

Subject: Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #6
Date: Thursday, November 13, 2025
Location: Microsoft Teams

Technical Advisory Committee Member Organizations:

Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Traffic Engineer	Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) Transportation Planning Manager
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) Traffic Engineer	DOT&PF AMATS Area Planner
DOT&PF Cultural Resources Specialist	MOA Planning Department
	DOT&PF Bridge Group
	MOA Office of Emergency Management
	DOT&PF Chief of Planning

Attendees:

Amy Burnett, HDR	Zakary Hartman, MOA Transportation
John McPherson, HDR	Taylor Keegan, MOA Parks and Recreation
Paige Barker, HDR	Bart Rudolph, MOA
Galen Jones, DOT&PF Project Manager	Ben White, DOT&PF
James Starzec, DOT&PF	Doug Kolwaite, DOT&PF
Matt Dietrick, DOT&PF-Environmental	Laurie Cummings, HDR
Leslie Daugherty,	

Agenda:

- **Introductions**
- **Screening Highlights**
- **Recommendations**
- **Next Steps**
- **Discussion**
 - **Q&A**
 - **Share your feedback!**

Presentation (Screening Highlights, Recommendations, Next Steps)

Galen Jones and John McPherson led the meeting with a presentation that covered the following topics:

- Alternatives
- Recommended Alternative
- Phasing Implementation
- Recommended Transit Route
- Recommended Port Connection
- Fairview Bypass-Livability
- Greenway/Complete Streets

The presentation summarized the screening highlights for the alternatives that moved forward from the last public comment and evaluation period. Alternatives include:

- Alternative 1: No Action – Required/baseline against which all other alternatives are measured:
 - Does not meet purpose and need
- Alternative 2: MTP – The 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, which is the most likely outcome if no action is taken because of the PEL Study:
 - Does not meet the purpose and need on its own (marginal on traffic and safety)
 - Continues to route Interstate Highway System (IHS) traffic through Fairview
 - Causes traffic diversion impacts
 - Has no Main Street
 - Adopted projects are incorporated into Alternatives 3, 4, and 5
- Alternative 3: Transit Focus – Does not include a new regional parkway but does reconfigure Gambell Street as a two-lane, two-way main street, and Ingra Street as a two-lane, two-way street with a center turn lane. This is in keeping with the goals of the Fairview neighborhood. This alternative also recommends a variety of Transit improvements. Alternative 3:
 - Does not meet the purpose and need on its own (marginal on traffic and safety).
 - Continues to route IHS traffic through Fairview
 - Causes traffic diversion impacts
 - Offers low ridership benefits for high operation and maintenance costs
 - The Downtown-Fairview-Midtown-U-Med route is recommended

- Alternative 4: Ingra Tunnel
 - Has high tunnel costs (construction and operations and maintenance)
 - Involves tunneling construction risk and complexity
 - Is less attractive to traffic than Alternative 5 at a higher cost
 - Does not accommodate hazardous materials
- Alternative 5: Fairview Bypass – This is the recommended alternative. The team reviewed the following regarding this alternative:
 - Benefit highlights include it being best for safety, bike and pedestrians, green space, traffic reduction through Fairview, lowest traffic diversion, and highest usage.
 - Challenge highlights include highest right-of-way (ROW) and relocations, noise concerns, airport concerns, and construction on former landfill.
 - The Implementation Plan showcases 11 resulting projects in the order they might be developed in and the cost for each).
 - Features include a depressed parkway along 15th Avenue with motorized, pedestrian, and green spaces maintaining connections between north and south Fairview; a Gambell Street “main street,” and a Hyder Street pedestrian boulevard that results in loop bike/pedestrian trail around northwest Anchorage.
 - The U-Med transit route from the transit alternative is recommended to advance.

After completing the overview of the recommended alternative, including reviewing the team’s recommendations for the potential order in which the series of projects from the recommended alternative would be implemented, the team shared “next steps” for the PEL Study and the process for implementing recommendations.

Questions/Discussion

Zakary Hartman: I have a question about adoption of the PEL Study. Who adopts?

- Because DOT&PF has NEPA approval responsibility from FHWA, the statewide environmental office does the PEL Study approval. Before anything moves forward, AMATS needs to adopt recommendations into the MTP.

Ben White advised that the MTP and Transportation Improvement Program would require regional approval. He indicated that once the PEL Study gets adopted, projects can lose steam. They need public commitment to get it finished. Politics can tank a project. Can we prioritize and see results faster to drive momentum?

- John McPherson validated that point and pointed to the phasing plan to be the framework for quicker results.

Galen Jones: Constant turnover (even within 5 years) can change projects' momentum. Local buy-in is very important.

John: As a reminder, the start of this PEL was Highway to Highway. The MTP advocated for neighborhoods to make the connection livable. The challenge is, how do we get relief for Fairview and maintain a regional traffic connection that is not overloaded?

Bart Rudolph: I'm concerned with the forecasted ridership in the transit scenario. It seems very low with all the changes made. I'm afraid that the study is downplaying the significance of transit's role in the PEL.

- John: We can talk with the modelers; it may mean we need to measure differently.
- Galen: Are the riders in the study area or system wide? Bart, do you have some comparative numbers?
 - Bart: Missoula saw 40% in the first year, Kansas City saw a 20% increase; they added a route that is once an hour and that has increased to 700 riders a day.
- John: And were these fair-free studies?
 - Bart: Yes.

John/Galen: Maybe we need to look at some other form of estimation in addition to modeling. Bart, what do you think of that proposed route?

- Bart: I agree with that route. I have no issues with the proposed route, but I think it would get more than 1,300 people a day.

Taylor Keegan: Thank you for inviting Parks to this level of conversation. You've done a great job being accessible to the public and in partnership with Fairview. There is a disconnect between the PEL and the maintenance aspect. We struggle to maintain roundabouts. My team is curious about Karluk and the wide ped bridges; we cannot find the funds to take care of things. Pedestrian bridges and greenbelt—we are very concerned about snow removal, operations, and maintenance. Lots of issues in day-to-day operations. Resources are crumbling due to hardships of maintenance.

- Galen: Karluk as a non-regional motorized connection—I like that idea. We are open to looking into that, but we won't be able to get public involvement on that, but it should be an option. Maintenance would be a part of the discussion in creation.

Leslie Daughtery: Most of my questions were just answered. Water is the most damaging thing to bridges, which is one of my biggest concerns. I would like to see aesthetics that don't add a lot of weight and are functional. Consider hardscaping. Thank you for removing a lot of the tunnel. Tunnel inspections are expensive (\$50k a year). So, if we can minimize that cost, great. Ship Creek bridge—is that bridge curved? Or is that just a drawing? Curves are doable but not ideal.

- Galen: Yeah, there would need to be some curvature, but this is a very conceptual level in terms of geometry. Great point.
- John: There is topography there with elevation and there might be ways to straighten the bridge but that might need to be ironed out in the next level of design.
- Galen: There might be other places to cross.
- John: The purpose is to get truck traffic out of neighborhoods.

Amy noted the time and asked for any last questions. No additional questions were asked.

The meeting concluded.