



Central Region

Director's Quarterly

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Summer Edition - Anchorage

June 2014

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Rob Campbell, P.E.

Central Region Director, is a lifelong Alaskan. He has a Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from Oregon State University, and a Master's degree in Engineering Management from the University of Alaska, Anchorage. He has worked at DOT&PF for more than 30 years.

For comments or questions about the newsletter:

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In this issue, we primarily focus on construction projects for our 2014 busy summer season, but I have included information on two other subjects as well: street sweeping and traffic counting. Nothing heralds the arrival of spring more than the sight of street sweepers in our urban areas. Beginning with the highways, the sweepers make their way to the less traveled roads and then on to the bike trails. While the sweepers are slightly bothersome to traffic, pulling up the winter sand helps both air & water quality. Then, secondly, our summer brings us the opportunity to collect yearly traffic data that aids our planning, design, and safety efforts. We have a small article below about our seasonal traffic counts program, another facet of our "intelligent highways" system.

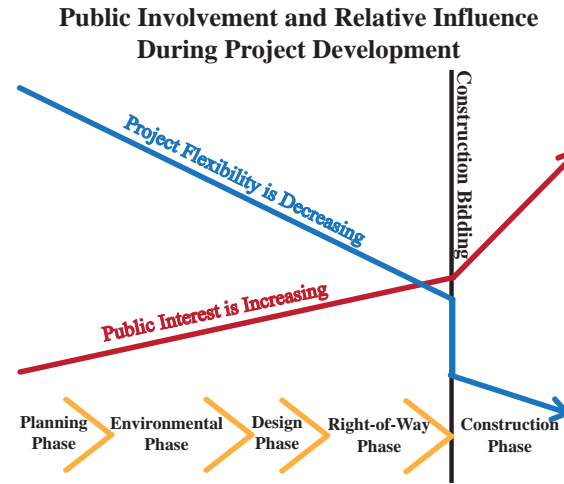
The main topic of summer, of course, is always construction activity. Many people have varying opinions about road construction, and often those opinions don't come out until the project is being built. While we always listen to comments, the volume and divergence of opinions make it impossible to satisfy everyone, and our construction documents reflect the culmination of years of efforts. After the inconvenience of construction is over, however, most comments on the final product are positive – which is always a good feeling.

I look forward to a busy, productive summer, and as always, if you are in the area, stop by, and we can look at projects together.

DOT&PF CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

The 2014 construction season is gearing up to be very busy for Central Region. A record amount of funding approved for transportation projects in fiscal year 2013 includes over \$200 million for road and highway construction in Central Region, most of which is underway this season. Additionally, approximately \$160 million in fiscal year 2014 road projects and approximately \$150 million for airport projects will be under construction this season.

The Department's on-site Project Engineers are working in close coordination with the project contractors' staffs to ensure that issues pertaining to dust, noise and traffic delays are handled in a timely and responsive manner. How the contractors and the Department's Project Engineers address these concerns is very project specific. In busy urban areas such as Anchorage, some of the repaving projects are scheduled for night-time construction, allowing the contractor to more efficiently mobilize equipment and construction materials while minimizing traffic impacts. Due to the nature of Alaska's road systems there are often no alternative highway routes. Hence, construction must occur while keeping the highway corridor open to the traveling public.



The construction phase of the project is also the time when the public takes a heightened interest in the specific details of a project; yet, the designs and plan sets have been finalized and contracts for work have been awarded. It is one of the dichotomies of any public works project: once construction starts, there is the most interest in project details, but the least flexibility in making changes to the design of the project. We strive to involve interested parties in the early stages of planning and project design when there is more opportunity for input and encourage all to stay abreast of project planning and design via the project website or links at the bottom of this page.



Keeping traffic moving during construction of the West Dowling Road Extension project is more challenging due to the need to accommodate rail traffic. Also, note the extensive utilities that needed to be accommodated and addressed in the design.

CENTRAL REGION'S ANNUAL TRAFFIC VOLUME REPORT



Highway data crews collecting traffic counts

The Highway Data Section provides statistical information regarding the volume and character of traffic on the state highway system for use by engineers, planners, and other decision makers to aid them in their assessment of the State's transportation needs. The data they collect is compiled into the Annual Traffic Volume Report, including:

- **Permanent Counts:** Traffic volumes (by direction of travel) are collected year-round with Permanent Traffic Recorders (PTRs) at a number of permanent locations. These counts are expressed in yearly averages and are used to provide information concerning seasonal traffic.
- **Coverage Counts:** Also known as the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), these traffic volumes (sometimes by direction of travel) are typically collected for seven consecutive days in varying locations. Due to weather conditions, these counts are only taken between May and September and those counts are adjusted for seasonal increases using the PTR data.

