

Dimond Boulevard Upgrade Jodhpur Road to Sand Lake Road

PM&E Project Number 05-005

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

For a Context Sensitive Solution/Context Sensitive Design

Prepared for:

Municipality of Anchorage
Project Management and Engineering
P.O. Box 196650
Anchorage, AK 99519-6650

and

R&M Consultants, Inc.
9101 Vanguard Drive
Anchorage, AK 99507

Prepared by:

Brooks & Associates
301 W. Northern Lights Boulevard Suite 440
Anchorage, AK 99503

April 2006

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 OVERVIEW1

2.0 PROJECT PROCESS2

3.0 DRAFT PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED.....3

4.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN3

4.1 Decision Maker 3

4.2 Public Outreach And Notification 4

4.2 Individual And Group Public Input 4

4.3 Public Involvement Activities 4

 4.3.1 Identify Stakeholders/Prepare Mailing List 4

 4.3.2 Citizen’s Advisory Committee 6

 4.3.3 Public Meetings 6

 4.3.4 Project Comments 7

 4.3.5 Documentation..... 7

5.0 SCHEDULE8

6.0 PROJECT TEAM LIST9

1.0 OVERVIEW

The Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) is proposing to make changes to Dimond Boulevard between Jodhpur Road and Sand Lake Road to improve vehicle circulation, pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle safety, road surface and subsurface, drainage, and lighting. The MOA Department of Project Management and Engineering (PM&E) will supervise the environmental approval, preliminary design, plans, and specifications for the changes and eventually supervise the construction of the improvements.

PM&E has retained R&M Consultants, Inc. (R&M) to lead the design and planning effort. R&M will be assisted by specialist technical design consultants and Brooks & Associates (B&A) to provide public involvement support.

This public involvement plan outlines a process to support development of a context sensitive solution (CSS) or context sensitive design (CSD). Qualities of projects, in term of design and process, that achieve a context sensitive solution include:

Transportation Design:

- ✓ The project satisfies the purpose and needs as agreed to by a full range of stakeholders. This agreement is forged in the earliest phase of the project and amended as warranted as the project develops.
- ✓ The project is a safe facility both for the user and the community.
- ✓ The project is in harmony with the community and preserves environmental, scenic, aesthetic, historic, and natural resource values of the area.
- ✓ The project exceeds the expectations of both designers and stakeholders and achieves a level of excellence in people's minds.
- ✓ The project involves efficient and effective use of resources (time, budget, community) of all involved parties.
- ✓ The project is seen as having added lasting value to the community.

The Design Process:

- ✓ Communicate with all stakeholders in a manner that is open and honest, early and continuous.
- ✓ Tailor the highway development process to the circumstances. Employ a process that examines multiple alternatives and that will result in consensus on approaches.
- ✓ Establish a multi-disciplinary team early with disciplines based on the needs of the specific project and include the public.
- ✓ Seek to understand the landscape, the community, and valued resources before beginning engineering design.

- ✓ Involve a full range of stakeholders with transportation officials in the scoping phase. Clearly define the purposes of the project and forge consensus on the scope before proceeding.
- ✓ Tailor the public involvement process to the project, include informal meetings.
- ✓ Use a full range of tools for communication about project alternative (e.g. visualization).
- ✓ Secure commitment to the process from top agency officials and local leaders. ¹

2.0 PROJECT PROCESS

The project, following a context sensitive solutions process, includes the following steps:

- ✓ *Step 1: Develop Community/Agency Involvement Program* – as described in this document. This document includes a description of the decision points and the decision makers.
- ✓ *Step 2: Identify project issues and define the problems to be solved* – several tools identified in this plan will help the project team identify project issues and problems to resolve in the project development process. The process is greatly served if all parties bring the issues to the project early in project development. These issues and problems are fully described in the in the project’s purpose and need.
- ✓ *Step 3: Determine evaluation criteria and an evaluation process* – prior to coming up with alternatives and in concert with the all project stakeholders, determine how the alternatives will be evaluated. What community values are important? What elements of the street may be a priority over another? This is an important step before you identify alternatives and may include separate evaluations by MOA/PM&E staff, consultant, citizen’s advisory groups, and others that are combined in the end.
- ✓ *Step 4: Develop Design Alternatives* – what options are available within the project limits? What are the design details? How do they fit together? What are the pieces of the design – sidewalks, bicycle lanes, lane widths, right of way widths, etc. Ensure that the full range of stakeholder values is reflected in the solutions. Listen and learn to understand innovative alternatives. The design options are joined in different combinations and become distinct alternatives to be evaluated and documented in the preliminary engineering and design study documents. Use simulations and graphics such as aerial photography, 3-D images, renderings, etc. to aid full understanding of the alternatives.
- ✓ *Step 5: Develop and Select the Preferred Alternative to Advance* – by applying the evaluation criteria to the design options in an iterative process with project stakeholders, the selected preferred alternative will reflect compromise. Compromise arrived at through multiple conversations, use of simulations and illustrative graphics, etc.

