Seward Glenn

CONNECTION

Improving mobility, accessibility, safety, and livability in North Anchorage



Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study

Final Report

August 2026



ES Executive Summary

Executive Summary

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funding through Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS), conducted this Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study to "define a vision for the future of this connection, identify environmental and resource concerns and opportunities in the study area, and use the information to develop reasonable alternatives through consultation with the affected agencies and the public" (AMATS 2018).

This PEL study evaluated options for improving mobility, safety, access, and connectivity between the Seward Highway-20th Avenue intersection, the Glenn Highway-Airport Heights Drive intersection, and the Don Young Port of Alaska (POA), **Figure ES-1**. The existing highway connection includes 5th and 6th Avenues (east of Gambell Street) and the Ingra-Gambell couplet (south of 5th Avenue). The study's findings may inform future project development consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

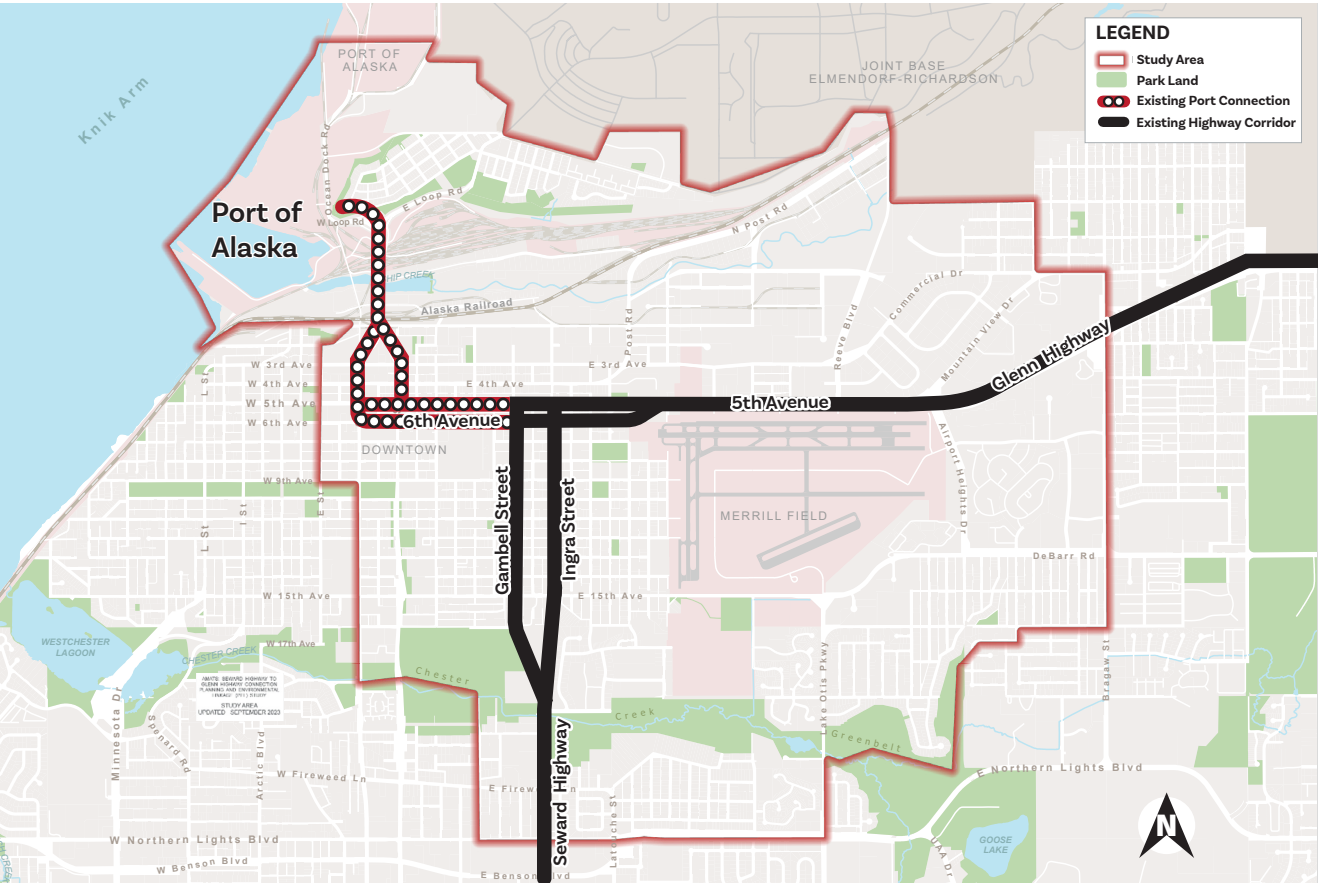
> ***Define a vision for the future of this connection, identify environmental and resource concerns and opportunities in the study area, and use the information to develop reasonable alternatives through consultation with the affected agencies and the public"***
>
> ***– AMATS 2018***

This PEL study included a robust public engagement process, involving public meetings, workshops, small group sessions, listening posts, online open houses, and outreach to agencies, Tribes, elected officials, and stakeholders.

The Seward-Glenn Highway corridor is a critical regional link, but its current configuration struggles to support the diverse transportation needs and neighborhoods it serves. A more balanced approach is needed—one that improves safety; supports freight and commuter traffic; and enhances access for all users, especially those who depend on non-motorized and public transportation.

The Seward-Glenn Highway corridor cuts through Fairview, a neighborhood facing higher poverty and greater reliance on walking, biking, and transit than much of Anchorage. Heavy traffic, trucks, and wide roads divide the community and create safety risks—especially for people walking or biking. Crashes are frequent and often severe. Public input and adopted plans consistently call for changes to improve safety, livability,

Figure ES–1: Study Area



Source: HDR

and connectivity. This PEL study aims to address these long-standing challenges while balancing regional traffic demands with local community needs.

Based on identified needs, this PEL study team defined the purpose of improvements as enhancing mobility, accessibility, safety, and livability for all users—whether driving, walking, biking, or taking transit—along the Seward and Glenn Highways, and POA connections. The goals are to maintain National Highway System (NHS) functionality while meeting local travel needs, improving neighborhood connections and quality of life, and supporting adopted plans.

Through the outreach process and a review of past plans and studies, the team considered a wide range of multimodal transportation concepts, including freeway, roadway, transit, and non-motorized options. This collaboration led to the creation and refinement of various alternatives, including an enhancement of the adopted Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) by adding transit and demand management strategies; seven freeway alternatives; and three parkway alternatives. The No Action Alternative and MTP 2050 Alternative (the current MTP with no changes) were also evaluated.

This PEL study evaluated alternatives using screening criteria that reflected public input and consideration of purpose and need as well as environmental, community, and cost factors. Based on the analysis, DOT&PF identified Alternative 5: Fairview Bypass as the basis for the recommended scenario, which includes a balanced mix of roadway, transit, and non-motorized improvements.

Key features include:

- **A regional parkway connection** between Airport Heights Drive and 20th Avenue.
- **A reconstruction of two-way Gambell and Ingra Streets** with a complete street design, slower speeds, improved wider sidewalks, and the potential for on-street parking and improved bike facilities.
- **The Fairview Greenway on Hyder,** which includes a continuous trail from Chester Creek to Ship Creek and a "Woonerf"-style pedestrian boulevard in the heart of Fairview.
- **New bus route** connecting Downtown, Midtown, and the University Medical (U-MED) District via Ingra-Gambell Streets and 36th Avenue with transit signal priority.
- **An extension of 16th Avenue** from Gambell Street to Ingra Street to increase opportunities for east-west connections in Fairview and reduce vehicular traffic on 15th Avenue destined for the Sullivan Arena and other sports facilities.
- **Other associated trail and roadway improvements**

Following the comment period on the Draft PEL Study Report, DOT&PF received a letter endorsing the recommended alternative signed by the Anchorage mayor, assembly members and state legislators representing Fairview, and the Fairview Community Council president. A copy of the letter is included below and in **Appendix N** - *Draft PEL Comments and Responses*.



December 2024 Public Meeting.

The next step is for the recommendations to be adopted into the AMATS MTP, which involves public meetings, review by the AMATS Technical Committee, and approval by the AMATS Policy Committee. If adopted into the MTP, projects would then be prioritized for funding through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Inclusion in the MTP and TIP allows DOT&PF to begin the NEPA process, using This PEL study results to streamline environmental review. After NEPA approval, projects can proceed to final design and construction.

A new regional connection would feature a parkway design with separated active transportation facilities.



Reducing regional traffic on Gambell and Ingra Streets allows them to be rebuilt as slower complete streets with a main street feel.



The recommendations include a trail connecting Ship Creek to Chester Creek and a "Woonerf" along Hyder Street, similar to the below example.



June 9, 2026

The Honorable Ryan Anderson
Commissioner
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
PO Box 112500
Juneau, AK 99501

Dear Commissioner Anderson,

We are writing to endorse the Seward to Glenn Highway Connection Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) study's recommended alternative.

The PEL lays out steps toward a long-term vision for the highway connection and the local transportation network that will meet regional transportation needs while finally restoring the safety and integrity of the Fairview neighborhood.

This recommendation is the result of years of work and community input. We commend the collaborative approach taken by your staff, who worked alongside the Fairview Community Council and NeighborWorks Alaska on both the PEL and the Reconnecting Fairview Corridor Plan. We are glad to be able to support your department's recommendation, so that we can move forward together on a real solution for Fairview.

To ensure the PEL's recommendation can be successfully and quickly implemented with broad community support, we would request the following:

1. Reduce both Gambell and Ingra Streets from 8 lanes to 6 lanes by the end of Summer 2027, or sooner if possible. The road is dangerous, especially the narrow sidewalks. Space created by the lane reduction should be used to create a buffer between the road and sidewalk. Use a phased approach, with short-term changes achieved through restriping, and with sidewalk widening and curb relocation to follow.
2. Dedicate statewide funding to the PEL's recommendations. This includes both the Fairview bypass and the Gambell and Ingra complete streets. This can be achieved

in the AMATS MTP update that will be completed by the end of 2026 and then added to the 2027-2030 TIP and STIP in early 2027.
3. Direct staff to prioritize delivery of the Hyder Street pedestrian boulevard and greenway project, the first phase of which is funded in the AMATS 2027-2030 TIP.
4. Design the bypass and complete streets projects at the same time, even if the bypass must be constructed first.
5. Phase bypass construction so that the western segment (along 15th Ave) is built last.

Again, we thank you and your team for the effort you put into finding a reasonable and realistic solution to this decade-long problem.

Sincerely,

Mayor Suzanne LaFrance

Assembly Member Daniel Volland

Assembly Member Sydney Scout

Senator Löki Tobin

Fairview Community Council President Allen Kemplen

Representative Zack Fields

Letter of Support from Elected Officials.

Acknowledgments

DOT&PF would like to thank the contributions of the community members who engaged in this PEL study. Thanks also go out to the following individuals.

Agencies and Tribes Committee

- **Emily Vullo** – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regulatory
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- **Chris Croft, PE** – HDR, Engineering
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- **Jeff Fronkja** – RSG

This planning document may be adopted in a subsequent environmental review process in accordance with 23 U.S. Code (USC)168 Integration of Planning and Environmental Review.

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this study are being, or have been, carried out by DOT&PF pursuant to 23 USC 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated April 13, 2023, and executed by FHWA and DOT&PF.

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1 Introduction

1.0 Introduction

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), with funding provided by Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS), conducted this Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study to identify and evaluate options to improve mobility, safety, access, and connectivity between the Seward Highway near 20th Avenue and the Glenn Highway east of Airport Heights Drive, as well as access between the Don Young Port of Alaska (POA) and the highway network (**Figure 1**).

Figure 1: Study Area Map. The study boundary generally follows Bragaw Street on the east, Northern Lights Boulevard on the south, C Street on the west, and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson on the north.



Why a PEL Study?

PEL studies promote a collaborative and integrated approach to transportation decision making that considers environmental, community, and economic goals and impacts early in the transportation planning process and uses the information, analyses, and products developed during planning to inform the environmental review process. The PEL process reduces duplication, shortens the project delivery timeline, and refines the level of effort for future environmental review processes.



Study Outcomes

The planning products and decisions from this PEL study may be used as part of the transportation project development process consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 23 U.S. Code (USC) 168, and 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 450.212 and 450.318. Specifically, this PEL study has developed the following planning products that can be used in subsequent NEPA processes:

1. Purpose and Need Statement
2. Identification of the general travel corridor and mode(s) (e.g., highway, transit, highway/transit combination)
3. Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives
4. Basic description of the environmental setting
5. Preliminary identification of environmental impacts
6. Recommendations for study area improvements and phasing

Background and Context

Ingra and Gambell Streets were originally constructed as two-way roads and used as the primary connections between the Glenn and Seward Highways (Reamer 2023). During the 1950s, as the regional population and traffic grew, Gambell Street was heavily used and frequently congested. In response, Anchorage began exploring options for a new/improved connection between the two highways (Reamer 2023). In 1961, it was decided that an expanded Orca Street was the appropriate solution. However, after the 1964 Good Friday Earthquake, city leadership decided that the Orca Street improvements were too expensive and Ingra and Gambell Streets should be expanded instead. The eight-lane couplet was completed in 1966 and exists today (Reamer 2023).

However, the pursuit of a different way to connect the Seward and Glenn Highways continued. For example, finding another route was discussed in the *1972 Anchorage Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)*. In 2001, AMATS conducted the *East Anchorage Study of Transportation* and identified the importance of connecting the Seward and Glenn Highways to solving traffic congestion in the Anchorage Bowl. Consequently, in 2005, the "Highway to Highway" (H2H) project was adopted as part of the *Anchorage Bowl LRTP* (MOA 2025). DOT&PF started a NEPA process for the H2H project; while the project was cancelled in 2010, the connection remained in both the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and *Fairview Neighborhood Plan*, but not necessarily under the H2H name. The cancellation left considerable unknowns. Namely, would a highway connection be built and if so, where?

The Fairview neighborhood—a densely populated, predominantly multicultural, lower-income community with many residents lacking vehicles—has long faced safety and livability challenges. Residents struggle to cross a corridor carrying 40,000 to 50,000 vehicles daily to access essentials such as groceries, schools, and parks. Wide,

> ***I would like to believe that this time we can leverage the political will to create a piece of design and engineering that will be a source of pride instead of embarrassment for all Alaskans. This piece of highway is arguably the most important and yet probably the most neglected and undervalued in our state. Many like myself feel it is a vestige of the kind of engineering that puts the convenience and needs of stakeholders who pass through communities ahead of those of stakeholders living in the shadow of these pieces of infrastructure. Almost with a certainty causing harm to those most vulnerable – to the detriment to us all eventually.***
>
> ***– Anchorage Resident***

high-speed roads and heavy traffic have stalled neighborhood development and diminished quality of life. With no clear solutions in sight, the Fairview Community Council requested AMATS funding to launch a PEL study to answer the question regarding a freeway connection. This PEL study was subsequently included in MTP 2040.

