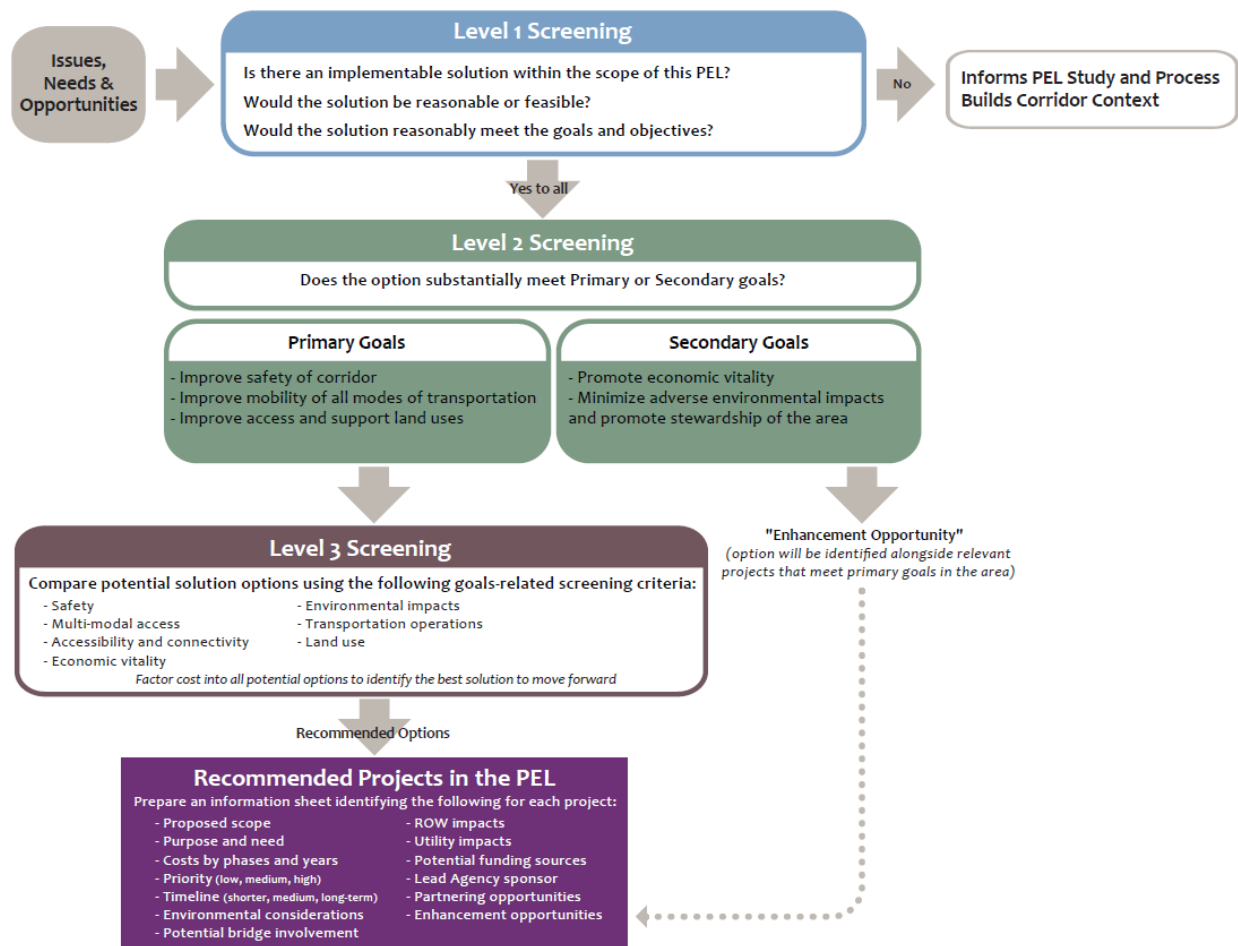


Screening Process Overview and Preliminary Screening Results

The development of potential improvement solution options came on the heels of the Needs and Opportunities Assessment phase of this PEL study. Drawing from that work, a screening evaluation process was developed. The purpose of screening is to evaluate whether a potential solution option should be moved forward for recommendation in the PEL Study for future implementation.

