

APPENDIX F

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY

Public Involvement Summary

This appendix summarizes the public participation undertaken during the reconnaissance report development. The summary contains two parts, the first a chronology of the public participation activities; the second, a summary of the public comment received.

Table F1. Chronology of Public Participation Activities – Ongoing and Completed

DATE	PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITY	PROJECT PHASE/PURPOSE
04/26/2007	Progress meeting	Review scope of work with Turner and Besse Engineering
04/27/2007	Stakeholder meeting	Review Sweeping Vista preliminary plat
05/15/2007	Stakeholder meeting	Discuss right of way requirements with Tucker
05/15/2007	Stakeholder meeting	Discuss alternatives with Tucker
08/08/2007	Stakeholder meeting	Review project progress with Turner and Besse Engineering
11/20/2007	Diagnostic Team Meeting	Discuss Fairview/Nelson Road and Abby Boulevard intersections with ADOT&PF, Alaska Railroad and Mat-Su Borough
12/13/2007	Diagnostic Team Meeting	Discuss Fairview/Nelson Road and Abby Boulevard intersections with ADOT&PF, Alaska Railroad and Mat-Su Borough
12/18/2007	Stakeholder meeting	Review Trunk Road cost estimate with Tucker
01/2008	Stakeholder meeting	Discuss roundabout design with Besse Engineering
01/04/2008	Stakeholder meeting	Review progress, road sections with Besse Engineering and Mat-Su Borough
01/4/2008	Stakeholder meeting	Discuss project, review cross sections with Turner
02/13/2008	Progress meeting	Discuss project with team and Besse Engineering
03/12/2008	Stakeholder meeting	Review Trunk Road 4-way intersection design with Besse Engineering and Mat-Su Borough
03/26/2008	Stakeholder meeting	Review Nelson Extension across Valley Block & Concrete with Siegle/Providence/Strobe/Besse Engineering and Mat-Su Borough

DATE	PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITY	PROJECT PHASE/PURPOSE
04/07/2008	Newsletter	Introduce Project, provide project team contact information
04/16/2008	Progress meeting	Project meeting with Besse Engineering, Proviance/Stroble
05/14/2008	Progress meeting	Project update with team, AKRR, Turner and Besse Engineering
05/21/2008	Garden Terrace Homeowners Public Meeting	Construction of South Palmer Elementary School
06/10/2008	Progress meeting	Project update with Turner and Besse Engineering
08/14/2008	Community Meeting	Borough officials attended a meeting convened by and for Linlu area property owners
08/21/2008	Community Meeting	Introduce Project, seek public comment and input
12/2008	Alaska Railroad Corporation postcard mailing	Announce date, time and place of public meeting combined with 2009 AKRR Program of Projects
12/03/2008	Stakeholder meeting	Meeting with Valley Block & Concrete
12/31/2008	Stakeholder meeting	City of Wasilla coordination meeting
01/03/2009	Postcard mailing	Describe outcome of draft Design Study Report and invite public to a meeting
01/06/2009	Progress meeting	Project update, team plus Assemblywoman Church
01/13/2009	Elected official briefing	Brief MSB Manager on project progress
01/16/2009	Stakeholder meeting	Informational overview/estimate review with Tucker
1/21/2009	KMBQ Radio announcement	Announce date, time and place of public meeting
1/18, 1/20 and 1/21/2009	Display advertising	Announce date, time and place of public meeting
01/22/2009	Public service announcements	Announce date, time and place of public meeting
01/22/2009	Public Meeting	Present draft Design Study Report, seek public comment and input