MTP 2040 described the PEL study as needing to define a future vision for the Seward/Glenn Highway connection, address environmental concerns, and develop reasonable alternatives through agency and public collaboration.

Metropolitan Transportation Planning Factors

To support this PEL study process, DOT&PF used the federal metropolitan planning factors (23 CFR 450.306) as a framework to inform the study and guide decision making. The PEL study team considered the planning factors as goals in developing the project's Purpose and Need Statement, alternative screening criteria, alternatives, and recommendations:

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
3. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
4. Increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight.
5. Protect and enhance the environment; promote energy conservation; improve quality of life; and promote consistency between transportation improvements, and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns.
6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight.
7. Promote efficient system management and operation.
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.
9. Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system, and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation.
10. Enhance travel and tourism

The plan highlighted priorities to be addressed in the PEL study such as **safety**, **congestion**, **access**, **connectivity**, and **freight movement**, while emphasizing federal performance areas such as safety, highway performance, freight efficiency, and environmental sustainability. Longer-term projects in the plan (#214 and #316) proposed a freeway connection between the Seward and Glenn Highways with controlled access, grade separations, and non-motorized features. The past plans envisioned the connection to be below grade with cross streets and lidded sections over top to reduce community and environmental impacts. **It was with this background that this PEL study started.**



Study Purpose and Objectives

As mentioned above, the 2040 MTP charged the PEL study with establishing a long-term vision for the Seward/ Glenn Highway connection. This PEL study is intended to address environmental concerns and explore reasonable alternatives through collaboration with agencies and the public.

To achieve these goals, the study team endeavored to meet the following objectives:

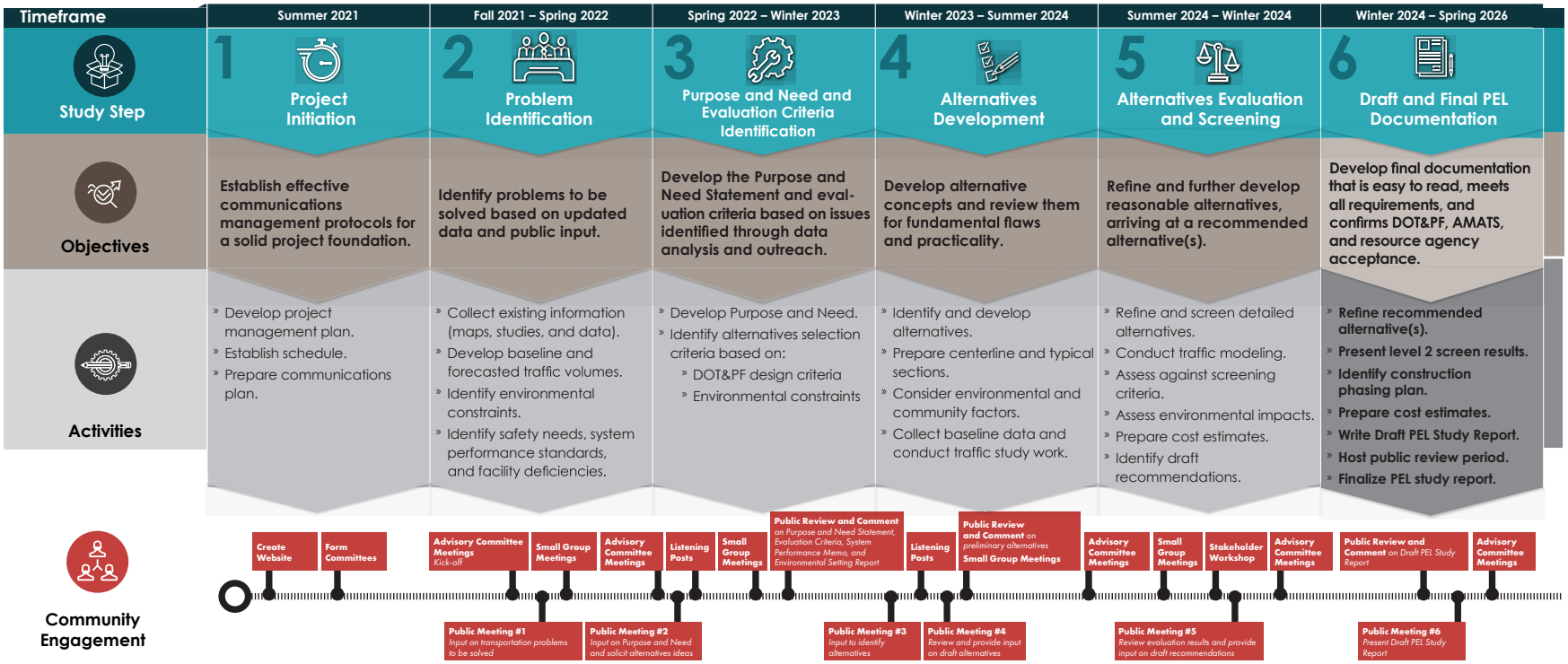
- Re-examine anticipated traffic levels to determine if a "freeway" is still the needed facility type and if so, where it would be;
- Identify potential access improvements for the POA to and from the highway system that could divert truck traffic from the Downtown and Fairview neighborhoods;
- Consider community and neighborhood viewpoints in identifying problems and potential solutions through robust engagement;
- Reassess transportation needs in light of community goals, objectives, and adopted plans developed since the highway connection was last studied;
- Minimize community and environmental impacts while reflecting neighborhood character; and
- Support multimodal access, including non-motorized transportation options.

Overview of the PEL Process

The PEL study team conducted this PEL study in accordance with DOT&PF's (2021) Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Guidebook. The PEL process occurred in six phases: (1) Project Initiation; (2) Problem Identification; (3) Purpose and Need and Evaluation Criteria Identification; (4) Alternatives Development; (5) Alternatives Evaluation and Screening; and (6) Draft and Final PEL Documentation. **Figure 2** depicts the PEL study process.

Because DOT&PF handles environmental reviews under an agreement (23 USC 327) that lets it take on NEPA responsibilities from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), formal NEPA concurrence points were coordinated with DOT&PF's Statewide Environmental Office. Formal written concurrence occurred at the following points in the PEL study process: (1) Purpose and Need, (2) Alternatives Development and Screening Methodology, (3) Alternatives Screening Results, and (4) the Draft PEL Study.

Figure 2: PEL Study Process



Public and Stakeholder Engagement

The PEL study was conducted with a robust public engagement process. Public meetings, study-specific committee meetings, small group meetings, listening posts, neighborhood walk-throughs with stakeholders and agencies, and online open house meetings occurred throughout the process. See **Appendices A** and **B** for details on the public involvement approach, and **Appendix C** *Chronology of Public Outreach Activities* for public outreach activities supporting this PEL study.



Public Outreach Goals

- **Raise awareness of the PEL study** process through clear, consistent communication
- **Engage a broad range of stakeholders**, including local residents, commuters, businesses, agencies, and community groups
- **Share information openly** so people understand the study, feel heard, and know how their input is used
- **Offer multiple ways for the public to stay informed** and provide feedback
- **Ensure openness** by meeting Title VI and Americans with Disabilities Act, requirements
- **Respond to questions and comments**, and keep track of public feedback
- **Track progress** and adjust outreach strategies as needed
- **Notify the public** that planning decisions may carry into future environmental reviews
- **Coordinate with agencies** to confirm agreement on key planning decisions
- **Show how public input has been considered and addressed** throughout the process

Committee Input

Four stakeholder committees were established to provide input throughout this PEL study:

1. **Agencies and Tribes Committee (ATC):** Included federal, state, and local agencies with permitting authority and Alaska Native Tribes with historical ties to the land to provide input on corridor needs and potential solutions.

2. **Community Advisory Committee (CAC):** Represented local residents, businesses, community councils, and user groups to provide community-focused feedback on the PEL study's development.

3. **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC):** Composed of transportation, engineering, and emergency response professionals, this group evaluated technical aspects and provided expert recommendations.

4. **Executive Committee:** Composed of AMATS Policy Committee members, DOT&PF leadership, and other key officials, these advisors offered strategic guidance.

Input by Phase

Phase 1: Study Initiation. The PEL study began in 2021. Initial communication management protocols and materials were developed to establish the project's foundation. Outreach during Phase 1 focused on awareness building and PEL study history.

Phase 2: Problem Identification. Phase 2 activities centered on collecting data and confirming the problem(s) to be solved. The PEL study team worked with advisory committees, small groups, and the public to learn more about transportation issues important to the community, user groups, and traveling public.

Phase 3: Purpose and Need. During Phase 3, the project's Purpose and Need and Evaluation Criteria were drafted with public feedback collected at listening posts, small group meetings, and a hybrid virtual and in-person public meeting. The public was encouraged to submit other ideas focused on the project's purpose and need and alternatives during a 30-day comment period.

Phase 4: Develop Range of Preliminary Alternatives: In 2023, the PEL study entered Phase 4, focusing on developing and refining a range of preliminary alternatives. The PEL study team continued stakeholder engagement through workshops, small group meetings, and a public meeting. Feedback was gathered during a 60-day public comment period, supported by targeted outreach that included social media posts, email updates, flyers, and community meetings. The public was invited to provide input on the proposed alternatives and share additional ideas.

Phase 5: Alternatives Refinement and Initial Screening. The PEL study team refined the range of alternatives based on public input, traffic modeling, and environmental analyses. The alternatives were evaluated against screening criteria, and initial screening findings were shared with advisory committees, key stakeholders, and the public. Phase 5 concluded with a public open house and comment period, during which the public provided feedback on the refined alternatives and offered input on potential environmental impacts and community concerns.

Phase 6: Draft PEL Document Development and Preferred Alternative(s). During Phase 6, the PEL study team refined remaining alternatives based on public

input and identified a recommended set of improvements for inclusion in this PEL study. This phase concluded with a public open house and comment period, offering the public and agencies an opportunity to review the Draft PEL Study Report, provide feedback, and help shape the direction of future environmental review under NEPA.

Following the comment period on the Draft PEL Study Report, DOT&PF received a letter endorsing the recommended alternative signed by the Anchorage mayor, assembly members and state legislators representing Fairview, and the Fairview Community Council president. A copy of the letter is included in **Appendix N** - *Draft PEL Comments and Responses*.

Summary of Report Structure

Chapter 1: Introduction. This chapter introduces the Seward to Glenn Highway Connection PEL study, including its purpose, objectives, background, and planning context. It also outlines the PEL process, public and stakeholder engagement, committee input, and how the study was structured and conducted.

Chapter 2: Purpose and Need. This chapter outlines the need for improvements to the Seward–Glenn Highway corridor to better balance regional mobility, freight efficiency, local access, and multimodal safety. It highlights challenges related to conflicting travel functions, high crash rates, poor non-motorized conditions, and community livability, underscoring the need for a safer, more connected, transportation system that balances regional and local needs.

Chapter 3: Environmental Setting. This chapter provides an overview of key environmental resources within the PEL study area and provides maps highlighting environmental constraints and sensitive areas.

Chapter 4: Alternatives Development and Screening. This chapter explains how the alternatives were developed and evaluated; presents screening results based on transportation, environmental, and other adopted criteria; and identifies alternatives recommended for further study.

Chapter 5: Recommendations. This chapter outlines proposed roadway and multimodal improvements and presents a phased implementation plan.

Chapter 6: Linkage to NEPA and Next Steps. This chapter describes how the PEL study findings support the NEPA process; summarizes key decisions and data developed; and outlines next steps for permitting, funding, and implementation.

Chapter 7: References. This chapter provides references for sources cited in the PEL study.

Appendices Supporting the PEL Study

Table 1 summarizes published documents that provide detailed technical documentation and supporting materials that informed this PEL study. These materials include summaries of public and agency outreach, system performance data, travel analysis, alternatives development and screening, environmental context, and evaluation criteria supporting the PEL process. These appendices are incorporated into this PEL study to support future NEPA processes.

Table 1: List of Appendices Supporting the PEL Study

Appendix A	**Communication Plan**	Provides an overview of the study outreach methods and activities.
Appendix B	**Communications Plan Update**	Provides an updated Communications Plan that provides an overview of the study outreach methods and activities.
Appendix C	**Chronology of Public Outreach Activities**	Provides a chronology of outreach activities that supported the PEL process.
Appendix D	**System Performance Memorandum**	Summarizes the existing and desired transportation conditions of the study area; existing and future transportation performance conditions were identified for automobiles, freight, public transportation, walking, and bicycling.
Appendix E	**Origin-Destination Study Memorandum**	Identifies and quantifies the origin, destination, and amount of observed travel for trips using the Seward and Glenn Highways within the study area at a representative time period (pre-Covid conditions during fall 2019) based on mobile device location data.
Appendix F	**Traffic Forecast Technical Memorandum**	Provides a historical trend analysis to forecast 2050 traffic on the Seward/Glenn Highway corridor within the study area based on Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development population projections.
Appendix G	**Pedestrian and Bicycle Study**	Provides a snapshot of pedestrian and bicycle count volumes at 37 intersections within this study area and an analysis of relative exposure to vehicle movements at those intersections.
Appendix H	**Purpose and Need Statement**	States the "purpose," or why the project is being proposed, and articulates the positive outcomes that are intended; describes the "need," or the key problems to be addressed, and explains the underlying causes of those problems.
Appendix I	**Recommended Alternative Selection Criteria Technical Memo**	Describes the alternatives evaluation screening process and criteria that will be used to evaluate alternatives.
Appendix J	**A Basic Description of the Environmental Setting Report**	Provides a description of the environmental setting, including the existing social, economic, and environmental conditions for the study area.
Appendix K	**Detailed Alternatives Report**	Provides details on a range of alternatives based on past plans and public input.
Appendix L	**Alternatives Refinement and Initial Screening Report**	Describes refinements made to alternatives and the results of the Level 1 Initial screening.
Appendix M	**Level 2 Screening and Recommendations Report**	Describes the Level 2 screening and recommendations; includes an appendix consisting of the traffic modeling report.
Appendix N	**Draft PEL Comments and Responses**	Provides comments received on the Draft PEL Study Report and DOT&PF's responses.
Appendix O	**Renderings**	Provides renderings depicting proposed improvements.