The screening process consists of three levels as shown in the following flow chart. This process began with the baseline understanding of existing conditions, issues, needs and opportunities, and input from the public, stakeholders, and agencies.

Screening Process Flowchart



An overview of the three screening levels is described as follows.

- **Level 1 Screening** entailed three “yes or no” “fatal flaw” questions. The purpose was to screen out issues and options that are not reasonable, not feasible, or do not meet the study goals and objectives. This screening level also screened out generic comments that did not lead to a specific implementable solution within the scope of this PEL. A “yes” to all three questions moved a solution option forward to Level 2 Screening.
- **Level 2 Screening** involved a qualitative assessment of whether the options that had passed Level 1 screening would have the strong potential to achieve the primary or secondary PEL study goals. Options largely meeting primary goals moved forward into Level 3 for additional analysis. Options largely meeting secondary goals were categorized as potential “enhancement opportunities.” “Enhancement opportunities” represent recommendations that could be complementary to a larger-scale construction project, but they don’t necessarily address key goals related to safety, mobility, and access.
- **Level 3 Screening** involved an additional screening that analyzed a series of related solutions using goals-related evaluation criteria to identify the best option within that set of solutions to move forward for recommendation to be included in the PEL study.

Level 1 Screening Results

More than 300 distinct comments were included in the comprehensive list of issues, needs and opportunities identified during Phase 1 of the PEL Study (See Appendix A of the Needs and Opportunities Assessment Report). Many comments did not lend themselves to evaluating specific solutions. Many comments helped to build an understanding of the corridor or helped to inform the development of the PEL Study and process. The following table includes comments, issues and topics that did not move forward for any further consideration beyond Level 1 screening.

Table 1. Level 1 Screening Not Carried Forward

Level 1 Comments and Ideas	Rationale for not moving forward
Update NPS’ 1997 Denali Frontcountry Plan	While this PEL is considering multi-modal connectivity in the corridor and this is reflective in the potential solutions under consideration to improve accessible frontcountry experiences, updating this plan is determined to be outside of the scope of this PEL.
State has limited funding	Comment does not lead to an implementable solution to evaluate in the PEL. However, the PEL is considering cost as a factor in Level 3 screening criteria.
Development affects residents	Several comments were submitted regarding development, ranging from not wanting additional development and concerns with related increased trash to encouraging development to promote regional economic growth and to keep schools open. Related comments also included encouraging

Level 1 Comments and Ideas	Rationale for not moving forward
	responsible, non-strip business development. Proposed solutions will be vetted through public input, which includes seeking input from residents. Proposed solutions will consider impacts to the natural and human environment. Promoting economic vitality is one of the identified PEL goals. Comment does not lead to an implementable solution to evaluate in the PEL; however, it builds corridor context and helps to inform the PEL Study.
Accommodating truck traffic: We need to maintain traffic flow or “non-constrictive obstacles” for large modular vehicles as we enhance and increase roadways (i.e., 18-ft high, 24-ft wide).	Comment noted for understanding corridor context.
The collaborative effort of the PEL study provides a great opportunity for this corridor.	Comment does not lead to an implementable solution to evaluate in the PEL. However, we agree with the statement. The PEL Study process has been set up to leverage collaboration.
Document existing trails in the Borough, including all RS2477 routes and 17b easements	Conducting a detailed inventory of RS2477s and 17b easements is outside of the scope of the PEL. However, the Recreation memo included in the Needs & Opportunities Assessment Report documents existing trails and recreation within the PEL corridor study area.
Prepare a Denali Region Recreation study, spanning from Talkeetna to Healy.	Conducting a Denali region recreation study is outside the scope of the PEL; the geographic extent extends beyond the boundary of the PEL Study area. The PEL's Recreation memo documents recreation within the PEL study area. Comment provides corridor context of the importance of recreation in the corridor and beyond.
Review the goals and visions from prior planning processes and fold them into the plan	Comment that does not lead to an implementable solution to evaluate in the PEL. However, the PEL Study did consider prior planning processes including related goals and visions, as summarized in the Needs & Opportunities Assessment Report.
If the ASAP and Alaska LNG pipeline projects are going to happen, it would generate	Comment does not lead to an implementable solution to evaluate in the PEL. However, the comment helps build corridor context and the PEL study will include

