

STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #2

Thursday, November 10, 2022, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m., via Teams

Attendees:

- Kelly Summers – DOT&PF Project Manager
- Kevin Jackson – DOT&PF
- Scott Thomas – DOT&PF
- Renee Whitesell – DOWL
- Jovie Garcia – DOWL
- Danielle Dance – DOWL
- Morgan McCammon – DOWL
- Talli Vittetoe – DOWL
- Joe Michel – Alaska Trucking Association
- James Sears – Southcentral Foundation
- Katie Krasinski
- Doug Campbell – DOT&PF
- Clint Alder – DOT&PF
- Claire Dougherty – Kittelson & Associates
- Rachel Steer – DOWL
- Emily Anderson – DOWL
- David Gamez – Lounsbury
- Jeremiah Gingrich – Lounsbury
- Jessica Viera – Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce
- Norma Johnson, Chickaloon Village Traditional Council
- Tim Swezey – Meadow Lakes Community Council

Summary

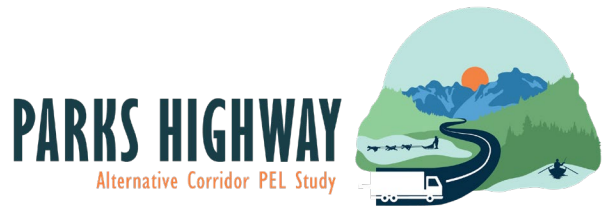
Kelly Summers (DOT&PF Project Manager) opened the meeting. Renee Whitesell (DOWL Project Manager) welcomed committee members, introduced the team, and shared an overview of the meeting agenda. Renee opened the presentation with a refresher of the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) process and benefits, an overview of the study area, and the Purpose and Need Statement.

Renee then presented on the Preliminary Alternatives and how major project elements (such as the Open House, Origin-Destination Study, and Alternatives Workshop) guided corridor planning and the preliminary alternatives presented. Renee added that public feedback and comments received at the Committee meeting would help move the preliminary alternatives through the process to narrow down corridor options.

Tim Swezey (Meadow Lakes Community Council) asked for clarification on the start and end points of the study area. Renee shared these points as West Hawk Lake and Hyer Road.

Dave Gamez (Lounsbury) gave a brief overview of the Alternatives Development Workshop and how the alternatives sketched as part of the workshop form the basis of the preliminary alternatives presented. The themes emerging from the workshop for routes included using existing infrastructure, using greenfield areas (i.e., undeveloped, or underdeveloped areas), and a combination of both. Dave shared the eight preliminary alternatives as well as a widen existing Parks Highway alternative, and a no build alternative.





Renee explained that the no build alternative serves as a baseline to compare each alternative to measure levels of improvement. The no build alternative has been screened and does not meet the Purpose and Need of the project. It will remain in screening process to provide a comparison.

Dave shared additional information on why the team started with 300-to-500-foot corridor width. Considering the hierarchy of roads and using existing infrastructure would help to provide connections to existing roadways with interchanges. Finalizing these design considerations and elements will help narrow right-of-way (ROW) needs as the preliminary alternatives move forward to more detailed alternatives.

Joe Michel (Alaska Trucking Association) asked about preliminary design elements in terms of number of on/off ramps, traffic signals, bridges, etc. Dave said it is too early in the process to know specific design elements. When designing interchanges, the team will be looking at traffic volumes in all directions. The Origin-Designation Study provides detailed information in this and mentions possible interchange locations. Renee added that controlled access to this corridor is an important design criterion, with no direct driveway or local road access.

Tim Swezey (Meadow Lakes Community Council) asked for insight for how an existing road and access, such as Hollywood Road, could be impacted by including it as part of an alternative corridor. Dave said traffic and access impacts for surrounding areas will be a part of the detailed engineering analysis. Roads can be “graduated” to increase capacity, reroute access, and accommodate traffic. The team will evaluate which surrounding roadways would need improvements.

Renee and Dave noted the freight industry were involved early in the project as the impacts of the Parks Highway on freight movement is a top concern for that industry. Each preliminary alternative uses a preliminary highway design speed of 70 mile per hour (mph) to ease mobility through the study area for freight movement.

Renee asked Dave to discuss how non-motorized users (people walking or bicycling) were considered in the identification and design of the preliminary alternative corridors. Dave explained that how non-motorized users would travel from one end of the corridor to the other as well as across the corridor are important design features when creating the route concepts. One possibility could feature a separated pathway with connections across the corridor at interchanges.

Renee presented on the phased alternatives screening process and how it is designed to identify one or more recommended alternatives. Phase 1 screening criteria will examine qualitative data, such as safety and mobility, while Phase 2 screening criteria focuses on more quantitative data to evaluate impacts.

Tim Swezey (Meadow Lakes Community Council) asked if Port Mackenzie and potential development was being examined as it is important existing infrastructure. Renee agreed that it is an important part of the land uses in the surrounding area and is important for freight movement.



Renee concluded the meeting with final remarks and invited the committee members to attend Open House No. 2 on December 8, 2022, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. at the Wasilla Public Library, adding that there will be an online component for those who cannot attend in person. She thanked members for their participation and reiterated the project contacts, website, and email.

Action Items/Next Steps

Project team:

- Post meeting materials to project website.

Committee members:

- Provide any additional feedback using online survey.
- Participate in the Open House No. 2 on December 8, 2022, and upcoming committee meetings.
- Monitor email for future project updates.