2 Purpose and Need

2.0 Purpose and Need

The objective of this PEL study is to make it easier, safer, and more convenient for people and goods to move around the area along the existing Seward Highway, Glenn Highway, and POA connections. This includes everyone—whether they are walking, biking, riding the bus, or driving. The goal is to improve how people get from place to place (mobility), how easily they can reach important destinations such as jobs, schools, and stores (accessibility), and how transportation can support broader community goals such as better neighborhood connections and overall quality of life (livability).

The recommended alternative must continue to provide the transportation functions currently served by the roads comprising the existing highway connection as part of the National Highway System (NHS) and Interstate Highway System (IHS)—which support regional travel, economic activity, freight mobility, and national defense—while also making it safer and easier for local residents to get around their neighborhoods.

The sidebar presents the adopted Purpose and Need Statement. **This PEL study's needs are detailed in the following subsections.**

Purpose:

This chapter presents a summary of the *Purpose and Need Statement* (**Appendix H**). The reader should consult this memo for details, data, and additional analysis. Presented below is the adopted Purpose and Need Statement:

The purpose is to improve mobility, accessibility, safety, and livability for people and goods traveling on or across the roadway system connecting the Seward Highway, Glenn Highway, and POA by all modes (including people on foot, bicycles, or buses) while improving community cohesion. The intent is to (1) maintain the functionality of the National Highway System while meeting the local travel needs of residents that live, play, and work in the area and must safely travel across or along those roadways; and (2) improve neighborhood connections, quality of life, and accommodate adopted plans, as practicable.

There are three inter-related needs (problems) that this PEL study aims to resolve:



Need 1: Reduce Conflicting Travel Functions



Need 2: Improve Safety



Need 3: Promote Community Livability and Economic Development

Need 1. Reduce Conflicting Travel Functions

Serving competing regional and local travel functions on the highway network in the study area leads to conflicts that reduce mobility, safety, and transportation accessibility for all users.

The Seward-Glenn Highway corridor in Anchorage serves dual, often conflicting roles. As part of the NHS and IHS, the corridor is designed for efficient regional travel and freight movement, particularly to and from the POA, Downtown, and Midtown. At the same time, these roads function as local streets, providing access to neighborhoods, businesses, and community services. This overlap in functions creates safety and operational challenges, especially in the Fairview neighborhood.

For Ingra and Gambell Streets, IHS designation cannot be changed unless a new IHS route is identified because federal regulations require the IHS to be contiguous. According to 23 CFR 470.107(a)(1), "The Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways (Interstate System) shall consist of routes of highest importance to the Nation, built to the uniform geometric and construction standards of 23 U.S.C. 109(h)[1], which connect, as directly as practicable, the principal metropolitan areas, cities, and industrial centers, including important routes into, through, and around urban areas, serve the national defense and, to the greatest extent possible, connect at suitable border points with routes of continental importance in Canada and Mexico."

The contiguous nature of the IHS is essential for it to satisfy its required functions. As a result, having an IHS facility through the study area is essential. Having a gap in the IHS route would not receive FHWA approval because it would violate 23 CFR 470.111(c), which states, "Routes proposed for Interstate designation under section 332(a)(2) of the NHS Designation Act of 1995 (NHS Act) shall be constructed to Interstate standards and connect to the Interstate System."

[1] Alaska and Puerto Rico are exempt from meeting some interstate design standards.

Communities that have successfully removed IHS facilities have typically done so by creating bypasses around the urban core, also known as "ring roads." This is not a viable solution to connect the Seward and Glenn Highways as very little traffic is actually trying to bypass the Anchorage Bowl. Rather it is trying to get to, from, and through the study area.

If a new route is not identified, the Ingra-Gambell couplet would remain the IHS route. However, this would be inconsistent with the neighborhood's desired vision of the corridor.

Regional Freight and Economic Role

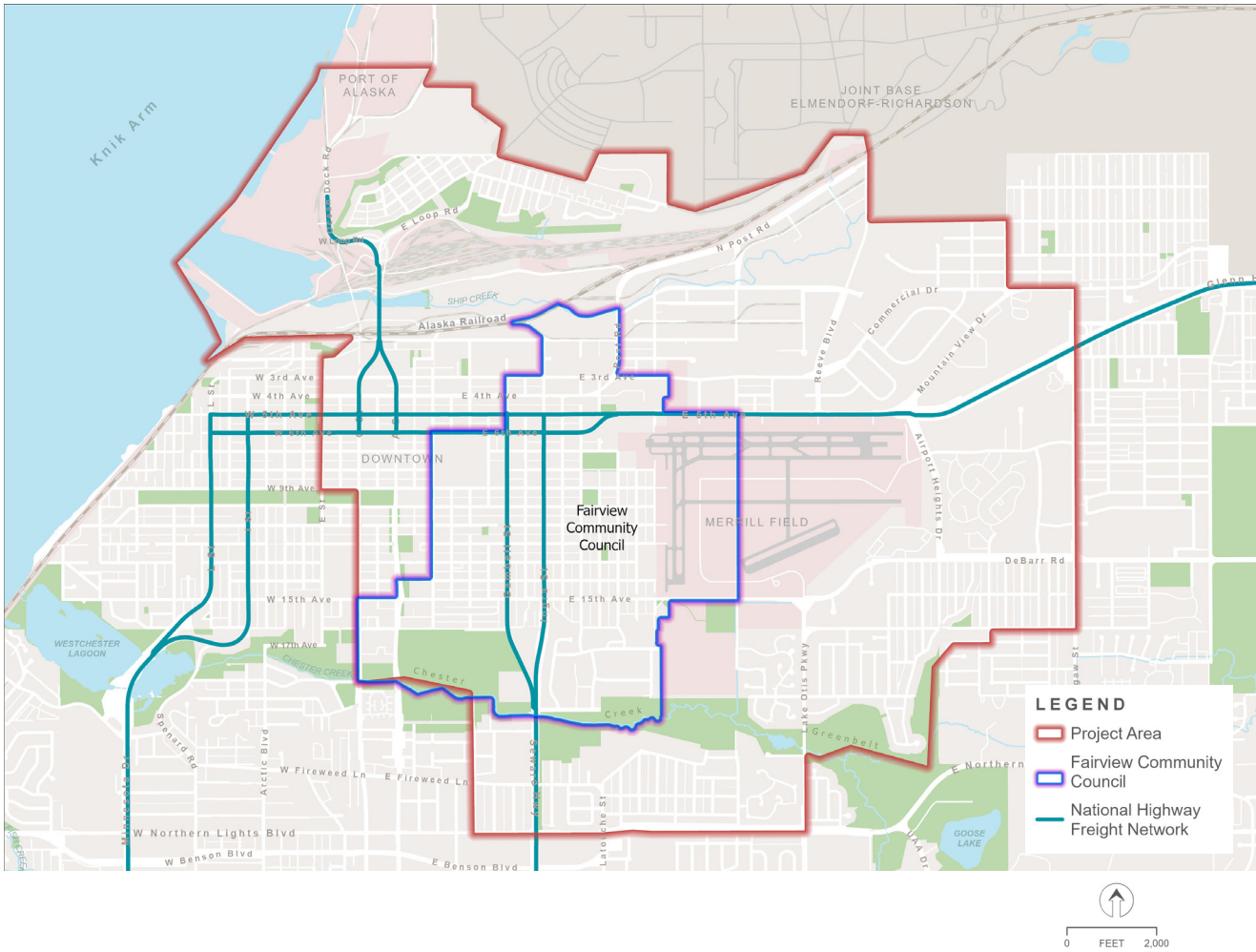
The Seward-Glenn Highway corridor carries some of the highest traffic volumes in the state, exceeding 50,000 vehicles per day in certain segments. It also supports a vital freight route to and from the POA, which handles about half of Alaska's waterborne goods

and most of its fuel. Trucks use the corridor to reach regional and statewide destinations, with heavy freight activity concentrated on 5th-6th Avenues and Ingra-Gambell Streets (**Figure 3**). In summary, the corridor supports a mix of local, commuter, freight, transit, and non-motorized users, leading to increased modal conflicts. Nowhere is this more acute than in the Glenn Highway- 5th Avenue and Ingra-Gambell Street segments, which must serve both regional traffic and neighborhood circulation.

Local Mobility and Access Conflicts

Despite its regional role, the Seward-Glenn Highway corridor is lined with intersections and driveways that serve local streets and properties. This lack of access control creates conflicts between higher-speed regional traffic and local users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. Fairview is particularly impacted due to its higher reliance on walking, biking, and transit, and the corridor's scale and speed create barriers to local access and neighborhood cohesion.

Figure 3: National Highway Freight Network. The network passes through Fairview, which contributes to traffic volumes and conflicts between large trucks and people walking or biking. Non-motorized travel is particularly important in the Fairview neighborhood.





Utility Pole in Sidewalk.

Non-Motorized Impacts

Conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists are particularly poor within the study area. In Fairview and adjacent areas, walking and biking are common due to low vehicle ownership, yet sidewalks are narrow and obstructed, bike facilities are lacking, and crossings need safety improvements. The wide streets and high traffic volumes on the Ingra-Gambell couplet function as a barrier between neighborhoods, impacting local non-motorized connectivity and access.

These challenges have a substantial impact on vulnerable populations. Fairview has one of the highest shares of households without access to a vehicle in Anchorage, and many residents depend on walking, biking, and transit for daily travel. However, the corridor is primarily designed to support vehicle traffic, which limits safe and convenient travel options for those who rely on other modes and contributes to ongoing disparities in access and safety.

The Need for a Balanced Approach

The current transportation system as designed cannot fully support both regional mobility and local access needs. As a result, the corridor experiences safety concerns, reduced efficiency, and poor quality of life for nearby residents. Improvements are needed to reduce conflicts, improve travel for all modes, and better connect people and freight within and beyond the region.

Conclusion

In summary, the Seward-Glenn Highway corridor functions as a critical but problematic transportation corridor through Anchorage. Its current configuration does not adequately serve the competing demands of regional commuter and freight movement, local access, multimodal travel, and neighborhood connectivity.

Need 2. Improve Safety

Crashes for vehicles and people walking and bicycling are elevated at several study area intersections and segments.

The study area includes some of Anchorage's most high-risk corridors and intersections, with a concentration of severe crashes that underscore the need for safety improvements. Data from the *2018 Vision Zero Action Plan* and Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) traffic records reveal a pattern of fatal and serious injury crashes, particularly at intersections and along high-traffic segments. These crash trends present a clear traffic safety concern, especially for non-motorized users, and reinforce the urgency for transportation system upgrades.

Part of the reason for the safety concerns is that roads within the study area are being used for multiple trip purposes. Some drivers are trying to pass through the area. These drivers are typically focused on reducing travel time and avoiding congestion when within the area. They can become frustrated by turning traffic, slow speed limits, frequent stops, and other conditions that are found on local streets. This can result in increased driver stress and lead to aggressive driving and crashes.

Vehicle Crashes

Between 2008 and 2017, 155 fatal and major injury crashes occurred within the study area, with 91 percent happening at intersections. The *2018 Vision Zero Action Plan* identified seven high-crash ("hotspot") intersections, led by 15th Avenue and Gambell Street with eight crashes, followed by 6th Avenue and Ingra Street, and 5th Avenue and Concrete Street with seven each (**Figure 4**).

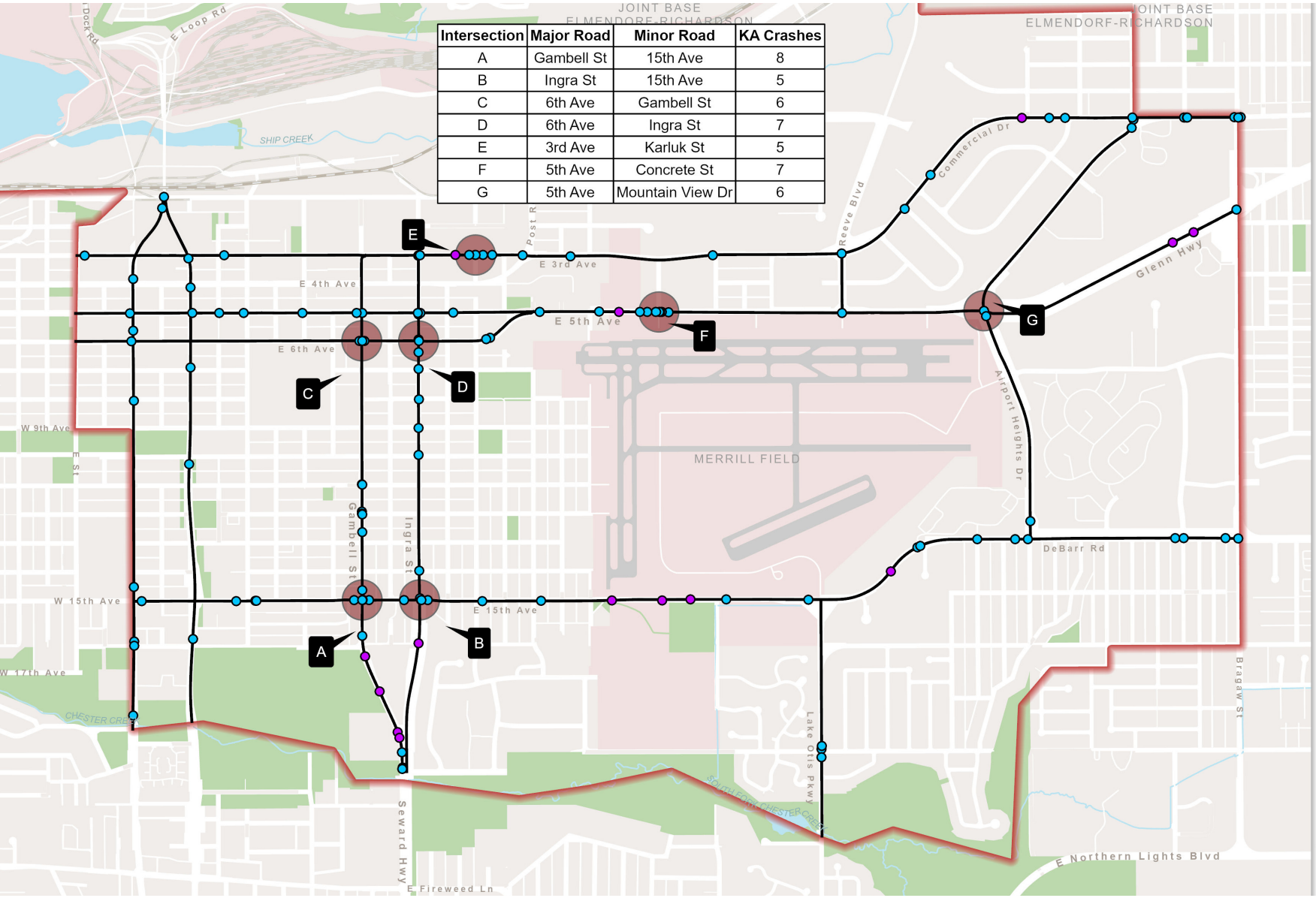
Several segments within the Seward-Glenn Highway corridor have crash rates substantially above the statewide average of 9.6 crashes per 100 million vehicle miles traveled for these facility types, indicating key areas of concern. The most critical segment is Ingra Street between 5th and 6th Avenues, with an exceptionally high crash rate of 145.7, followed by 6th Avenue between Gambell and Ingra Streets (67.8) and Ingra Street from 3rd to 5th Avenues (59.9).