Level 1 Comments and Ideas	Rationale for not moving forward
many new planning issues regarding transportation and new users.	reference to other identified external projects or plans that may have influence on the corridor.
Consider various users, including winter seasonality, hunting, fishing, and berry pickers.	This comment does not lead to an implementable solution to evaluate in the PEL. However, improving mobility of all modes of transportation is one of the PEL's identified goals. Comment is noted and builds corridor context.
DOT&PF should investigate other M&O techniques and expert research to maintain the roadway quality: consider redoing the roadbed; avoid chip seal overlays that result in chipped and broken windows; mark frost heaves for drivers	DOT&PF has a Research, Development & Technology Transfer division that conducts research to continuously improve the state's infrastructure and investigates these kinds of issues. Comment noted.
Prohibit double trailers in snowy winter conditions	This is not a practical nor reasonable solution to implement as the Parks Highway serves as a major thoroughfare for truck traffic supporting the state's Interior and beyond to the North Slope.
Turn entire corridor from 2 to 4 lanes to prevent passing crashes/deaths	This potential solution to address safety is not reasonable or feasible to implement. Passing lanes will be addressed as needed in relevant segments in the corridor.
Where the 4-wheeler trails are on the highway right of way, they should be platted in a safe and legal manner regarding grade, substrate, stream crossings, and keeping the trails off private property	Comment addresses items beyond the scope of the PEL. Platting is beyond the jurisdiction of the lead sponsors (DOT&PF, NPS, WFL). Comment noted.
Maintain scenic quality and recreational values of the highway and adjacent lands. In particular, Broad Pass to Jack River is one of the few areas remaining along the Parks Hwy that a traveler gets a sense of the vastness, a taste of "remote Alaska". Take care to preserve the undeveloped nature of this stretch.	Comment does not have a specific implementable solution to evaluate in the PEL. However, the comment builds corridor context. Additionally, several primary and secondary goals address this topic: support land use, promote economic vitality, minimize adverse environmental impacts, and promote stewardship of the area.
Use the PEL process to be an opportunity to discuss the "Denali Region", not just DNP. Could be a way to tie all of that together and	Comment does not have a specific implementable solution to evaluate in the PEL. However, the comment builds corridor context. Additionally, the PEL study will include a high-level reference to other