DATE	PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITY	PROJECT PHASE/PURPOSE
02/17/2009	Stakeholder meeting	Review Tucker alternative with Assembly members Church, Kluberton, Tucker and Dellar
03/19/2009	Stakeholder meeting	Review South Palmer Elementary School access with MSB School District personnel and Besse Engineering
04/2009	Newsletter	Provide notice of May 20, 2009, public meeting. Mailed to stakeholder mailing list.
04/03/2009	Stakeholder meeting	Review Tucker and Ewing alternatives with Assemblywoman Church and Siegle, Proviance/Stroble, Besse Engineering
04/07/2009	Elected official briefing	Brief Assembly members Church and Kluberton
04/14/2009	Stakeholder meeting	Review Sweeping Vista plan with Assemblyman Houston
04/17/2009	Stakeholder meeting	Review Old Matanuska improvement Assemblywoman Church, Assemblyman Kluberton
05/11/2009	E-mail announcement	Provide notice of May 20, 2009 public meeting via e-mail to subscribers
05/13/2009	Web update	Project team provided Alternative Comparison Summary on project web site
05/14/2009	Stakeholder meeting	Review and revise Tucker alignment with Bill Tucker
05/15/2009	E-mail announcement	Provide notice of May 20, 2009 public meeting via e-mail to subscribers
05/18/2009	Public service announcement	PSA regarding 5/20 public meeting sent to KMBQ radio station
05/19/2009	Public service announcement	PSA regarding 5/20 public meeting sent to KAYO 100.9 radio station
05/20/2009	Public meeting	Provide update to public, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. meeting at Evangelo's
05/20/2009	E-mail announcement	Provide notice of May 20, 2009, public meeting via E-mail to subscribers.
05/27/2009	Media coverage	Article published in <i>Anchorage Daily News</i> , Mat-Su valley edition
Various dates	Develop and update project web site	All Phases – updated at key points in project

The project team has received comments via e-mail, hand-written comment sheets and verbally via telephone conversations with project team members. The following is a summary of the comments received at the January and May meetings sorted by project alternative.

Nelson Road East At-Grade

The January 22 meeting generated 9 responses to the question on the comment sheet regarding whether the alternative will or will not solve the connectivity for the community. The alternative generated 12 comments overall.

5 responses said the alternative would solve area connectivity because the alternative:

- Gets traffic out of neighborhood
- Easy access to school
- Shortest route
- Cost-effective
- Lessens impacts on Garden Terrace and Ranch subdivisions
- Works with future Seward Meridian connection
- Cost for portions to Fairview Loop paid by others
- Keeps school buses off sharp corner at Old Mat-Su/Fairview Loop intersection
- Eliminates one railroad crossing
- Shortest alternative
- Quickest completion time

4 responses said the alternative would not solve area connectivity because the alternative:

- Creates safety issues
- Costly
- Significant right-of-way acquisition
- Traffic will bottleneck at the at-grade crossing
- Increases congestion on overloaded Fairview Loop
- Intersection can't support traffic if there's only one way in and out of the school

This alternative generated comments from the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Central Region Traffic Engineer.

Nelson Road East Grade-Separated

The January 22 meeting generated 7 responses to the question on the comment sheet regarding whether the alternative will or will not solve the connectivity for the community. The alternative generated 13 comments overall.

4 responses said the alternative would solve area connectivity because the alternative:

- Gets traffic out of neighborhood
- Provides good flow
- Eliminates at-grade crossing
- Minimizes impacts on Ranch Garden Terrace subdivisions
- Shortest route
- Portions to Fairview Loop paid for by others
- Less costly
- Routes traffic away from existing homes and toward new subdivision
- Safer

3 responses said the alternative would not solve area connectivity because the alternative:

- Costly
- Only a partial solution (need a second access)
- Adds congestion on Fairview Loop

This alternative generated comments from the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Central Region Traffic Engineer. Commenters at the May 20 meeting also noted that this alternative would avoid railroad crossing after the railroad upgrades.

Nelson Road West Grade Separated

The January 22 meeting generated 9 responses to the question on the comment sheet regarding whether the alternative will or will not solve the connectivity for the community. The alternative generated 12 comments overall.