Other segments exceeding the statewide average include:

- Gambell Street from 15th Avenue to Chester Creek (25.0),
- Gambell Street between 6th and 15th Avenues (20.3),
- 5th Avenue between A and Gambell Streets (20.4), and
- 6th Avenue between E and C Streets (16.5).

These high-crash segments are concentrated around major intersections and high-traffic areas, underscoring the need for safety improvements.

Figure 4: Fatal and Major Crash Locations.



Reconnecting Fairview Corridor Plan

In February 2023, the Fairview Community Council and NeighborWorks Alaska were awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT's) Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program, with funding matched by the MOA. The program provides planning and capital grants toward projects that restore community connectivity through the removal, retrofit, mitigation, or replacement of transportation facilities that create barriers to community connectivity and impact mobility, access, or economic development due to high speeds, grade separations, or other design factors.

The plan's goals are:

- **Make Fairview whole.** Correct the wrongs that have been inflicted on Fairview, such as disinvestment, unsafe roads, pollution, and more.
- **Revitalize Fairview.** Improve economic conditions, strengthen community resilience, improve health outcomes, and advocate for a more livable Winter City.
- **Shape our future.** Enact Fairview's community vision in the 2040 Land Use Plan and Fairview Neighborhood Plan.
- **Reduce the highway's impact.** Be innovative with options, such as the Fairview Greenway, road diets, and more.
- **Safety for all.** Include pedestrian, bicycle, and transit users at every step.
- **Better public engagement.** Improve outreach by working with residents of all backgrounds. Meet us where we are at.

DOT&PF has coordinated extensively with the committee managing the grant through a recurring monthly meeting at the time of publication, the Reconnecting Fairview Corridor Plan was not finalized.

Non-motorized Crashes

Between 2010 and 2020, several intersections within the study area experienced high densities of pedestrian and bicycle crashes, particularly at 15th Avenue-Ingra Street; Gambell Street between 12th and 15th Avenues; and key segments along 5th and 6th Avenues, and Airport Heights Drive. High crash densities for bicyclists were also found at the intersection of 6th Avenue and Karluk Street. Overall, non-motorized crashes were more frequent along the NHS/IHS routes, likely due to higher traffic volumes, speeds, and behavior of regional drivers navigating roads through neighborhoods. These patterns align with public concerns about pedestrian and bicyclist safety in the corridor.

Conclusion

This history of frequent and severe crashes, especially for people walking and biking, demonstrates a critical need for corridor improvements to enhance safety and reduce conflicts for all users.

Need 3. Promote Community Livability and Economic Development

Current highway and arterial design on the Seward-Glenn Highway corridor within the study area is inconsistent with the vision expressed in recently adopted plans. Those plans envision improving neighborhood redevelopment, community cohesion, and quality of life.

The Seward-Glenn Highway corridor cuts through the middle of Fairview, a neighborhood that experiences higher rates of poverty, renter occupancy, and linguistic and educational challenges than Anchorage as a whole. Public input and multiple adopted neighborhood and municipal plans reflect a clear community desire for transportation improvements that address long-standing barriers to development, livability, and connectivity caused by the existing highway design.

The current corridor configuration, with wide one-way roads and substantial truck traffic, lacks any sort of speed calming techniques and creates physical and psychological barriers that limit access to greenspace, services, businesses, and recreational amenities. These conditions have adversely impacted neighborhood development, property values, and quality of life. The presence of numerous social service providers highlights community needs and the reliance of residents on safe local infrastructure.

Planning documents such as the *Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan, 2040 MTP*, and Fairview Neighborhood Plan consistently call for redesigning the corridor to support reinvestment, mixed-use redevelopment, and improved pedestrian and transit connectivity. Features such as complete streets, two-way streets, reduced traffic conflicts, trail connections, and 'lidded' sections, are envisioned in these plans to re-knit the urban fabric and foster more vibrant and resilient community cohesion.

> ***The extension of Gambell Street southward to the New Seward Highway heralded the loss of the Fairview Main Street atmosphere. The transformation into a strip commercial corridor was strengthened when the one-way couplet was implemented. As traffic volumes increased on Ingra Street, adjoining properties began to feel the impact as families relocated to less congested and safer parts of town. Most dwellings transitioned into rental units with high turnover rates. In the early 2000s, the Fairview Community Council advocated for and succeeded in installing intersection barriers to discourage Downtown commuters from cutting through Fairview.***
>
> ***– Fairview Neighborhood Plan (MOA 2014:36)***

Compromise is Key

Seward Glenn CONNECTION

- Improve safety.
- Reduce regional and local travel conflicts.
- Consider the needs of all users *(pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicles, and freight)*.
- Maintain National Highway System *(regional)* functionality.
- Improve the ability to move safely and efficiently when accessing key destinations.
- Port access routing: Improve access between the Port and the highway while also reducing neighborhood impacts.
- Livability: Help reconnect the neighborhood *(physically and socially)* by removing or separating regional and Port traffic from local traffic, improve quality of life, and promote economic development.
- Accommodate ideas from adopted plans:
  - Gambell Main Street Redevelopment
  - Ingra Greenway Supportive Development Corridor
  - Improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists
  - Reconnecting Communities Grant *(forthcoming)*

Transportation improvements in the Seward-Glenn Highway corridor are expected to catalyze economic development, support land use infill, improve access to services, and restore neighborhood vitality. Addressing these community-identified needs aligns with FHWA guidance that recognizes social demands and economic development as valid elements of a project's purpose and need.

Summary

The Seward-Glenn Highway corridor is a critical regional link, but its current configuration struggles to support the diverse transportation needs of its users. A more balanced approach is needed—one that improves safety; supports freight and commuter traffic, predominately with origins and destinations within the greater Anchorage metropolitan area; and enhances access for all users, especially those who depend on non-motorized and public transportation.



3 Environmental Setting

3.0 Environmental Setting

Social Environment

Land Use and Planning

Residential

The study area has a mix of residential land use types, including single-family, duplex, and multi-family. Within the study boundary, areas of higher residential density can be found in Fairview, the northeastern portion of Airport Heights, Mountain View, and the eastern portion of Government Hill. Several group quarters that provide housing are also within the study area.

Housing values are a factor to consider in determining if comparable housing may be available in the event of necessary relocation. Housing values within the study area vary. The lowest-cost housing is within Mountain View and Fairview, while the highest cost housing is within Rogers Park, Government Hill, and Airport Heights.

Commercial

Commercial and industrial businesses are located within the study area, primarily in Midtown, along 5th and 6th Avenues and Gambell and Ingra Streets, Downtown, and north of 5th Avenue and along Commercial Drive.

Commercial district in Fairview.



Industrial

The Ship Creek area remains one of MOA's major warehousing and transportation-related industrial areas and continues to play a critical role in the shipment and distribution of goods to the MOA and the rest of the state. However, the bulk of outdoor storage facilities and warehousing, as well as manufacturing/ processing plants and construction yards, have gravitated from the Downtown-Ship Creek basin area to the rail/highway industrial corridor between the New Seward Highway and Arctic Boulevard, south of International Airport Road. This places most truck traffic to or from the POA onto the New Seward Highway, Gambell and Ingra Streets, and A and C Streets. Some truck traffic also uses the L Street-Minnesota Drive connection.



Due to the location of the POA and industrial-designated land uses, Gambell and Ingra Streets experience heavy truck traffic.

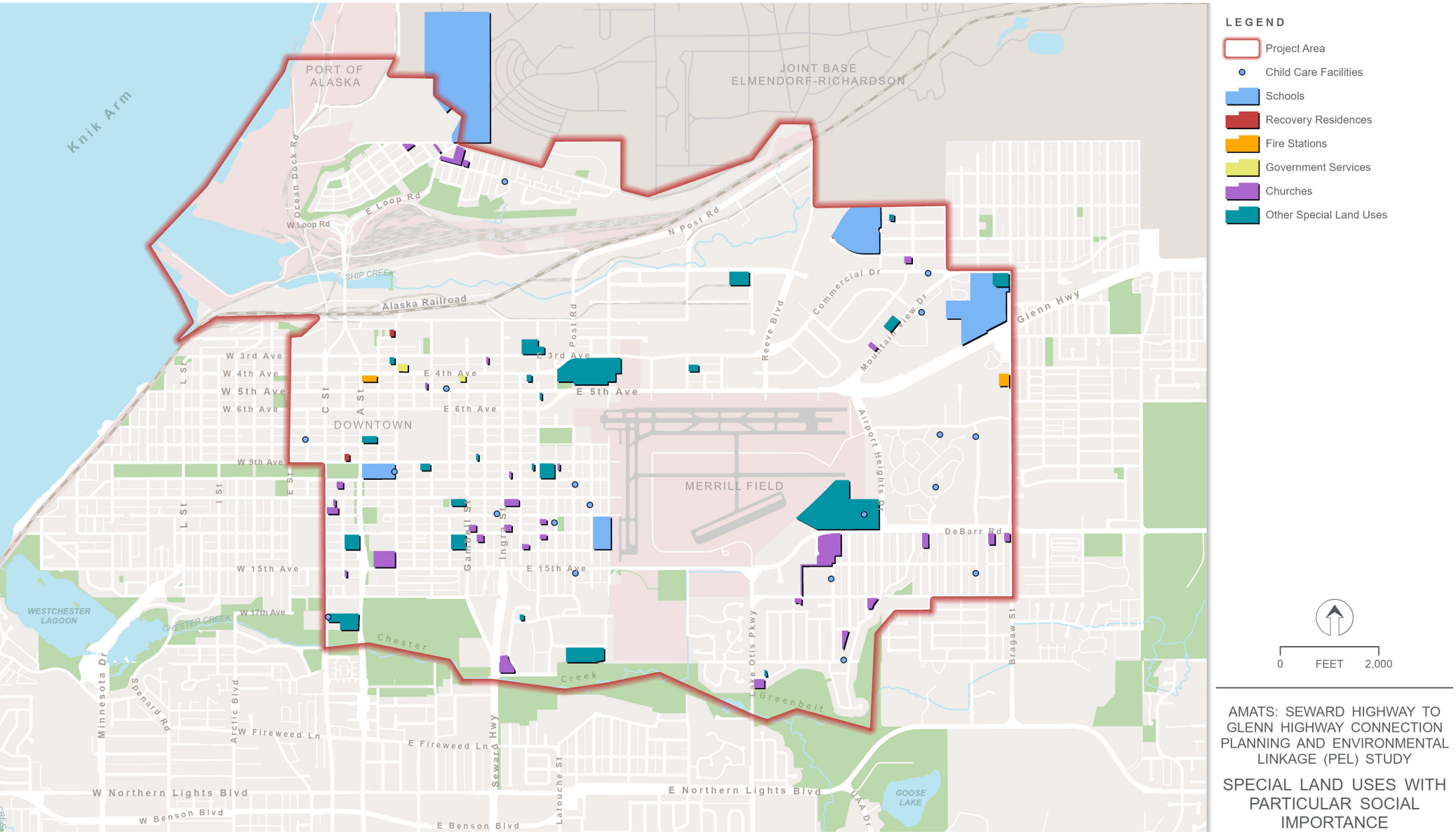


Utilities. Within the study area, electricity is provided by Chugach Electric Association. Anchorage Water and Wastewater Utility provides drinking water and wastewater services. GCI provides telecommunications, internet, and cable television services. Alaska Communications provides internet and voice communications services. Enstar Natural Gas provides natural gas services. Some of these utilities have critical infrastructure within the study area, some of which are co-located with roadway facilities.



Special Land Uses. FHWA's social impact analysis guidance recommends describing impacts on important community facilities and services such as schools, recreation areas, churches, and police and fire protection services. Community facilities include educational, childcare, and religious institutions, and other community facilities (e.g., social services, cultural and social, governmental, other). Public services include public safety, health care, and recreation (see **Figure 5**). Community facilities and public services may be publicly operated or operated by for-profit or non-profit organizations.

Figure 5: Land Uses within the Study Area. Special land uses with particular social importance.



Adopted Plans

MOA's land use planning indicates several relevant land plans within the study area. These include plans for a main street corridor along Ingra and Gambell Streets, a town center at Northway Mall, a transit-supportive development corridor along 15th Avenue, and redevelopment/mixed-use areas in parts of Downtown and Fairview.

The *Fairview Neighborhood Plan* (MOA 2014) indicated a desire for a pedestrian-scaled urban environment. It also envisions planning for a Seward-Glenn Highway connection project as one of its implementing actions, and states that the project should identify an alternative that reduces neighborhood impacts while providing needed neighborhood streets and pedestrian improvements. The plan states that the project should also support mixed-use and other land use development as well as redevelopment opportunities within the area.

The *Gambell Street Redevelopment and Implementation Plan* recommends converting Gambell Street to a three-lane road that has sidewalks and snow storage on both sides. The recommendations are meant to better meet the needs of the area and improve conditions for non-motorized users. It also maintains the ability to be converted to a two-way street in the future (Fairview Business Association 2013).

Other plans, such as the *Mountain View Targeted Neighborhood Plan* (MOA 2016) and the *Government Hill Neighborhood Plan* (MOA 2013), identify business development and preservation of open space as goals. They add to other planning efforts such as the *Anchorage Pedestrian Plan* (MOA 2017), which identifies the need for a safer crossing at the Airport Heights Drive and Glenn Highway intersection, an important gateway into the community.

Fairview's plans envision a pedestrian-scaled urban environment for Gambell and Ingra Streets. DOT&PF has been coordinating with Fairview's Reconnecting Communities Grant team to make sure both efforts are synchronized and lead to a common vision for recommended improvements.



Demographics

Between 2010 and 2019, the population of the study area declined by 7 percent, while the population of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) grew by 20 percent and the MOA remained relatively stable. The study area comprises approximately 6.2 percent of the MOA's total population. It also has a notably higher percentage of minority residents (56.6 percent) compared to the MOA overall (41.3 percent), with higher representation across most racial and ethnic groups except Hispanic.