Level 1 Comments and Ideas	Rationale for not moving forward
make it a cohesive story and there isn't one Denali but the entire area	influences from beyond the corridor that have effect on the PEL Study corridor.
"One more day" economic opportunity concept: this provides congestion relief and more frontcountry opportunities.	Comment does not lend itself to a specific implementable solution to evaluate in the PEL. However, several of the PEL's primary and secondary goals address this concept. Comment builds corridor context and informs the PEL study.
Construct a separated multi-use pathway for the full corridor (from Broad Pass to Ferry).	Constructing a separated multi-use pathway along the full corridor is not reasonable or feasible to implement. Several bridges have narrow shoulders that act as pinch points for non-motorized users. However, the PEL study is looking at individual communities and community connections for implementable solutions to accommodate non-motorized users. Comment informs PEL Study and builds corridor context.
Considering roadway conditions and repair needs, it seems like the 10-mile highway segment between Summit Lake and the "Leaving Mat Su Borough sign would be in better condition if it were gravel.	DOT&PF has identified this as an unreasonable solution to implement.
roadway condition/ repair needs: frost heaves from MP 210-230	DOT&PF has identified a 20-mile long project addressing frost heaves as not feasible to implement at this time. Frost heaves will be addressed at more localized locations. Comment helps to build the context of corridor conditions and setting.
Construct visitor centers in Healy and Cantwell. In particular, the 1996 South Side Development Concept Plan/EIS was amended 15 years later to describe this southside destination around Parks Highway MP 134. At the time, the NPS supported a NPS visitor center in the Cantwell/Broad Pass area that could function year-round with seasonal activities aiming at DNP, the Nenana River, and upper Talkeetna Mountains.	Several past plans have looked at the need to relieve visitor congestion at Denali National Park, including the South Side Development Concept Plan as well as a northern access route into the park. Healy has a recently constructed visitor center. Constructing an NPS-sponsored visitor center in Cantwell extends beyond the scope of the needs identified and to be addressed in this PEL. Comment informs PEL study and builds corridor context.
Construct an interchange with the Denali Highway, or if interchange is too costly have	Constructing an interchange of the Parks Highway at the Denali Highway is not reasonable or feasible within the context of this PEL. There are other more

Level 1 Comments and Ideas	Rationale for not moving forward
roundabout due to congestion and increased visitors to DNP.	reasonable and feasible solutions the Study is considering that would address safety and turning movements in this location. Comment informs PEL Study and builds corridor context.
Consider a Cantwell bypass	A previous planning study identified the consideration of a highway bypass of Cantwell. Constructing a Cantwell bypass is considered not reasonable or feasible at this time, due to cost. Other solutions are being considered that will address issues identified along the Parks Highway through Cantwell. Comment informs PEL Study and builds corridor context.
Numerous comments were submitted regarding safety and speed. Representative comments included requests for more speed limit signage, painted speed limits in the 45 mph zones (Cantwell, Healy), using a consistent 55 mph limit from Cantwell to Stampede Road, and seasonal speed limits through Carlo Creek and McKinley Village/Crabbie's Crossing.	Speed limits and strategies to improve safety are addressed in the PEL Study's Traffic & Safety Memo (see the Needs & Opportunities Assessment Report). DOT&PF has previously conducted speed studies and analyzed speed data along the corridor. As projects are moved forward, speed limits are reviewed. No additional speed limit changes are planned at this time.
A BLM sign at the boat access at MP 216 is knocked down and either needs to be removed or replaced. This boat launch could also benefit from a "Kids Don't Float" life jacket loaner board and educational components.	Comment noted.
There are no on-road bicycle lanes; riders currently use highway shoulder	Constructing on-road bicycle lanes is not reasonable to implement. However, the PEL study is looking at individual communities and community connections for implementable solutions to accommodate non-motorized users.
Potential for large new lodge near MP 230	Comment does not lead to an implementable solution to evaluate in the PEL. Comment noted to build corridor context.
Consider travel options through Nenana Canyon, including a cut-and-cover design in the canyon or a bypass to the east around Sugar Loaf Mountain.	Numerous solutions are under consideration for travel through Nenana Canyon. In addition to being cost prohibitive, a bypass of Nenana Canyon is not a reasonable or feasible solution within the scope of the PEL currently.

Level 1 Comments and Ideas	Rationale for not moving forward
<p>Several comments were submitted related to wanting new pedestrian/ bicycle bridges. Locations for these include at MP 231, Glitter Gulch, Windy/Moody River Bridge, Dry Creek, and Bridge #1143 at MP 242.8. These issues stem from the problem that pedestrians and users have nowhere else to go except on the highway.</p>	<p>For the most part, standalone bicycle/ pedestrian bridges are considered not reasonable for inclusion as recommendations in this study, largely due to financial feasibility.</p>
<p>The bridge at MP 252.5 was resurfaced a few years ago, but it's located on a curve; would like to see it straightened. There's also a vertical curve south of the bridge; truckers call it Caribou Dip since the caribou cross there. So, there's wildlife crossing issues here.</p>	<p>Since work was done recently on this bridge, realigning the roadway to remove the curve and replace the bridge is not a reasonable solution to implement in the PEL at this time.</p>
<p>There are huge trespass issues across the railroad tracks. Informal trails have been created without talking to the railroad.</p>	<p>Comment noted and builds corridor context.</p>

Level 2 Screening Results

For options passing Level 1 screening, the following qualitative screening questions were asked during Level 2 screening.