4 responses said the alternative would solve area connectivity because the alternative:

- Eliminates at-grade crossing
- Provides access directly off Parks Highway
- Gives buses quick route to school
- Quick fix
- Less impact to areas being developed
- Works with future work on Seward-Meridian
- Provides better collector roads
- Ties into frontage road

5 responses said the alternative would not solve area connectivity because the alternative:

- Comes in at bad turn on Fairview Loop
- Costly
- Only a partial solution, depends on Seward-Meridian being built
- Too much traffic routed to same point on Parks Highway
- Requires too much right-of-way acquisition and contouring
- Connects to a service road instead of Parks Highway; intersection not designed for that much traffic
- Adds traffic to already-congested Fairview Loop

This alternative generated comments from the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Central Region Traffic Engineer.

Abby Road Extension

The January 22 meeting generated 7 responses to the question on the comment sheet regarding whether the alternative will or will not solve the connectivity for the community. All seven indicated that the connection would not solve the area connectivity. The main reason stated for the alternative not solving area connectivity for the community was impacts to the neighborhood. Other reasons cited included the volume of traffic Abby Boulevard would need to accommodate.

This alternative generated comments from the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Central Region Traffic Engineer.

The project team removed this alternative from consideration after the January 22, 2009 meeting.

At the May 20, 2009 meeting, this alternative continued to generate comment and concern about Abby Boulevard continuing to be the main road access to and from Fairview Loop.

Nelson Road Extension

The January 22 meeting generated 11 responses to the question on the comment sheet regarding whether the alternative will or will not solve the connectivity for the community. This alternative generated 19 comments overall.

4 responses said the alternative would solve area connectivity because the alternative:

- Only impacts 4 property owners, and 2 of those are for it
- Prefers cul-de-sac to at-grade crossing on Fairview Loop
- Promotes traffic flow from the Ranch and the new school
- Eliminates the need for a railroad crossing at Abby Boulevard
- Does not create new at-grade crossing
- Promotes a more continuous collector system
- Fits with future planning

7 responses said the alternative would not solve area connectivity because the alternative:

- Benefits one large developer
- Routes too much traffic onto a bad turn
- Too close to bed and breakfast
- Connect Seward-Meridian to Fairview Loop first
- Impacts my property at the intersection of Fairview Loop and Linlu Lane
- Significant impact on existing homeowners
- Burdens Linlu Lane property owners
- Significantly impacts property at 4059 E. Fairview Loop; prefers widening existing Fairview Loop without right-of-way acquisition
- It diminishes my property; building Seward-Meridian will diminish it further
- Property owner says they will not relinquish right-of-way and eminent domain is not justifiable since other alternatives exist
- Costly
- Creates circuitous route
- Destroys trees
- Most buses likely arrive from the east
- Makes a dangerous intersection at Fairview Loop more dangerous
- Fairview Loop already too congested
- Will add traffic congestion to future Seward Meridian/Fairview/Nelson intersection
- Not consistent with LRTP
- Increases traffic over a railroad crossing at a poorly designed intersection at Fairview Loop and Old Mat Road

An audience member at the May 20 meeting said Nelson Road Extension is dangerous to children on buses; the 90-degree corner headed downhill on existing access to the school is dangerous; and a roundabout at a congested intersection is dangerous.

Trunk Road Extension with 4-way intersection

The January 22 meeting generated 7 responses to the question on the comment sheet regarding whether the alternative will or will not solve the connectivity for the community. The alternative generated 13 comments overall.

5 responses said the alternative would solve connectivity because the alternative:

- Provides best access to school; buses, parents and commuters will use it
- Gives direct access to Parks Highway
- Land and road construction provided by others
- Impacts existing business and property owners less than a roundabout
- Logical long-term investment in area circulation

- Doesn't impact residences

2 responses said the alternative would not solve area connectivity because the alternative:

- Creates too much traffic at Trunk
- Disturbs wildlife
- Roundabout is better
- Set up to benefit Mr. Turner
- Impacts Grizzly Espresso owner
- Creates congestion at a 4-way intersection

At the May 20 meeting commenters suggested that the Trunk Road alternative be considered the first phase to provide access to the school.

Trunk Road Extension with roundabout intersection

The January 22 meeting generated 7 responses to the question on the comment sheet regarding whether the alternative will or will not solve the connectivity for the community. The alternative generated 16 comments overall.