Economics

The MOA and MSB's economies are driven by a mix of federal spending, military presence, oil and gas, tourism, retail, and service industries. Federal funding supports infrastructure and job creation, especially in the MOA, while many MSB residents commute to federal jobs in Anchorage. Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) is a major economic anchor. The oil and gas sector boosts MOA's economy through administrative functions and support industries. Tourism significantly contributes to both regions, with Anchorage serving as a primary gateway and convention hub. Retail and services have expanded in both the MOA and MSB, helping to meet local demand and reduce spending outflows. Key MOA employment hubs include Downtown, Midtown, and the University Medical (U-MED) District, which is home to top employers in healthcare, education, and government.

Transportation



Road System. The Seward and Glenn Highways provide important regional connectivity as part of the IHS and NHS. The NHS is a network of key routes that support national security, commerce, and travel, including interstates, major arterials, national defense, and connections to intermodal facilities such as ports and airports. Within the study area, NHS and IHS routes—managed by DOT&PF—include the Seward and Glenn Highways, 5th and 6th Avenues, A and C Streets (south of 6th Avenue), and 15th Avenue. The Seward and Glenn Highways serve as critical regional corridors, linking residential areas, employment centers, the POA, and JBER (see **Figure 6**).

Figure 6: Regional Road Systems. The Glenn and Seward Highways carry regional trips to employment centers, the POA, the airport, and military bases and converge directly through the Fairview neighborhood.



While built for high-speed, long-distance travel and heavy freight movement, their efficiency is sometimes limited by local traffic conflicts.

As mentioned previously, local travelers face challenges crossing the Seward-Glenn Highway corridor due to wide roads and high traffic volumes. The current design does not meet modern standards and lacks adequate pedestrian, bicycle, and non-motorized connections—key needs for surrounding neighborhoods. These conditions particularly impact Fairview, a lower-income area with higher reliance on walking, biking, and transit.

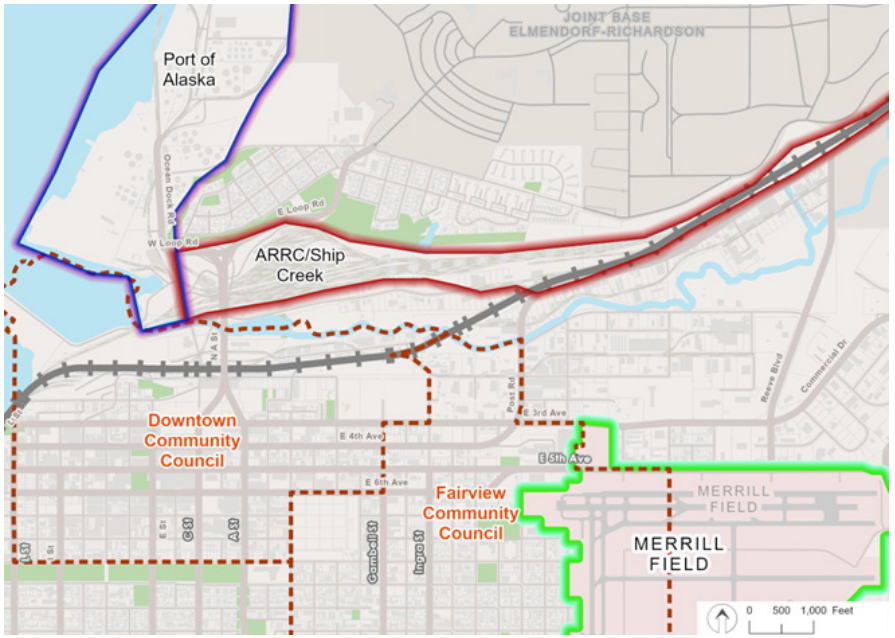


Port. The POA is located in the northwestern corner of the study area (see **Figure 7**). The POA is a major asset to the regional and state economy. Of the goods entering the state, 55 percent of waterborne freight and 90 percent of all refined petroleum products arrive through the POA (AMATS 2017). While some of the freight and petroleum stays within the Anchorage area, much is destined for other parts of the state. In 2020, tonnage through the POA was 4,704,374 tons, approximately 35 percent of that was composed of vans, flats, and containers (POA 2021).



Rail. The Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) main yard and passenger terminal is located along the northern side of the study area. ARRC provides both passenger and freight rail services between Seward/Whittier and Fairbanks via Anchorage. In 2020, ARRC moved 2.8 million tons of freight and transported 32,069 passengers.

Figure 7: Port and Industry. This map shows the location of the industrial area and port. Getting to and from the highway network while reducing impacts on Downtown and Fairview is a key challenge for the PEL study.





Aviation. Merrill Field, owned and operated by the MOA, is centrally located within the study area. This airport is classified as a transportation use and is one of the busiest general aviation airports in the United States. Merrill Field offers a mix of commercial aviation activities; aviation-related businesses operating on Merrill Field include flightseeing companies, air taxis, maintenance companies, and flight schools. Most of the operations at the airport are general aviation. Taxiway Q provides direct access to the Alaska Regional Hospital Emergency Room, enabling med-evac flights to taxi to the hospital door.



Pedestrian and Bicycle. The study area features a well-used but often deficient pedestrian and bicycle network composed of sidewalks, shared-use trails, and bicycle boulevards. Key trails such as the Chester Creek and Ship Creek Trails support a wide range of year-round activities, including biking, walking, skiing, and skijoring. The Chester Creek Trail is especially important for both commuting and recreation, offering lighting, grooming, and grade-separated crossings. Downtown, Midtown, and the U-MED District are top bicycle destinations, with pedestrian and bike activity within the area. Fairview has higher pedestrian use than other parts of Anchorage due to lower vehicle ownership and proximity to employment centers; however, the network faces challenges such as missing or poorly maintained sidewalks, limited winter maintenance, safety concerns near traffic due to narrow facilities and lack of separation from vehicles, and a lack of signage. These issues can discourage non-motorized travel, particularly during winter.

Cultural Resources and Historic Properties

Based on a review of the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey database, 936 cultural resources are located within the study area. Of these cultural resources, 10 have been formally listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and 1 has been nominated to the NRHP. Two of these NRHP-eligible properties are historic districts: the Government Hill Federal Housing Historic District and the Block 13 FHA Army Housing Historic District. One NRHP-listed property is the Anchorage Cemetery. Additionally, 125 historic properties within the study area have been determined eligible for the NRHP but not formally listed: 116 buildings, 5 historic districts, 3 sites, and 1 structure.

Visual Environment

Visual assessments evaluate how transportation projects affect the surrounding landscape and can influence socioeconomic factors such as recreation, neighborhood cohesion, and land use, as well as protected resources such as parks and historic sites. These assessments

National Historic Preservation Act

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires federal agencies to consider how their projects might affect historic places. Before constructing a project, DOT&PF must identify historic properties within the area; consult with historic preservation officials, tribes, and the public; assess potential impacts; and try to avoid or reduce harm. While it does not prevent projects from moving forward, it ensures that historic and cultural resources are considered in planning and decision making. Properties that are eligible for the NRHP are also protected under Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act.



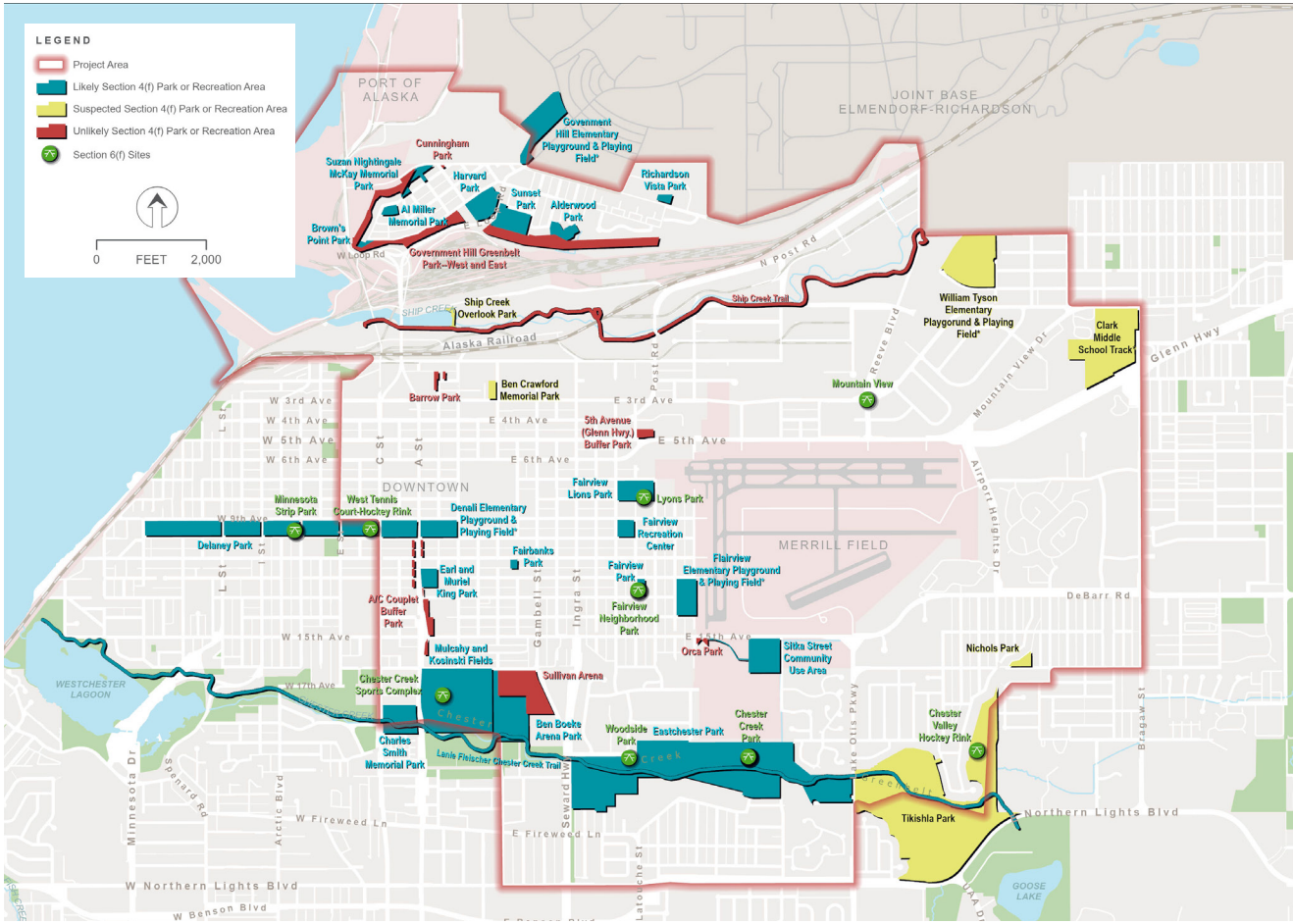
Historic house in Fairview.

consider views both of and from a project, evaluating potential visual changes and public sensitivity to them. The level of assessment ranges from basic qualitative reviews to detailed visual inventories, depending on a project's visibility and impact. In Anchorage, where scenic views of the Chugach Mountains, Cook Inlet, and Mount Susitna exist, roadway users and viewers may be especially sensitive to changes. Key visual areas within the study area include neighborhoods, greenbelts, commercial zones, Downtown, industrial sites, and the airport.

Recreation and Section 4(f)

Section 4(f) originated in the USDOT Act of 1966, a federal environmental protection statute specific to USDOT-funded projects. It generally prohibits the use of land from significant publicly owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or historic sites for transportation projects. Section 4(f) protections for parks and recreation areas apply when the property is (1) publicly owned, (2) generally open to the public, and (3) significant as determined by the officials with jurisdiction over the property. The study area contains parks, recreation areas, and historic sites but not wildlife or waterfowl refuges. Within the study area, there are 36 recreation resources (see **Figure 8**).

Figure 8: Section 4(f). Protection for recreation, park, and historic sites that require special analysis and findings to use such properties.



Natural Environment

Wetlands

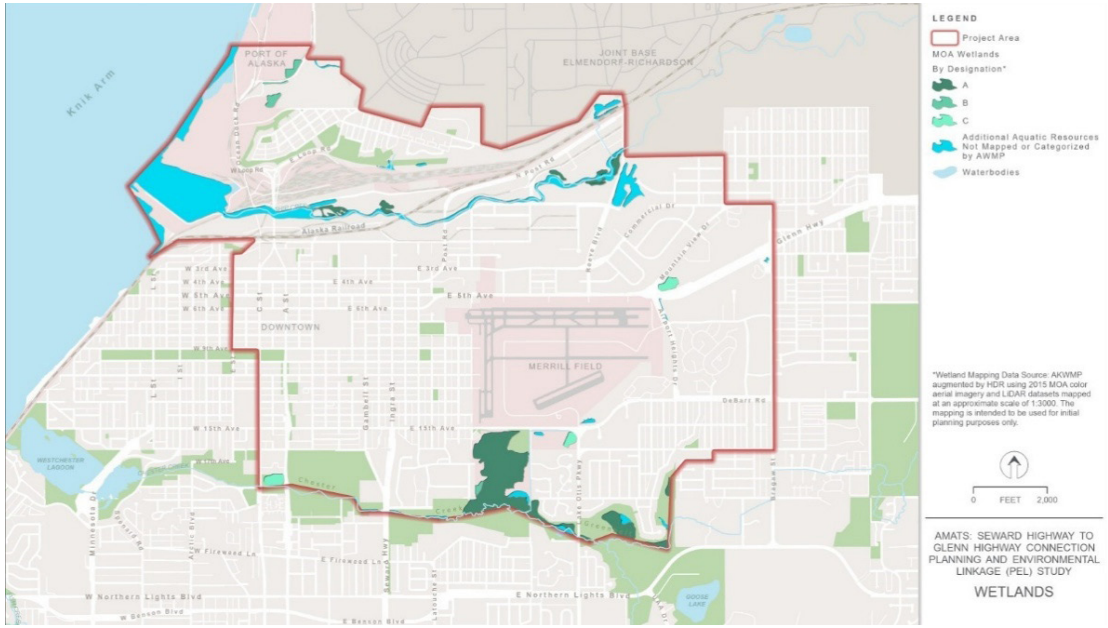
Wetlands occur in discrete locations within the study area, most notably along the Ship and Chester Creek waterways (**Figure 9**). Any construction project actions that add fill within these boundaries would require a permit.

Waterbodies

Ship Creek traverses the upper third of the study area. Its watershed is 123 square miles, originating in the Chugach Mountains. The stream flows northwestward as it reaches the MOA, where it then turns westward and flows to where it discharges into Knik Arm. The study area encompasses approximately 2 miles of lower Ship Creek. Habitat in the lower drainage has been adversely affected by human development.