Primary Goals

- Does the option improve the safety of the corridor?
- To what degree does the option improve mobility for all modes of transportation?
- Does the option improve access and support land uses?

Secondary Goals

- Does the option promote economic vitality?
- Does the option minimize adverse environmental impacts?
- Does the option promote stewardship of the area?

Solution options largely addressing primary goals related to safety, mobility and access moved forward into Level 3 for additional screening analysis. These types of solutions are generally traditional transportation-type construction projects.

Solutions largely meeting secondary goals were categorized as potential “enhancement opportunities.” Examples of such projects might be to install an informational kiosk or add a picnic table to an existing

rest area. The Study Team considered these types of projects as community enhancements rather than standalone transportation infrastructure projects. These are projects that generally do not fall under DOT&PF’s purview as typical construction projects. In many instances, a potential sponsor of these enhancements would still need to be identified. These represent potential community enhancement projects that could be implemented if other funding or partnership opportunities were identified. These projects could also be implemented alongside a larger typical DOT&PF construction project or stand alone.

One of the main identified potential enhancement opportunities was improving Nenana River access for recreational and commercial activities by creating a formal boat launch facility with facilities (e.g., rest area, restroom facilities).

While not identified for any specific location in the corridor, another potential enhancement opportunity would be to install interpretive kiosks and panels along the corridor where appropriate to enhance visitor experience. Sponsors would need to be determined. Per public input, topic ideas could include the following:

- Geographic features and history of the area
- History of Ahtna people, placing it into context with geographic, historical, and cultural context
- Have a cohesive theme in all the panels within the corridor. (A cited good example are the panels of the Maclaren region along the Denali Highway.)
- Highlight scenic quality of the highway
- Discuss Denali region not just Denali National Park

The following table shows enhancement opportunities that while they initially passed Level 1 screening, are not being recommended for further consideration in the PEL Study.

Table 2. Level 2 Screening – Solutions Not Carried Forward

Level 2 Comments and Ideas	Rationale for not moving forward
Between MP 203-206: Create year-round rest area with bathroom facilities near the southern edge of the study area where people pull over to view the mountain	There are no identified maintenance sponsors and other similar facilities are being decommissioned due to fiscal constraints. Adding new year-round facilities could become feasible and be considered in the future should sponsors be identified.
Near MP 209: Install improved signage for emergency vehicles accessing water source	Traffic control devices are evaluated and upgraded as appropriate through typical transportation project development.
Near MP 242-243: Create a wildlife viewing (particularly for sheep) pull-out north of Windy or Moody Bridges	Poor sight distance at this location would make a pull-out unsafe.

Level 2 Comments and Ideas	Rationale for not moving forward
Create a safe place for four-wheelers to cross Parks Highway in Healy area and improve signage (~Near MP 248.5)	The need for this is uncertain. A crossing location would need to be identified should this move forward someday.

Level 3 Screening Results

Level 3 Screening involves a comparative analysis of solutions using goals-related evaluation criteria to identify the best option within that set of solutions to move forward for recommendation in the PEL Study. Potential solutions have been identified and are the key focus of the second public online open house in the spring of 2021. Solutions have been largely grouped into the following geographic focus areas:

- Cantwell
- Carlo Creek
- McKinley Village
- Glitter Gulch/ Nenana Canyon
- Healy
- Remaining areas through the corridor