¹ *A Guide to Best Practices for Achieving Context Sensitive Solutions, National Cooperative Highway Research Program, Report 480, Transportation Research Board, p3*

- ✓ *Step 6: Implementation* – CSS/CSD doesn't end with plan set submittal, it extends through construction in an effort to mitigate construction impacts. To accomplish this step, public desires related to the construction effort will be summarized and forwarded through the Municipality to the selected contractor.

3.0 DRAFT PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

The overall goal of this project is to upgrade 5,300-feet of Dimond Boulevard between Jodhpur Road and Sand Lake Road to MOA urban collector standards. Improvements anticipated include roadway foundation and surfacing, curb and gutter, storm drainage, lighting, pedestrian facilities and landscaping.

4.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

The public involvement plan provides MOA/PM&E with an outline of the methods to obtain public input as the project development occurs. The plan contains a listing of the tools and methods as well as a schedule of their use.

Before any public involvement activities can begin for the project, MOA/PM&E, in consultation with R&M and Brooks & Associates, will determine the questions to be resolved by public participation and the level of public input it will support on the spectrum developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).

<http://iap2.org/practitionertools/index.shtml>

This PIP has been based on an public participation at the INVOLVE level, which states the following goal:

To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered. © IAP2 2005

This level also includes the following Promise to the Public:

We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. © IAP2 2005

At this level of participation, the public is provided opportunities to influence the project design, however, final decisions rest with the PM&E. Working at the INVOLVE level means that elements of the INFORM and CONSULT levels may also be used.

4.1 Decision Maker

The Municipality of Anchorage Project Management and Engineering will retain all decision-making authority for this project. Their decisions may be influenced by input received from the public during the project development.

4.2 Public Outreach And Notification

Public outreach and notification will be accomplished using the following tools:

- ✓ Door hangers and Early Notification Letters
- ✓ Door-to-door Personal Introduction along the Corridor
- ✓ Project Web Site
- ✓ Newsletters and Other Print Media
- ✓ Public Meetings and Workshops
- ✓ Public Service Announcements
- ✓ Community Council Meetings
- ✓ *Anchorage Daily News* Advertising

4.2 Individual And Group Public Input

The project will affect those neighborhoods, businesses and residents with direct access to the project area. The project team will contact these individuals using the following tools:

- ✓ Adjacent Tenant, Homeowner and Business Meetings
- ✓ Citizen's Advisory Committee
- ✓ Community Council Meetings
- ✓ Door-to-Door Visits/Door Hangers/Face-to-Face Discussions
- ✓ Newsletters
- ✓ Telephone, Fax, Email and U.S. Postal Service Communications

The project team will document verbal and written communication from the public in a summary. Copies of the summary will be distributed to the MOA/PM&E Project Manager.

4.3 Public Involvement Activities

4.3.1 Identify Stakeholders/Prepare Mailing List

Mailing lists will be developed for project mailings—newsletters, notices, etc. The project is within the boundaries of the Sand Lake Community Council. State legislators, Senator Ben Stevens, and Representative Norman Rokeberg represent the area. Anchorage Municipal Assembly members Pamela Jennings and Dan Sullivan represent residents.

The following is a preliminary list of potential user groups that may have an interest in this project and will be included in project mailings. This list will be expanded as research and input identify others.

The public involvement process for the Dimond Boulevard Upgrade will include the following potentially affected interests (PAI).

General Public

The general public using the roadway fall into this group of potential affected stakeholders. Additionally, other important stakeholders will need to be engaged such as the Anchorage

School District, emergency responders, equestrians, Kincaid Park employees and Kincaid Park users. The mailing list includes business, property owners and residents with the mailing list boundary.