Chester Creek and its associated green belt comprise the southern boundary of the study area. The Chester Creek watershed extends 21 miles from the Chugach Mountains to the creek's mouth on Knik Arm at Westchester Lagoon. This portion of the watershed, upstream of the study area, provides high-quality fish and wildlife habitat. More than half the watershed, including the entire study area, is in urban Anchorage and has been negatively influenced by development.

Figure 9: Wetlands within the Study Area.



Floodplains

Floodplains are land areas of low-lying ground adjacent to a waterbody that are subject to inundation by floodwaters during times of heavy rain, snowmelt, or heavy tides (for coastal areas). Chester Creek's floodplain within the study area extends from C Street to Lake Otis Parkway, with a channelized, narrow flood zone in the west and a more natural, wider floodplain in the east that supports high-value fish, wildlife, and wetland habitat (see **Figure 10**).

Flooding typically results from snowmelt, winter thaws, or heavy rain, but no major flooding issues have been identified. Most development within the floodplain is limited to parks, trails, and some residences. Ship Creek's floodplain, which lies within a large drainage basin, is subject to prolonged flooding from spring snowmelt or heavy rain due to slow runoff from the Chugach Mountains.

A Flood Hazard Permit from MOA's Department of Project Management and Engineering would be required for any construction within a floodplain.

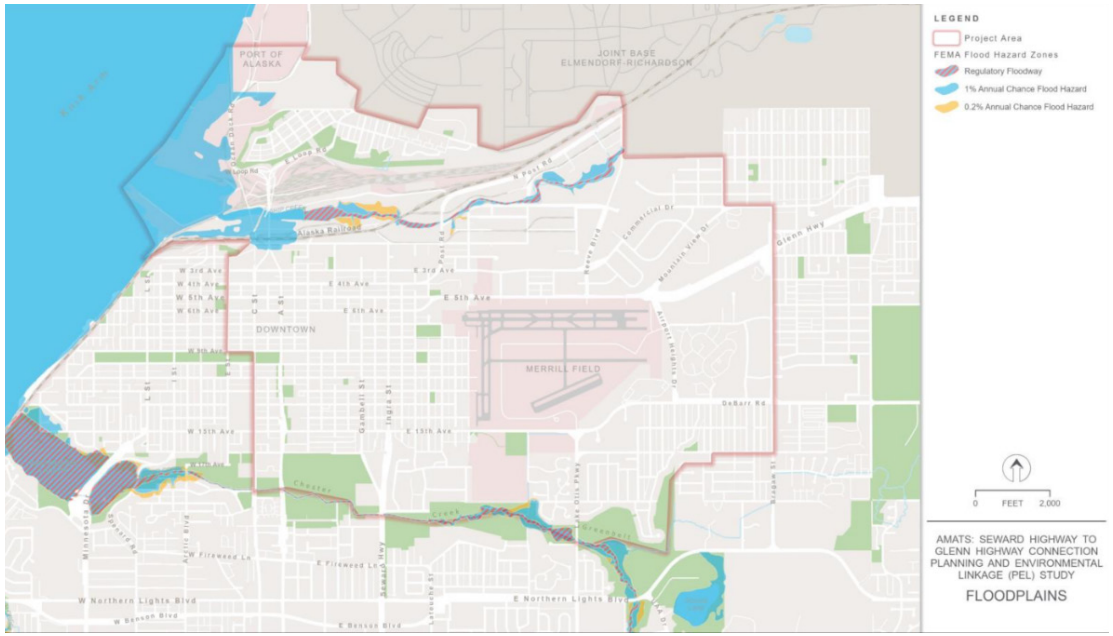
Fish and Wildlife

Urban development has degraded aquatic habitat in both Chester and Ship Creeks by altering stream flow, damaging banks, introducing barriers to fish passage, and reducing habitat quality. Chester Creek, though impacted by culverts, sedimentation, and reduced water quality, still supports important habitat for salmon, trout, and char. Similarly, lower Ship Creek, while affected by nearby industrial development and flow interruptions, continues to provide valuable habitat for several anadromous and resident fish species, including Chinook and coho salmon and Dolly Varden, with hatchery operations helping to support salmon runs.

The Anchorage area supports 52-mammal species, with moose, and black and brown bear being key species of interest within the study area. While moose are common, other mammals such as bears, coyotes, and foxes are seen less frequently. Within the study area, habitat is concentrated in the Chester and Ship Creek greenbelts, small forested parks, and undeveloped patches, though much of the natural environment has been altered by urban development. Despite this, upland forests, shrublands, meadows, and even urban vegetation continue to provide important habitat for local wildlife.

No federally listed threatened and endangered plant species occur within the study area.

Figure 10: Floodplains within the Study Area.



Physical Environment

Air Quality

The MOA meets national air quality standards. However, due to past exceedances of carbon monoxide in Anchorage and particulate matter with a diameter of 10 micrometers or less (PM10) in Eagle River, the state maintains U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-approved air quality plans for these pollutants to limit emissions. Despite occasional seasonal spikes in PM10 and wildfire-related PM2.5 (particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 micrometers or less), the MOA is expected to remain in compliance with air quality standards through 2040.

Water Quality

Water quality is important for human health and the health of the surrounding natural environment. Both watersheds within the study area (Ship and Chester Creeks) are considered impaired by fecal coliform. Additionally, Ship Creek is considered impaired for petroleum products from the Glenn Highway to its mouth.

Noise

Noise is defined as unwanted or excessive sound, which can occur when it interferes with normal activities such as sleep, work, speech, or recreation. Traffic noise impacts can occur when traffic volumes increase and approach residential neighborhoods and other sensitive areas (e.g., schools, churches). The study area encompasses areas with high residential population densities. As a result, traffic noise impacts could occur at properties adjacent to alternative corridors.

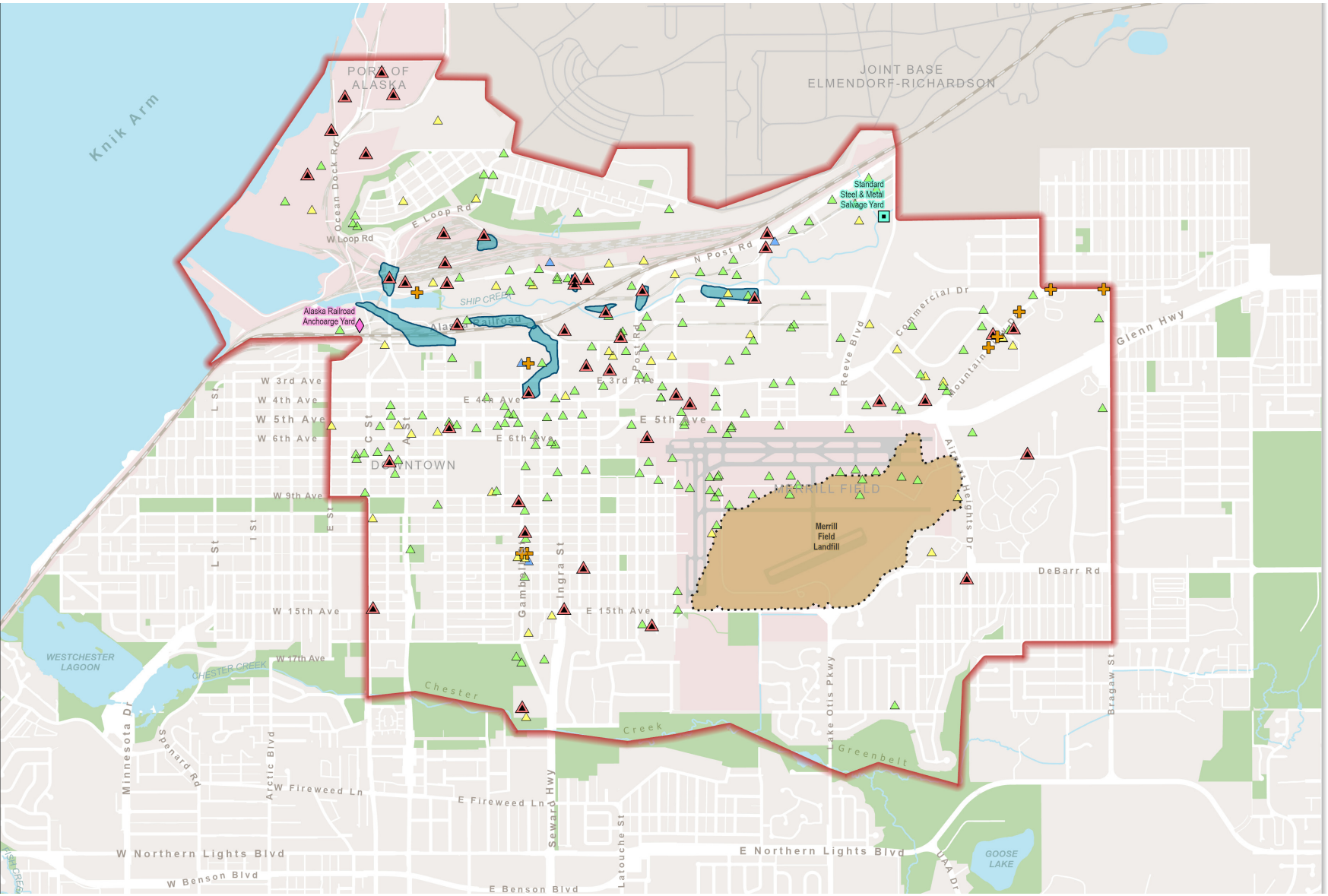
Hazardous Waste

A review of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation Contaminated Sites Database indicated 39 open contaminated sites occur within the study area (ADEC 2021), see **Figure 11**. Among the listings are 8 groundwater plumes, 2 superfund sites, and 24 brownfield properties. Of particular note is the Merrill Field Landfill, which is a closed, unlined landfill south of East 5th Avenue and north of East 15th Avenue (DeBarr Road), between Orca Street and Airport Heights Drive. The landfill covers approximately 200 acres, and is filled with soil and refuse to an average depth of 30 feet.

Subsurface Conditions/ Geology

Subsurface conditions within the study area are shaped by a complex geologic history that includes glacial, alluvial, colluvial, and artificial deposits, along with significant earthquake activity and variable permafrost presence. Soils range from deep glacial till and Bootlegger Cove clay to recent alluvial and colluvial sediments, especially near Ship and Chester Creeks. The area is seismically active, with frequent earthquakes and high potential for ground failure, particularly within areas underlain by weak clay. Although permafrost is generally sparse in Anchorage, isolated pockets still exist and may affect development. Groundwater is present and can influence construction and environmental conditions, while artificial fill areas such as the Merrill Field Landfill pose additional geotechnical considerations.

Figure 11: Hazardous Materials within the Study Area.





4 Alternatives Development and Screening

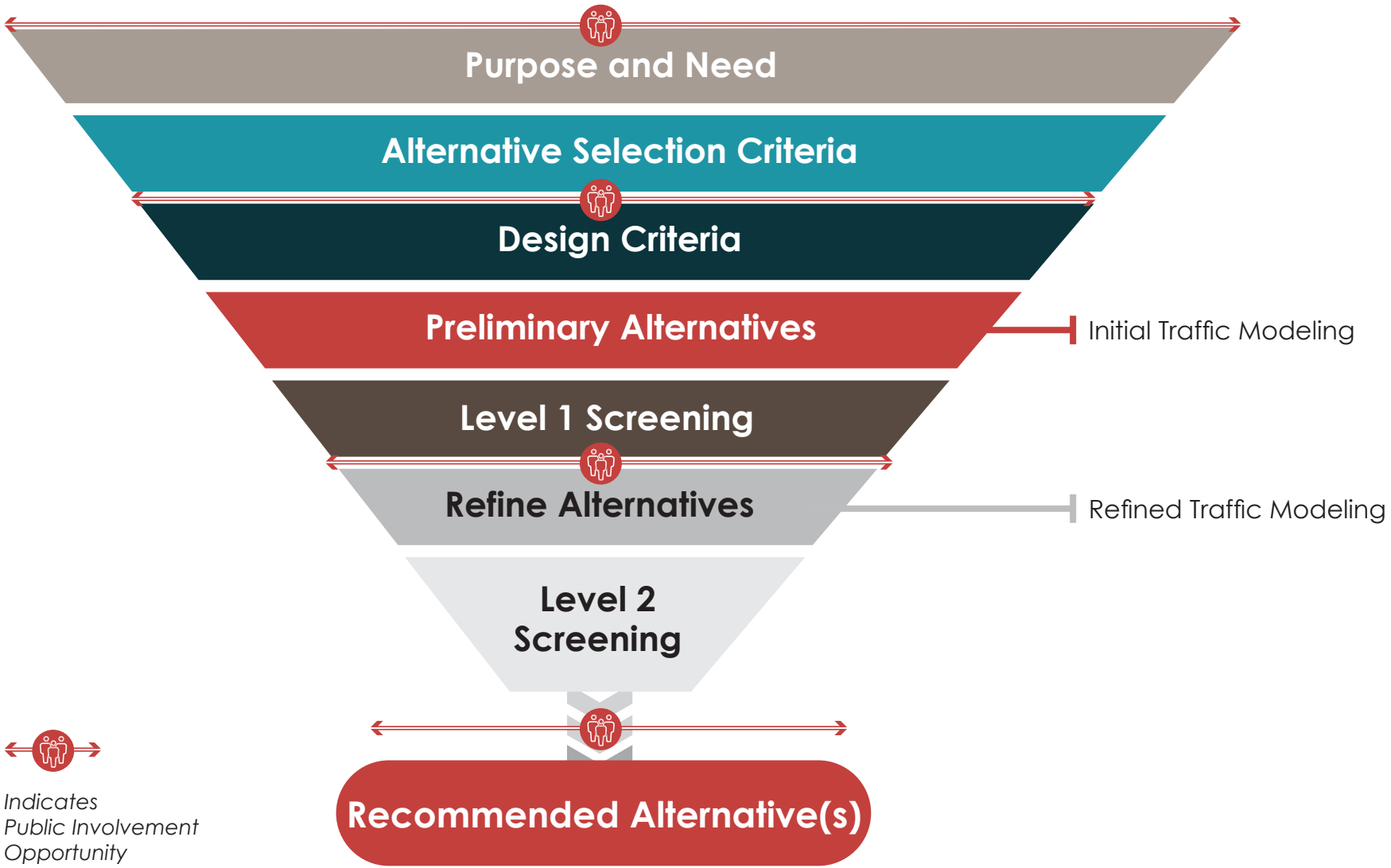
4.0 Alternatives Development and Screening

Alternative Development Methodology

Screening Process Overview

1	**Purpose and Need:**	The PEL study team identified transportation problems within the study area using traffic modeling and existing conditions research to create the PEL's Purpose and Need Statement. This statement was refined based on public and agency feedback, and served as the foundation for developing alternatives and screening criteria.
2	**Alternative Selection Criteria:**	To evaluate potential alternatives, the PEL study team created screening criteria used in two evaluation phases. These criteria were shared with the public and agencies and revised based on their input.
3	**Design Criteria:**	The PEL study team established design criteria to reflect the desired function of the future transportation facility. These criteria align with DOT&PF standards and community plans, guiding the development of alternatives.
4	**Alternatives Development:**	Using prior studies, public input, and adopted plans, the PEL study team developed multimodal alternatives that address the purpose and need. The alternatives were shared with the public and stakeholders and refined through ongoing feedback.
5	**Level 1 Screening:**	The PEL study team conducted an initial screening to eliminate alternatives with fatal flaws. Results were shared online, at public meetings, and with project committees to ensure transparency and obtain input.
6	**Refine Alternatives:**	The PEL study team refined alternatives that passed Level 1 screening based on feedback to improve design and reduce impacts on communities and the environment.
7	**Level 2 Screening:**	In Level 2 screening, the PEL study team evaluated the refined alternatives against the remaining criteria and environmental constraints to identify recommendations.
8	**Recommended Alternative(s):**	The PEL study team identified recommended improvements for potential inclusion in subsequent updates of the MTP and advancement into preliminary engineering and NEPA.

