Orca Road and travel the 2.1 miles to Cordova many times a day. There are many times a year when travel to Cordova is too dangerous due to icy roads. The State DOT has enough trouble keeping up with our 2.1 miles of road and the Copper River Highway in order to access the Airport without adding a dangerous 4.3 more miles to maintain. Those 4.3 miles intersect 3 very active and dangerous avalanche chutes. In all reality the facility that they are so keen to build, may be inaccessible in the event of a dangerous spill.

Cordova currently drills for oil spill response out of the Cordova Harbor. All the vessels needed for response can get into and out of the Cordova Harbor. There is a boatlift in Cordova as well, and I drive by response equipment storage in Cordova that is very adequate. Use the money to improve the existing facility, not build one that cannot be accessed.

I can site the Avalanche Hazard Mitigation Analysis Cordova Deep Water Port Report that NVE lists on their own website in support of this project when talking about avalanche dangers. Page four of this report, which I have attached for your convenience, states "The avalanche risk value on the Shepard Point road is roughly three times that of the Copper River Highway." This report shows 19 potential avalanche chute zones. Granted only three of those are regularly active, but why take the chance.

Cordova's Oil Spill Response Infrastructure is active, viable and in place. Use these funds to improve on those existing facilities and programs don't create unnecessary dangerous situations.

Prince William Sound's shoreline is fragile. Construction along 4.5 miles of it, thru delicate anadromous streams can devastate the local ecology, and for what? A few extra miles closer for boats to travel into the sound?

Once again I reiterated my stand against the Shepard Point Road. No Shepard Point! Not, no oil spill response.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Wendy A Ranney



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Program Development

3132 Channel, Suite 200
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Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500
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Fax: 907.465.6984
TTY/ITD: 907.465.3657
dot.state.ak.us

September 13, 2015

Wendy Ranney
P.O. Box 21
Cordova, Alaska 99574

Subject: Draft 2016-2019 STIP Comments on the Shepard Point Road Project

Dear Ms. Ranney,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Department appreciates your comments regarding the Shepard Point Road project. Public engagement and participation are important components to the success of the ADOT&PF mission.

Currently ADOT&PF's role in the Project is that of a cooperating agency; this role is a contributing role to the overall project. The responsibilities of ADOT&PF are as follows:

- Program federal aid highway funds to the road project construction via the STIP.
 - o These funds will only be utilized when the construction phase of the project is authorized to begin. Until that time the federal highway funding amount of \$5.5 million will be annotated in the current federal fiscal year. This is a single contribution of \$5.5 million towards the project.
- Function as the pass-through agency for the expenditure of Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) Investment Fund allocations for the project, currently managed by the Alaska Department of Revenue.
 - o These funds are required to be expended towards a project located at Shepard Point by the Alyeska Consent Decree issued by the U.S. District Court in 1992. ADOT&PF is required to act on this fund as a fiscal agent only; we do not have the authority to amend nor rescind this fund.

- The Shepard Point Road project listed in the STIP is not managed by ADOT&PF.
 - o Any concerns regarding project feasibility and development should be directed to the Federal Highway Administration, Western Federal Lands (WFL) division at (360) 619-7700 or wfl.fhwa@dot.gov. (Your STIP comment will be shared with WFL by ADOT&PF.)

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding our role in this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Duane Hoskins at 451-2382 or duane.hoskins@alaska.gov.

Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Sara', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Sara Mason
Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Jen-Ann Kirchmeier <jenannkirchmeier@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 09, 2015 8:37 AM
To: dot.stip; EPC Cordova
Subject: Shepard Point Road

I believe the Shepard Point Road is a futile plan because the oil response facility should not be that far away from town and there are several other options for the oil response facility that are possible. The best place would be at Orca Lodge area or even closer to town.

Why build a road which has a threat of avalanches? Why build a road that far away when immediate response is needed?

Basically this seems to be a plan that will put money in the pockets of a few and not be of benefit to the general public.

I would like to see some common sense with regard to the oil response facility.

Thank you.

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 2:36 PM
To: dot.stip
Cc: Potter, Shelley M (DOT)
Subject: FW: RE: Shepard Point Road-AMD 16 comment



FYI

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 1:39 PM
To: 'jenannkirchmeier@gmail.com'
Subject: RE: Shepard Point Road-AMD 16 comment

Ms. Kirchmeier,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP); I apologize for the long delay in providing a response to your Shepard Point Road comment.

Currently ADOT&PF's role in the Project is that of a cooperating agency; this role is a contributing role to the overall project. The responsibilities of ADOT&PF are as follows:

- Program federal aid highway funds to the road project construction via the STIP.
 - o These funds will only be utilized when the construction phase of the project is authorized to begin. Until that time the federal highway funding amount of \$5.5 million will be annotated in the current federal fiscal year. This is a single contribution of \$5.5 million towards the project.
- Function as the pass-through agency for the expenditure of Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) Investment Fund allocations for the project, currently managed by the Alaska Department of Revenue.
 - o These funds are required to be expended towards a project located at Shepard Point by the Alyeska Consent Decree issued by the U.S. District Court in 1992. ADOT&PF is required to act on this fund as a fiscal agent only; we do not have the authority to amend nor rescind this fund.
- The Shepard Point Road project listed in the STIP is not managed by ADOT&PF.
 - o Any concerns regarding project feasibility and development should be directed to the Federal Highway Administration, Western Federal Lands (WFL) division at (360) 619-7700 or wfl.fhwa@dot.gov. (Your STIP comment will be shared with WFL by ADOT&PF.)

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding our role in this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Duane Hoskins at 451-2382 or duane.hoskins@alaska.gov.

Best,

Sara

Sara E. Mason

Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive
Juneau, Alaska 99801
☎: 907.465.2065 | ✉: sara.mason@alaska.gov

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 2:33 PM
To: dot.stip
Cc: Potter, Shelley M (DOT)
Subject: FW: Comment on Draft STIP for Cordova, Alaska project



FYI

From: Mason, Sara E (DOT)
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2015 12:19 PM
To: 'Lauren Padawer'
Subject: RE: Comment on Draft STIP for Cordova, Alaska project

Ms. Padawer,

Thank you for taking an interest in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Department appreciates your comments of support regarding the **Whitshed Road Bike and Pedestrian Path** project. The project is scheduled to begin design in FFY 2017 with anticipated construction in 2019. Based on public comments received, the Department is working to accelerate development of this project.

If you have additional questions or concerns regarding this project or other transportation projects in your area, please do not hesitate to contact your area planner Duane Hoskins at 451-2382 or duane.hoskins@alaska.gov.

Best,

Sara

Sara E. Mason

Chief of Statewide Surface Transportation Programs
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive
Juneau, Alaska 99801
☎: 907.465.2065 | ✉: sara.mason@alaska.gov

From: Lauren Padawer [<mailto:lauren.padawer@gmail.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2015 12:29 AM
To: dot.stip
Subject: Comment on Draft STIP for Cordova, Alaska project

I am writing as a Cordova resident in support of the proposed **Whitshed Road Bike/Pedestrian Path that would go the 3/4 mile from the Copper River Highway to the recreational ball fields and the RV park**. This would help insure the safety of bike riders and pedestrians.

Thank You!

Lauren Padawer
PO Box 394
Cordova, Alaska 99574