Special Interest Groups

Alaska Center for the Environment
Alaska Truckers Association
Anchorage Citizen's Coalition
Anchorage Road Coalition
Anchorage Trails and Greenways Coalition
Transit Works
Equestrian
Groups regularly using Kincaid Park

Agencies

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
U. S. Corps of Engineers (USCOE)
State of Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, Central Region (ADOT&PF)
Alaska Department Natural Resources (ADNR)
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)
State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
Federal Highway Administration

Local Government

Mayor's office
Project Management & Engineering (PM&E)
Anchorage Fire Department (AFD)
Anchorage Police Department (APD)
Anchorage Public Transportation Department (People Mover, Anchorage Rides, Share-a-Ride)
Anchorage Municipal Assembly Members
Anchorage School District (ASD)
Anchorage Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Environmental Services
Anchorage Department of Parks & Recreation
Anchorage Urban Design Commission

Utilities

Alaska Communications System (ACS)
Anchorage Water and Wastewater Utility (AWWU)
Chugach Electric Association (CEA)
ENSTAR Natural Gas Company (ENSTAR)
GCI Cable (GCI)
Municipal Light and Power (ML&P)

The initial mailing list will include mail recipients in the area within the boundaries shown on map below (Figure 1). In addition to the stakeholder mailing list, two other lists will be

Alternatives Development Workshop – hands-on workshop to develop and discuss project alternatives.

Preferred Alternative Workshop/Meeting – at completion of the draft DSR to seek input on the evaluation and selection of the preferred alternative and its documentation.

4.3.4 Project Comments

The Public Involvement Coordinator, Anne Brooks, P.E., is the designated contact for the public for this project. She can be reached via email, telephone or fax. All public communications will also include contact information for the MOA/PM&E and Consultant project managers. All requests will be coordinated with R&M and/or MOA/PM&E as deemed appropriate. Public responses will be documented in project records.

4.3.5 Documentation

This task includes documenting the public involvement efforts. The documents will be presented chronologically to provide future project phases with the complete project history. Comments and responses will be summarized.

5.0 SCHEDULE

Dimond Boulevard Upgrade, Jodhpur Road to Sand Lake Road

Public Involvement Tool (Group/Activity)	Date	Project Purpose	Time and Location
Mailing List	Throughout project	Continuously updated.	N/A
Web Site Development	Throughout project	All Phases—updated at 4 key points in project.	[URL to be acquired]
Public Involvement Plan	Throughout project	Covers public outreach all phases.	N/A
Newsletters	1) - 05/2006 2) - TBD 3) - TBD 4) - TBD	1) Announce project and upcoming public meeting; 2) Provide overview of alternatives, seek input on design details; 3) Present preferred alternative; 4) Present preferred alternative, final DSR, outline construction schedule.	To Mailing list
<i>Anchorage Daily News</i> display advertising	05/2006 TBD TBD	Announce project and upcoming public meeting—1 week prior and day before meeting	Not applicable
Citizen's Advisory Committee	TBD	Assist in developing evaluation criteria and process and to work with project team through the project.	To Be Determined
Sand Lake Community Council	1) - 05/08/06 2) - TBD 3) - TBD 4) - TBD 5) - TBD 6) - TBD	1) Announce project, invite community to public meeting; 2) Present alternatives and announce upcoming meeting; 3) Present preferred alternative and announce upcoming meeting; 4) Provide notice of construction start and contractor contact information; 5) Provide status of construction; 6) Provide status of construction.	2 nd Monday, 7 pm Calvary Church, Spuhler Hall W 80 th /Jewel Lake Rd.
Public Workshops	1) - 05/11/06 <i>tentative</i> 2) - TBD 3) - TBD	1) Introduce project, seek public input on project scope and alternative evaluation criteria; 2) Present alternatives and solicit comments; 3) Present preferred alternative and draft DSR.	5/11/06: 7-9 p.m., Chinook Elementary School, Presentation at 7:30 p.m.
Urban Design Commission	TBD	Present alternatives	3 rd Wednesday Assembly Chambers

DSR = Design Study Report

TBD = To Be Determined

6.0 PROJECT TEAM LIST

Contracting Agencies

Municipality of Anchorage

Project Management & Engineering
4700 Bragaw Street/POB 196650
Anchorage, AK 99519-6650
Fax: (907) 343-8088

John Smith, P.E. Project Manager, 343-8422
Julie Makela, P.E. Project Administrator, 343-7598

Consultant Team (partial list)

R&M Consultants, Inc. (Project Lead)

9101 Vanguard Drive
Anchorage, AK 99507
Telephone (907) 522-1701

Frank D. Rast, P.E., Principal-in-Charge
Todd C. Jacobson, P.E., Project Manager
Paula J. Winfree, E.I.T., Design Engineer

Brooks & Associates (Public Involvement)

301 W. Northern Lights Blvd. Suite 440
Anchorage, AK 99503
Tel: (907) 272-1877
Fax: (907) 743-6087

M. Anne Brooks, P.E., Public Involvement Coordinator, annebrooks@ak.net
Kathy Burgess, Public Involvement Support, kbc@ak.net
Betty Caudle, Public Involvement Support, betty@brooksandassociates.info
Jan Hazen, Graphics & Web Site Design, jhazen@gci.net