5 responses said the alternative would solve area connectivity because the alternative:

- No train crossing
- Easy access to Parks Highway
- Good access to school; buses, parents and commuters will use it whether it has a stop sign or roundabout
- Serves majority of traffic
- Most of the work completed by others
- Serves future development in Happy Valley
- Work could commence quickly
- Minimizes right-of-way acquisition
- Serves future plans
- Easy to get used to
- Roundabouts work and everyone gets used to them
- Connecting Trunk Road to future Seward Meridian will relieve traffic

2 responses said the alternative would not solve area connectivity because the alternative:

- Creates too much traffic at Trunk Road
- Disturbs wildlife
- Unsafe
- Will require regular snow removal to see signs
- No safe pedestrian crossing
- Requires large area to work properly
- Roundabouts don't work well in Alaska
- Proposed roundabout size is too small; won't accommodate commercial vehicles
- Roundabouts are difficult to navigate in winter conditions

Concerns were expressed about the use of roundabouts for intersection control.

At the May 20 meeting commenters suggested that the Trunk Road alternative be considered the first phase to provide access to the school.

Brome Avenue Extension

The January 22 meeting generated 8 responses to the question on the comment sheet regarding whether the alternative will or will not solve the connectivity for the community. All 8 indicated that the connection would not solve the area connectivity. The reasons stated for the alternative not solving area connectivity for the community included impacts to neighborhoods, no direct access to the Parks Highway or major intersection and alternative does not provide

true exit to all the subdivision and failure to meet purpose and future needs. This alternative generated 9 comments overall.

The project team removed this alternative from consideration after the January 22, 2009 meeting.

No comments were made regarding this alternative at the May 20, 2009 meeting.

Tucker Extension

This alternative was not considered at the January 22 meeting. At the May 20th meeting, 3 commenters submitted comments regarding this alternative.

3 responses said the alternative was:

- Cheapest
- Shortest
- Least disruptive
- Best approach to traffic and railroad issues
- Least impact to existing homes
- Best route to access school and new subdivisions in the short-term
- Connect it to the frontage road
- Use lighting conservatively

Mr. Tucker shared information he received from the Alaska Railroad Corporation emphasizing their desire for grade-separation of road/rail crossings to eliminate safety issues, mitigate maintenance issues and provide needed infrastructure for near term and future development.

No-build Alternative

While always a consideration, this alternative was not specifically mentioned at the January 22 meeting. At the May 20th meeting, 1 commenter submitted comments regarding this alternative. This commenter indicated that snow and ice make under-railroad crossings and roundabouts dangerous.

Comments on long-term/short-term solutions at 5/20 meeting:

At the May 20, 2009, meeting we asked the public to help us decide on an alternative with which we could move forward. Groups were invited to talk to each other about both short-term and long-term needs and tell the project team which alternative or combination of alternatives they thought would best satisfy those needs. The abbreviated comments below are from the court reporter's transcript.

- We need to plan in phases for a system that allows east-west access, accesses the school and takes the railroad into account. First phase: Extend Trunk Road to access the school with either 4-way stop or roundabout. Second phase: Secondary school access, depending on whether children are coming from the east or west. Third phase: east-west extension from Trunk Road to Fairview Loop needs to go all the way through to Seward Meridian and include improvements to Old Mat Road. Establish priorities, make a plan and get funding support for it in Juneau to avoid piecemeal solutions.
- Extend Trunk Road south. It goes to the school, accesses the subdivision, does everything we need right now. Tie it into the long-term solution later.