Figure 12: Screening Process Overview



Screening Criteria and Rationale

Level 1 Criteria

Number of Residential and Commercial Properties Impacted. Public feedback indicated that people were concerned about the potential number of residential relocations because Anchorage, like other communities, is facing a housing shortage and there may be insufficient available relocation housing.

Impacts on Parks and Historic Properties (Section 4(f) Resources). Projects that affect parks or historic sites can change the character of a community. Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966 also limits use of these areas unless no feasible and prudent option exists and harm is minimized, making such impacts a potential fatal flaw.

Impacts on Community Facilities. Community facilities such as schools and clinics are essential to neighborhoods. The public raised concerns about disruptions to these services, so evaluating these impacts helps ensure projects do not reduce access to important local resources.

LEVEL 1 SCREENING CRITERIA

Livability

- Number of residential and commercial properties impacted
- Impacts on parks and historic properties (Section 4(f) resources)
- Impacts on community facilities

Level 2 Criteria

Safety. These measures focus on reducing crash risks by analyzing expected crash numbers and identifying points where conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists are likely to occur. Fewer conflict points and safer designs can lead to fewer and less-severe crashes, improving overall safety for all users of the transportation system.

Pedestrian Mobility and Accessibility. Pedestrian Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) evaluates how safe and comfortable it is to walk along a corridor. Lower LTS values indicate fewer barriers and calmer traffic conditions, encouraging more walking, improving access, and supporting community livability goals in line with Anchorage's adopted plans.

Bicycle Mobility and Accessibility. Similar to pedestrian LTS, bicycle LTS reflects how safe and accessible a roadway feels for bicyclists. LTS levels suggest better infrastructure and safer conditions, which can encourage more people to bike and support healthier, more sustainable transportation choices.

Port Mobility and Accessibility. Freight travel time is a key indicator of how efficiently goods can move through the corridor. Delays raise costs and reduce reliability for Alaska's freight network. Additionally, reducing at-grade rail crossings helps minimize delay and safety risks for trucks accessing the POA.

LEVEL 2 SCREENING CRITERIA

Safety

- Number of crashes with the Build Condition compared to the No Action Condition
- Number of conflict points (intersections) between vehicles and non-motorized users per mile of non-motorized infrastructure
- Number of vehicle conflict points with the Build Condition compared to the No Action Condition

Non-motorized Mobility and Accessibility

- Pedestrian LTS
- Bicycle Level LTS

Port Mobility and Accessibility

- Peak period freight travel time
- Number of at-grade rail crossings

Vehicle Mobility and Accessibility. Level of Service (LOS) and peak period delay help assess how well the roadway system handles traffic. Maintaining LOS D or better ensures reasonable traffic flow, while reducing delay improves mobility, saves drivers time, reduces fuel consumption, and often contributes to better air quality.

Livability. Livability measures evaluate how well transportation alternatives align with Anchorage's land use and community development goals while supporting quality of life. This includes reducing vehicle miles traveled to promote compact growth and lower emissions, minimizing right-of-way (ROW) impacts that could displace housing or services—especially in vulnerable communities—and enhancing neighborhood cohesion. Added green space, improved walking and biking infrastructure, and reduced truck traffic within residential areas all contribute to safer, more connected, and more livable communities consistent with adopted plans.

LEVEL 2 SCREENING CRITERIA

Vehicle Mobility and Accessibility

- Miles of roadway within the study area that have a peak period LOS of D or better
- Peak period delay

Livability

- Consistency with adopted plans
- ROW acreage of various land uses
- Number of dwelling units
- Numbers of businesses, including from low-income or minority areas
- Acres of roadway pavement fronting existing residential development
- Acres of greenspace provided
- Miles of new bikeway
- Miles of upgraded sidewalk/trail
- Change in truck traffic at 5th Avenue at Merrill Field and Seward Highway/ 20th Avenue

Environmental Impacts. Transportation projects can have a wide range of effects on the human and natural environment, including air and water quality, noise, wildlife, wetlands, and cultural and historic resources. Considering these impacts during planning is essential to identifying environmentally responsible alternatives and complying with permitting and regulatory requirements.

Technical Feasibility. This criterion evaluates whether an alternative can reasonably be built, operated, and maintained using available technologies and methods. It helps identify any physical, operational, or maintenance-related barriers that could limit a project's success, or cause excessive delays or complications.

Economic Feasibility. Economic feasibility considers both the initial construction cost and ongoing maintenance costs of each alternative. These measures help determine whether a project offers a reasonable return on investment, and whether the long-term financial commitment aligns with available funding and the expected benefits.

LEVEL 2 SCREENING CRITERIA

Environmental Impacts

- Land Use
- Social Impacts
- Relocation Impacts
- Economic Impacts
- Joint Development
- Pedestrian and Bicyclist Impacts
- Air Quality Impacts
- Noise Impacts
- Water Quality Impacts
- Permits
- Wetland Impacts
- Waterbody Modifications and Wildlife Impacts
- Floodplain Impacts
- Historic and Archaeological Preservation
- Hazardous Waste Sites
- Visual Impact
- Energy
- Construction Impacts
- Relationship of Local Short-Term Uses versus Long-Term Productivity
- Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

Technical Feasibility

- Reasonableness of constructability considering available technology
- Presence of construction, operation, or maintenance constraints that cannot be overcome

Economic Feasibility

- Preliminary cost to construct alternative
- Preliminary cost to maintain alternative

Alternatives

Through the PEL outreach process, the PEL study team gathered comments and ideas from the public, agencies, tribes, and elected officials while also reviewing previous plans and studies for relevant improvements (see **Figure 13**). Using this input, the team developed and refined a range of multimodal transportation concepts, accommodating vehicle and non-motorized users. Through workshops, public meetings, and meetings with community councils, stakeholders, AMATS committees, and others, the team developed and refined 13 different multimodal alternatives with 5 different port connection options.

No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative tests what would happen if nothing is constructed to try to alleviate the transportation problems identified in the Purpose and Need Statement. It includes all projects adopted in the AMATS 2050 MTP, except it would not include any changes on Gambell and Ingra Streets, or 5th and 6th Avenues. A No Action Alternative is required for any future NEPA analyses that stem from this PEL study and is included herein as the basis of comparison for impacts associated with potential build alternatives.

MTP 2050

The MTP 2050 Alternative tests improvements recommended in the AMATS 2050 MTP, which does not include a new freeway connection between the Glenn and Seward Highways. Rather, it includes removing one lane per direction on Gambell and Ingra Streets and 5th and 6th Avenues, paired with non-motorized upgrades. Ingra and Gambell Streets would each remain one way streets. While it does not create a dedicated POA connection, it features improvements to Whitney Road, and includes the Fairview Greenway Phase 1 (between 20th and 15th Avenues) and the Hyder Pedestrian Boulevard (between 15th and 5th Avenues), which is a woonerf-style street, consisting of a shared space that blends pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle use in a low-speed, community-oriented environment.

Figure 13: Universe of Alternatives

The PEL study team collected ideas from a considerable engagement effort.

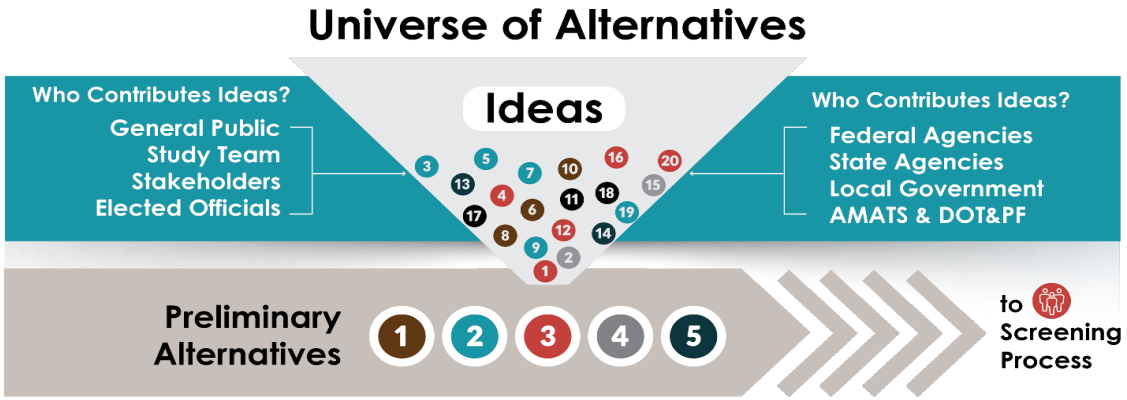


Figure 14: Overall Design Approach

To address the purpose and need, the PEL study team incorporated the following approaches into each proposed build alternative, to the extent possible:



Improve Local Travel, Livability, and Economic Development

- Use a two-way main street design on Gambell Street with on-street parking
- Use a two-way complete street design on Ingra Street
- Use a two-way woonerf design on Hyder Street
- Reduce lanes on 5th and 6th Avenues and Gambell and Ingra Streets
- Use pedestrian bridges (over depressed highway connection alternatives)



Improve Non-Motorized Travel

- Provide a regional trail connecting Chester Creek Trail to Ship Creek Trail to form a non-motorized loop around Anchorage's urban core with the Coastal Trail and Chester Creek Trail
- Provide pedestrian accommodations via bridges or tunnels across major roadways
- Provide a roadway bridge over Chester Creek at the Seward Highway to improve pedestrian undercrossing comfort and return the creek to natural settings for fish passage



Reduce Travel Conflicts and Improve Safety

- Reduce local and regional travel conflicts with tunnels or rerouting to bypass neighborhoods
- Provide a route to the POA so truck traffic can avoid neighborhoods
- Improve freight movement, reduce conflicts, and improve safety



Improve Regional Travel & Freight Mobility

- Provide a regional connection from the Seward Highway to the Glenn Highway
- Increase freight mobility by keeping trucks on freeways and rerouting them to industrial streets without stop lights



Provide Consistency with Adopted Plans

Provide accommodation/ promotion of planned improvements from:

- 2050 MTP
- Anchorage Land Use Plan Map
- Fairview Neighborhood Plan
- Gambell Street Redevelopment and Implementation Plan

MTP+

The MTP+ Alternative builds on the AMATS 2050 MTP by adding enhanced transit service, non-motorized improvements, and demand management strategies to support a more efficient and accessible transportation system. It includes expanded transit routes, fare-free service, increased rideshare capacity, and upgrades to existing routes. This alternative also promotes telework and e-learning activities, along with land-use incentives to encourage higher-density development. Gambell Street would be redeveloped as a two-lane, two-way main street, and Ingra Street would be redeveloped as a three-lane complete street with a shared center turn lane, reallocating space for non-motorized features, landscaping, and streetscape improvements. More details on the MTP+ Alternative advanced through Level 1 screening are available in **Appendix L** *Alternatives Refinement and Screening Report*.



Source: MOA Public Transportation

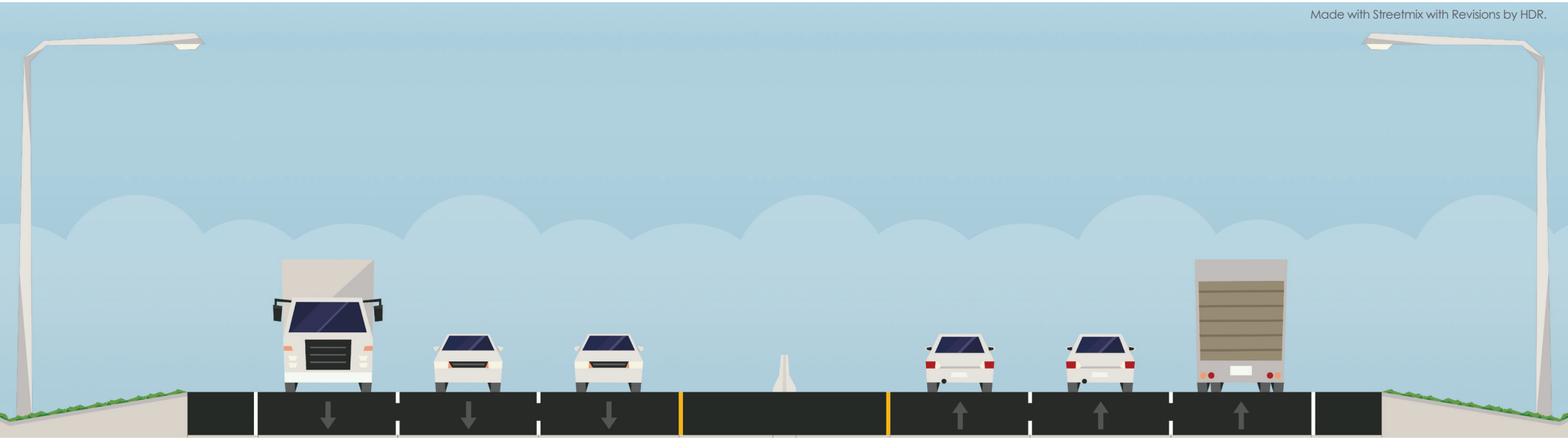
Freeway Alternative

- Six 12-foot freeway lanes
- 55 miles per hour
- Fenced ROW
- Interchanges
- No sidewalks or bike paths
- No landscaping
- 150 to 200 foot ROW

Freeway Connection Alternatives

The PEL study team developed seven freeway connection alternatives: A, B, AB1, AB2, C1, C2, and D. These alternatives would create a completely controlled-access freeway connecting the Glenn and Seward Highways through Anchorage. Both four- and six-lane options were evaluated. Freeways would include fenced ROW (see **Figure 15**) and fully grade-separated interchanges with no landscaping, sidewalks, or paths in a 150 to 200-foot ROW. The posted speed limit would be 55 miles per hour and the alignments were routed to minimize neighborhood impacts by depressing some segments or by routing the freeway around the southern and eastern sides of Merrill Field. See **Appendix K** *Detailed Alternatives Report* for detailed information on the freeway alternatives advanced to Level 1 screening.