For more information about traffic counts or to read Central Region's Annual Traffic Volume Report visit <http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdp/plng/mapping/adt.shtml>.

IMPORTANT LINKS

Where can I go to...

- Find information about road construction projects and road closures?
- Find information about road conditions?
- Locate the Central Region Public Involvement Calendar?
- Sign up for weekly updates on Parks Highway construction?
- Get more information about active Central Region projects?
- Find websites for Central Region Projects?

<http://alaskanavigator.org/>
<http://511.alaska.gov/>
<http://dot.alaska.gov/creg/calendar.shtml>
<http://dot.alaska.gov/parks2014/>
<http://dot.alaska.gov/projects-status/index.cfm>
http://dot.alaska.gov/creg/project_info/

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS



Larger cleared areas provide for increased awareness and time to react to wildlife in the road corridor

Pavement Preservation Project

Several major roads are scheduled to be repaved in 2014 including:

- 5th and 6th Avenues from L Street to Ingra St
- C Street from 3rd Avenue to 6th Avenue
- A Street from 3rd Avenue to 6th Avenue
- I Street and L Street from 5th Avenue to just south of 15th Avenue

Due to right of way needs, some portion of the curb ramp work may be delayed until 2015. The milling and repaving and other activities that have large impacts to traffic are expected to occur at night. For additional information, please contact Project Manager, Steve Jochens, at steven.jochens@alaska.gov or (907) 269-0659.

Seward Highway Safety Corridor Intelligent Speed Limit Signs

This project installed ten new Driver Feedback Speed Limit signs along the Seward Highway from Potter Marsh to Girdwood. These signs provide immediate flashing speed feedback to drivers allowing an increase in awareness and safety on the roadway. The Seward Highway currently is designated as a highway safety corridor with a high rate of accidents. Intelligent speed limits signs are a way to warn drivers, through visual information, that they are exceeding the speed limit.



Diagram of how feedback signs work courtesy of <http://www.wsbg.com/services/driver-feedback-signs>



Intelligent Speed Limit Sign near Bird Point

West Dowling Phase II - C Street to Minnesota Drive

DOT&PF began construction of the West Dowling Road connection from C Street to Raspberry Road at Minnesota Boulevard in May. The project will fill a significant gap in the Anchorage grid system since there are currently no east-west cross-town corridors between Tudor Road and Dimond Boulevard. The new four-lane roadway is one of the largest transportation projects to be constructed in recent years, including a 200' bridge over Arctic Boulevard and the railroad tracks and a 150' tunnel connecting Arctic Boulevard and Electron Drive. The project also includes street lighting, a separated sidewalk on the north side, and a 12-foot separated pathway on the south side.



Construction work to stabilize the sub-grade for bridge abutments on the West Dowling Road Phase II project

By the end of this 2014 construction season, we expect to have completed the western portion of the project, reconstructing and widening a portion of Raspberry Road and the new access roads for area businesses, including Electron Drive and Alaska's Best Place. In 2015, the bridge embankment and bridge deck over the railroad and Arctic Boulevard will be completed, and the entire project should be open to traffic in the fall of 2015.

For more information and project updates go to: <http://www.dowlingroad.com/projectDescription.htm> or contact the Project Manager, Bob Anderson at 269-0452 or bob.anderson@alaska.gov

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PROJECTS

Campbell Creek Pathway

The wonderful spring weather brought out many trail users enjoying the new Campbell Creek Trail segment constructed beneath the Seward Highway Bridges that was replaced as part of the Seward Highway: 36th Avenue to Dowling Road project. This new trail connects this segment of the Campbell Creek Trail to a similar trail connection completed as part of last year's Dowling Road: Old Seward Highway to C Street Project. The Municipality's plan for a circular route connecting the Campbell Creek trails with Chester Creek Trail and the Coastal Trail is much closer to completion.

Bicycle Plan Implementation Project

ADOT&PF and the MOA are working in coordination to implement the Anchorage Bicycle Plan developed in 2010. This plan lists a number of key core bike networks that could include signing, stripping, and marking of bike lanes or shoulders on existing roadways within Anchorage/Eagle River.

Pedestrian Plan Implementation Project

ADOT&PF and the MOA are working in coordination to implement the Anchorage Pedestrian Plan developed in 2007. This plan lists key priority locations that would improve pedestrian safety throughout Anchorage and Eagle River. For more information go to: <http://www.muni.org/Departments/OCPD/Planning/AMATS/Pages/Non-MotorizedTransportationPlan.aspx>



Campell Creek Pathway beneath the Seward Hwy