- Build Trunk Road South extension first, with a four-way intersection, to access the school. There's no need to focus on the west end until subdivisions grow. Long-term — separate traffic flow from newly developing, high-density neighborhoods (to the east?) from traffic flow on the west side of Fairview Loop where there is farmland and existing, larger neighborhoods. The east/west corridor should be Trunk Road South through Valley Block & Concrete/Klondike Concrete gravel pit area.
- Short-term, Nelson Road East is the fastest, least expensive access to the school. Long-term, Trunk Road extension makes a lot of sense.
- Build the Tucker route or one of the other alternatives that do not disrupt rural neighborhoods to provide access to the school.
- First connect South Trunk Road for school access. There's not enough traffic now to justify an east/west corridor off of Fairview Loop. Explore other alternatives later.
- The best near-term solution is Nelson Road East. The ultimate solution is extending Nelson Road and Fairview Loop to Seward Meridian. Continue working with the Legislature to fund Trunk Road South and Seward Meridian.
- Connect Trunk Road on the east to provide access to the school and leave the east-west tie-in for later.
- Establish priorities, make a plan and get funding support for it in Juneau to avoid piecemeal solutions.
- Don't push traffic from new subdivisions to the Seward Meridian and Wal-Mart area, which is already overloaded; build another access so people headed to Anchorage to work have an alternate route, such as Tucker, which would provide another way to the frontage road.
- The Trunk Road South should come first, but you have to have more than one north-south corridor. The Tucker alternative would give the needed above-grade railroad crossing and the start of a collector road system, with options of a single loop through to Trunk Road South or a standalone. In the short-term it provides above-grade access to the school. When Fairview goes through, there will be a separate Fairview Loop connected with the Fairview/Old Mat inter-tie; presumably that on-grade crossing will go away. The only thing we ask is that we define the right of way through our property so we can find a developer interested in commercial real estate and willing to build the road from there to the Parks Highway. We're asking the borough to take right of way. Otherwise, there are no other options to the east, and the only two west of the Seward Meridian are going to be extremely expensive.
- Build Trunk Road south to access the school. Don't route additional traffic onto Fairview Loop.
- The Tucker alternative would give the needed above-grade railroad crossing and the start of a collector road system, with options of a single loop through to Trunk Road South or a standalone. In the short term, it provides above-grade access to the school

and meets Mr. Turner's requirement to proceed with development. When Fairview goes through, there will be a separate Fairview Loop connected with the Fairview/Old Mat inter-tie.

- See if there is a way the borough could do some kind of a land swap with the Railroad for the area from Hyer Road where they're going to move their tracks. Once the tracks are moved the corridor could be used for a road.

Comments and concerns about the project development process

- We need additional information on the Wasilla/Palmer boundary, the railroad's plans, and the potential for a land swap with the railroad.
- Provide accurate cost information for all alternatives.
- Does the borough already have a plan in place? Is it under the table and going to come out in the future regardless of what goes on at this meeting?
- The Borough decided to put a school there, and rated the current access a 3 out of 5. Now there's a school here, and we need safe transportation in and out. When you guys chose to put the school there, you ran over the community and its long-time residents. It's wrong to put people in that position. Now it's been thrown into our laps. We've seen so many alternatives that run over somebody's home, that we can't afford, and nothing looks attractive. It's really rotten.
- There's no adult supervision at the Borough, and it's about time we had people that aren't dancing at the ends of the strings of Friends of Mat-Su. Scandinavia's roads are pristine and they cost the same as ours. If we built roads right the first time, we'd have money to make these improvements. The way we're doing it is broken.
- We need some borough motivation to get some of these projects through. Punch Fern through and alleviate traffic on Fairview Loop. Punch Seward Meridian through to alleviate traffic on Fairview Loop. Fairview Loop has all kinds of exits out that, with paving, could get the job done. Some of these ideas don't work for some property owners, and some of the problems are the boroughs. So do we cry to the borough, or do we cry to the engineer paid by the borough who's doing what he's paid to do.
- The coordination with the Alaska Railroad Corporation, Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and Mat-Su Borough.

General comments

- Roads in the area drift in when the snow flies in winter this should be taken into consideration.
- We need safe corridors for our children traveling by bus.
- Consider impacts to creeks including losing them in culverts and impacts to traditional fishing use.

- No roads under railroads. Provide crossing bars at any at-grade crossings. Minimize light pollution.
- Regarding a road in the existing railroad access: there's not space to accommodate 60-70 feet right of way without disturbing the creek.