

Nelson Road West Grade Separated

This alternative will will not solve the connectivity for the community.
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Still coming in at that bad turn on Fairview at the “farm.” (Reference comment 3)

Bike/pedestrian trails need to be considered on all new roadways. (Reference comment 7)

Without Fairview connection until Seward Meridian is completed. Seems OK. (Reference comment 9)

Too expensive – is only a partial solution. There needs to be more than one access. (Reference comment 10)

This proposal has merit. However, it is disingenuous to say that any extension of Nelson Road towards the west is independent of the Seward-Meridian extension project. The two must complement each other in order for the flow of traffic to empty smoothly onto the Parks Highway from the west and the east. (Reference comment 11)

To me this would present the best solution. It eliminates the at-grade crossing and provides access directly to the frontage road off the Parks Highway. From a bussing standpoint this would benefit the greatest number of buses for the school in the quickest route. (Reference comment 12)

Too much traffic will be routed to the same area of the Parks Hwy. with Fairview Loop → Seward Meridian and the Ranch traffic on an adjacent parallel road. (Reference comment 13)

Expensive plus requires additional land purchase and contouring. Traffic would not connect to the Parks Hwy but to a service road, which would create traffic flow conditions at intersections not designed for that much traffic. (Reference comment 14)

This appears to be a workable and quick fix at the east end and have less impact to other area now developed. This also would be easy to adjust for any future work on Seward-Meridian project. Would also provide for better collector roads. (Reference comment 15)

Looks like a good option when used in conjunction with Abby Blvd. extension and Brome Ave. extension and Seward-Meridian extension. Conforms more to overall plan. Very costly but maybe most bang for the buck. Tying into frontage road makes good sense. (Reference comment 22)

This will not solve the problem because it adds to the already overloaded congestion problem that Fairview Loop is now experiencing. (Reference comment 31)

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Valley Block Access: For the Valley Block and Abby Boulevard access points, a draft Railroad Diagnostic Team report addresses the railroad crossings and is ready for signature by all agencies. Intersection capacity still needs to be verified through a TIA under a DOT/PF Approach Road Permit. The current draft of the Railroad Diagnostic Team Report depended on the Lounsbury TIA and assumed traffic had two ways in and out of the school. If Valley Block is to be the only connection, vehicle storage will have to be reevaluated in an updated TIA.

Working with the Alaska Railroad, I do not support creating an at-grade railroad crossing at Valley Block with less than minimum storage requirements, especially for a new route to a school with buses, parents, and residents. Storage may have to be even longer if this is to be the only access. The Federal Railroad Administration's Railroad-Highway Crossing Handbook recommends a minimum of 100 feet of storage between railroad gates on a STOP controlled sidestreet and the main road. This setback will store one school bus and two vehicles. The sidestreet would be widened with shoulders, a left turn lane, and a right turn lane.

To provide less than minimum storage would require a traffic signal and mainline left turn lanes in order to preempt traffic and clear the train tracks. However, in this case a review of daily traffic volumes suggests this location is not close to meeting signal warrants. I do not support a traffic signal that is not warranted as it will be disruptive to mainline traffic all day, and as a signal it will create rear end collisions each year.

I did consider the Borough's request to examine another option to offset minimal storage, such as using gating or stop signs on Fairview Loop Road when a train is present. The goal would be to clear out the new school access road when a train arrives, and to strive for a less costly solution. After consideration, I find too many problems with this concept. Gating designs will not be able to fully block Fairview Loop Road, especially because "escape" routes are needed on two-way roads. Trains which cross during times when there is no sidestreet traffic would also require stopping Fairview Loop Road. The partial gating, and the times of trains are fully expected to lead to "cheaters" who question the gating purpose and go around it. Sidestreet users' subject to any uncertainty or confusion as to what other traffic is doing becomes at risk, increasing the potential for a vehicle to be trapped on the tracks. No such triple gating of the crossing and sidestreet is recommended by the Railroad-Highway grade Crossing Handbook. It is an unconventional design. A permanent All-Way Stop is also not warranted on Fairview Loop Road given the unbalanced traffic volumes, and would lead to the same "cheaters" that a gate system would create.