



Open House #2: Presentations Q&A

Thursday February 28, 2019

Z.J. Loussac Library, Anchorage

Presentation 1: 3:30 p.m.

Q: *How will the highest priority project be determined?*

A: This will be determined as part of the second phase of the study.

Q: *Is this the furthest along that a project has made it addressing the Seward Highway?*

A: The PEL process is a new process. There have been previous efforts such as the Highway-to-Highway project, which was so large that funding was a challenge, and the 36th Avenue intersection project, which stalled because there were concerns about how the project would tie in with the rest of Midtown. The Long-Range Transportation Plan continues to include a connection between the Seward Highway and the Glenn Highway. This PEL Study of the segment between Tudor Road and 20th Avenue is a new approach to solving the transportation challenges in Midtown.

Q: *With regard to signal phasing on Concept H (the Median U-Turn concept) you mentioned moving from 4-phase to 2-phase signals. What is the impact on pedestrian crossing times?*

A: Pedestrian crossings are timed on the basis of a travel speed of 3.5 feet/second. This will dictate the signal cycles and will be a consideration in the future intersection designs.

Q: *So, is there a benefit for the pedestrian?*

A: Yes, because the one-way frontage roads enable you to cross one direction of traffic per signal cycle.

Q: *Are you still relying on a tunnel or a bridge to get over the freeway?*

A: Yes.

Q: *Do you anticipate (i.e., 90 percent certainty) that we will do Concept H?*

A: Not with 90 percent certainty, but we have heard favorable things from the advisory groups. We have received particularly good feedback from businesses as it acquires right-of-way early in the process. This will need to be worked through as part of Phase 2 of the PEL Study.

Q: *This all comes down to money. How much will be Federal vs. State funded?*

A: Normal project funding is 9 percent State/91 percent Federal.

Q: *What are the implications of the current budget proposal?*

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Q: *Can you throw a dollar figure at this?*

A: The whole swathe of improvements will be hundreds of millions of dollars. We want to identify individual projects that are fundable, which probably means each project will have to be less than \$100 million.

Q: *It still looks like there will be a lot of traffic cutting through the residential (east) side of Fireweed Lane.*

A: We are proposing the same traffic restrictions as today. Rogers Park Community Council have been active participants so far and are seeking to avoid cut-through traffic along LaTouche, Fireweed and on the western side of the Highway near 33rd Avenue.

Q: *Have you looked at traffic through the entire system?*

A: The Long-Range Transportation Plan still includes a connection between the Seward Highway and Glenn Highway. The Seward-to-Glenn connection in the traffic model accommodates growth in the next 25 years and beyond. Our solutions accommodate growth and pull traffic from other roads to alleviate stress elsewhere in the network (e.g. Lake Otis, A and C streets). If we don't do this then we have to make harder choices about other projects to provide connections. Travel Demand Management (strategies to reduce travel demand (specifically of single-occupancy private vehicles), or to redistribute this demand in space or in time) is being looked at from a region-wide perspective through the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

Q: *Are there examples we can cite where adding lanes has eliminated congestion?*

A: There are numerous examples in Anchorage where adding lanes has alleviated congestion. Examples include the Elmore Road extension and Dowling Road extension, which alleviated congestion at Lake Otis Parkway and Tudor Road.

Q: *I am concerned about removing taxable property within the Municipality of Anchorage, removing the ability to enjoy my property and my property value being reduced.*

A: Right-of-way impacts haven't been determined yet. Concepts that had significant obvious right-of-way impacts scored poorly during the Phase 1 screening process. We may be able to make some existing quality of life issues better through addition of noise walls or improved air quality. We recommend you contact us directly to discuss your concerns.

Q: *Please look at places where cut and cover to put parks on top can be accommodated.*

A: Thank you for your feedback.





Presentation 2: 5:30 p.m.

Q: *Are we contemplating any improvements north of Chester Creek or South of Tudor?*

A: Another PEL Study is being contemplated north of 20th Avenue. Our approach outside of the study area has largely been a transition back to the existing roadway. There is a design proposal for the Tudor interchange that will be advancing to design in Fall 2019.

Q: *Are there traffic jams on the Seward Highway? It seems like the congestion impacts the east-west corridors more than the highway.*

A: Correct. This is because the signal timing intentionally prioritizes north-south movements along the highway. There is generally a peak hour problem in Midtown. Traffic is delayed on Tudor Road because there is more room to store traffic on Tudor prior to releasing it to the Seward Highway. Signal timings are designed to flush traffic through the system.

Q: *What happens if we don't do anything?*

A: Traffic is growing at a 1-2 percent growth rate per year. Over a 25-year period, we will get a 25-50 percent increase in traffic volumes. We need to try to identify where delays occur and plan to minimize them. If we do nothing on the Seward Highway then we will need to build additional capacity on other facilities (Tudor, Lake Otis, C Street, etc.). The Metropolitan Transportation Plan addresses anticipated growth in the region and provides high-level strategies for addressing the growth.

Q: *Can we say how much right-of-way will be required?*

A: No. This will be part of the second phase of screening/concept development.