Figure 15: Parkway Design Cross Section



Parkway Design

- Four 11-foot parkway lanes
- 40 - 45 miles per hour
- Usable ROW
- Roundabouts or signals
- Sidewalks or cycle track(s), and/or separated paths
- Robust landscaping
- 100 to 125 foot ROW

Parkway Connection Alternatives

Based on feedback from initial outreach efforts on the freeway alternatives, the PEL study team created three parkway alternatives: Parkway AB, Parkway C, and Parkway D. Parkway alternatives include multimodal arterial roadways alternatives design, not freeways.

Parkway alternatives are proposed with (see **Figure 16**):

- Slower target speeds (approximately 40 mph) to enhance safety for all users and promote less emphasis on vehicle mobility,
- Fewer and narrower vehicle lanes to promote traffic calming, and separated multi-use pathways for active transportation users,
- Space for landscaping, and tunnels or bridges to reduce surface impacts, and
- Reconnection of neighborhoods.

See **Appendix L** *Alternatives Refinement and Screening Report* for details on the Parkway Alternatives advanced to Level 1 screening.

Figure 16: Parkway Design Cross Section



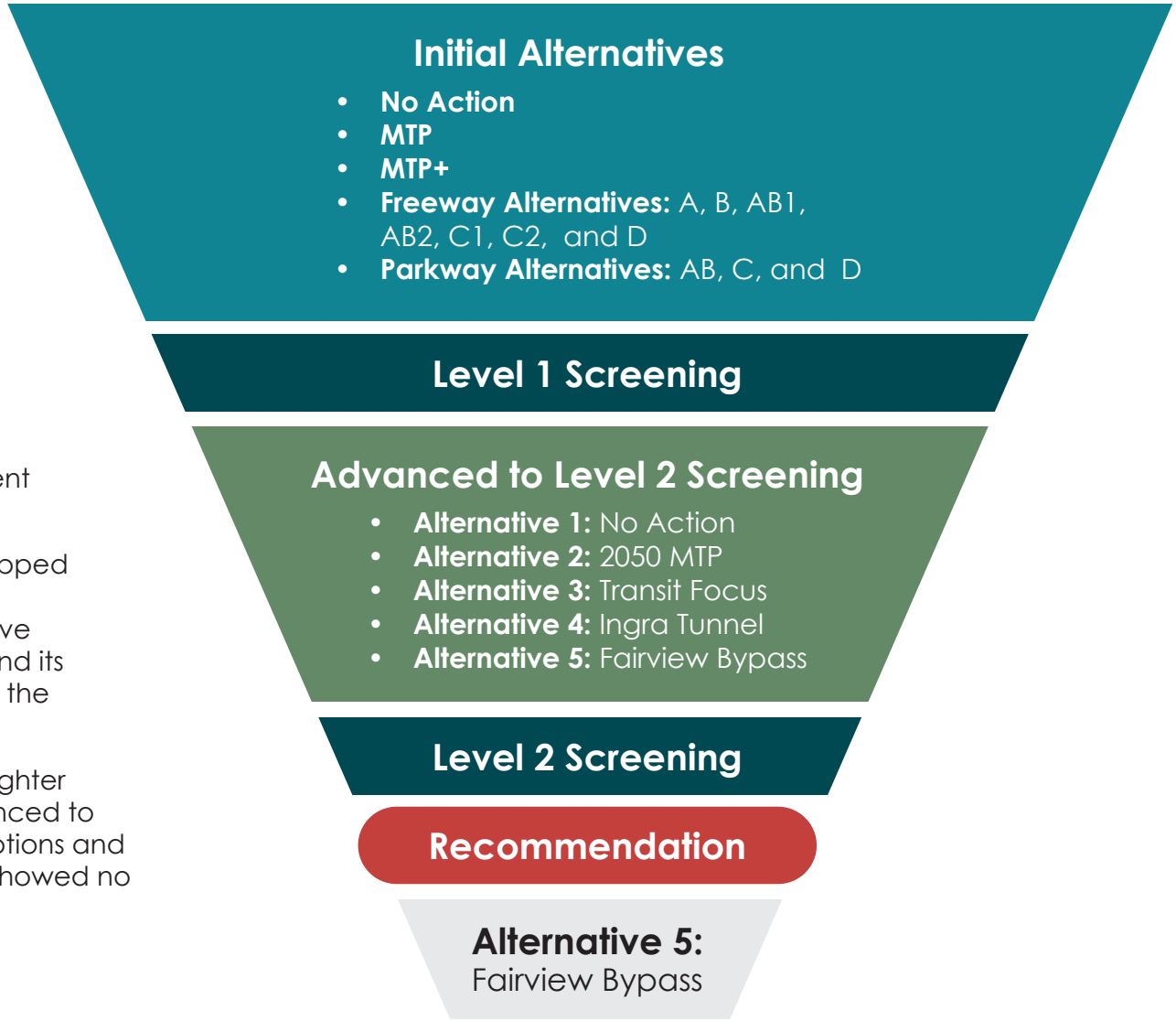
Level 1 Screening

Level 1 "fatal flaw" screening eliminated freeway Alternatives A through D because they duplicated newer parkway routes, offered no purpose and need advantages, and imposed unacceptable community impacts. Freeway Alternatives A, AB1, AB2, and B would have required extensive residential and non-residential acquisitions, relocations in housing burdened tracts, and effects on known or potential historic sites; whereas, Parkway Alternative AB—using tunnels beneath Fairview and the Mountain View industrial area—achieves a similar alignment with far fewer impacts.

Freeway Alternatives C1 and C2 were dropped for comparable residential, parkland, and historic site impacts that Parkway Alternative C largely avoids. Freeway Alternative D, and its refined Parkway version, were rejected for the highest Section 4(f) parkland use.

Engineered with narrower footprints and tighter curves, Parkway AB and Parkway C advanced to Level 2 screening, together with all port options and the 2050 MTP and MTP+ scenarios, which showed no fatal flaws, see **Figure 17**.

Figure 17: Screening Process



Level 2 Screening

The Level 2 screening phase of the PEL study evaluated five transportation alternatives to assess their performance across a range of criteria, including traffic, neighborhood impacts, freight mobility, environmental impacts, and technical and economic criteria. The PEL study team conducted additional engineering and refinement of the alternatives that passed the Level 1 screening. The revisions were based on public comments and attempted to: (1) reduce costs, (2) avoid or reduce impacts on environmental resources, and (3) reflect additional focused outreach. Commenters also suggested that new names should be considered to better convey the main theme of each alternative.

Table 2 identifies the alternatives advanced from Level 1 to Level 2 screening along with the new alternatives naming conventions.

Table 2: Alternatives Advanced to Level 2 Screening

Previous Name	New Name
No Action	Alternative 1. No Action
MTP 2050	Alternative 2. 2050 MTP
MTP+	Alternative 3. Transit Focus
Parkway Alternative AB	Alternative 4. Ingra Tunnel
Parkway Alternative C	Alternative 5. Fairview Bypass

The Level 2 screening evaluated these remaining alternatives in greater detail based on their ability to meet the purpose and need, environmental impacts, cost, and technical feasibility. *The Level 2 Screening and Recommendations Report* (**Appendix M**) presents an evaluation of: Safety, Non-Motorized Mobility and Access, Port Mobility and Accessibility, Vehicle Mobility and Accessibility, Livability, Environmental Impacts, and Technical and Economic Feasibility. The Level 2 screening results are presented in **Appendix M**.

Alternatives 1 through 4 were not preferred due to their inability to fully meet the study's purpose and need. Alternative 1 maintains existing conditions but fails to address Fairview's longstanding transportation and livability challenges.

Alternatives 2 and 3 introduce lane reductions and modest improvements; however without a new regional connection, Alternative 2 did not adequately address the interstate traffic through Fairview, and Alternative 3 shifted traffic-related impacts to other neighborhoods and offered only limited transit gains.

While Alternative 4 includes a new connection and performs better than Alternatives 2 and 3, it faces substantial costs for the number of trips it attracts. It also includes eight at-grade rail crossings along the port connection and would require complex tunneling requirements with considerable operation and maintenance costs. Overall, these alternatives either lack transformative potential or introduce new concerns that outweigh their benefits.

In contrast, Alternative 5 emerged as the preferred option due to its comprehensive and balanced performance. It delivers the greatest reductions in traffic volumes on Gambell and Ingra Streets, including truck traffic, enabling safer and more effective complete street improvements and supporting redevelopment aligned with local plans. It attracts the most trips, provides the greatest safety benefits, minimizes traffic diversion to other neighborhoods, and improves regional mobility and port travel times. By attracting trips to the highway network, many other routes in the northeastern part of Anchorage are projected to see reduced traffic volumes. This would improve safety on those routes by reducing the exposure to traffic and could allow those roads to be redesigned to better accommodate community needs.

Despite involving relocations and environmental concerns near Merrill Field, it offers the most miles of non-motorized infrastructure, the most greenspace, and the lowest acreage of roadway fronting residential properties. Its depressed roadway section and cut-and-cover park help preserve community cohesion and increase non-motorized crossing opportunities between North and South Fairview, and its regional connection is more cost-effective and is forecast to attract three times more use than Alternative 4, making it the most promising solution for study area's transportation and environmental challenges.



5 Recommendations

5.0 Recommendations

Vision for the Future

Balancing Regional Mobility and Community Goals

Alternative 5: Fairview Bypass envisions a bold transformation for the study area by establishing a regional parkway between the Seward and Glenn Highways that enhances mobility while restoring neighborhood integrity. By diverting freight and through-traffic away from Gambell and Ingra Streets, the recommended plan dramatically reduces traffic volumes, noise, and pollution in Fairview, allowing these corridors to be redesigned as safe, multimodal streets with lower speeds, wider sidewalks, bike lanes, snow storage buffers, and landscaping.

This shift unlocks opportunities for redevelopment aligned with local plans and supportive of Fairview's goals for walkability, safety, reinvestment, and livability.

The parkway's alignment—largely through vacant land adjacent to Merrill Field—minimizes traffic disruption to residential areas and features a depressed roadway section along 15th Avenue with wide bridges, green buffers, and a cut-and-cover park to maintain community connectivity.

The Fairview Bypass also supports a network of associated improvements, including the Hyder Pedestrian Boulevard and Fairview Greenway Trail, which link Fairview to the citywide trail system. Diverting some regional traffic from 5th and 6th Avenues allows them to be rebuilt as complete streets as called for in the 2050 MTP, while maintaining regional mobility.

Unlike the current eight-lane, high-volume couplet that divides Fairview, the proposed parkway connection is envisioned with community context in mind—lower target speeds, enhanced landscaping, snow storage buffers, and multimodal infrastructure. It serves regional mobility needs while acting as a gateway into urban Anchorage, not a barrier within it.

The analysis results from Alternative 3: Transit Focus suggest that a new bus route connecting Downtown, Fairview, U-MED, and Midtown would garner considerable ridership. Such a route would help unify three disparate employment centers, and with a connection on Gambell and Ingra Streets, it would connect Fairview, a highly transit dependent neighborhood, to jobs, shopping, and other essential services. This route is recommended for further study, inclusion in the Alternative 5 Implementation Plan, and potential inclusion in People Mover's next plan update.

Together, these improvements reclaim Fairview's streets for local use, creating a safer, more vibrant, and better-connected neighborhood centered on people, not vehicles. At the same time, regional connectivity between the Seward Highway, Glenn Highway, and POA would be strengthened.

Recommendations are depicted on **Figure 27,** included later in this chapter. Artistic renderings of various locations along the recommended Fairview Bypass alignment can be found in **Appendix O** *Renderings*.

This PEL study recommends an integrated, multimodal, subarea plan that establishes a vision for the NHS and associated improvements within the study area. The improvements are consistent with adopted plans for the study area and work together to create a multimodal network that satisfies this PEL study's Purpose and Need Statement.

Fairview Bypass Parkway

The Fairview Bypass will be a **four-lane arterial parkway** connecting the Seward and Glenn Highways, see **Figures 18 and 19**. Starting from the proposed southern terminus at 20th Avenue, the bypass will follow the existing Ingra Street alignment and intersect with proposed roundabout.[2] The roundabout will also connect to a new 16th Avenue extension between Ingra and Gambell Streets, as well as a two-way connection extending north to the existing 15th Avenue-Ingra Street intersection. This connection would provide access for vehicles destined for Fairview, Downtown, Government Hill, and other destinations to the north. This intersection control type will calm traffic by creating a contextual

[2] Final intersection control would be determined during the preliminary design and NEPA phases.

Figure 18: Parkway Design



The parkway design is based on an arterial street (not a new freeway) connection with slower speeds, less emphasis on vehicle mobility, fewer and narrower lanes, and adjacent sidewalks and pathways similar to Providence Drive in Anchorage (depicted above).

- **Four 11-foot** Parkway Lanes
- **35-45 mph** Parkway Lanes
- Usable ROW
- Roundabouts or signals
- Sidewalks or separated paths
- Robust landscaping
- **100-125 foot** ROW

Figure 19: Potential Parkway: Seward-Glenn Highway Connection and 15th Avenue: Ingra Street to Orca Street



transition between the Seward Highway and: (1) Gambell and Ingra Streets (i.e., Fairview), and (2) the parkway connection.

These changes would also improve access to the Sullivan Arena, Mulcahy Sports Complex, and the A-C couplet farther west via the 16th Avenue extension, strengthening the east-west connections between major north-south corridors through Midtown into Downtown. In other words, the proposed connection to A and C Streets provides an alternate way for Downtown and port traffic to get to and from the Seward Highway, reducing pressure on Gambell and Ingra Streets.

North of the 16th Avenue extension, the bypass would curve eastward within the existing 15th Avenue ROW in a depressed (i.e., trenched) section of roadway, see **Figure 19**.

Over the depressed section, bridges that include multimodal, motorized, and park facilities would be built to maintain neighborhood connectivity between the northern and southern sides of the depressed section.

Two new, non-motorized-only bridges are proposed at Latouche and Nelchina Streets, doubling the opportunities for connection between north and south Fairview. The bridges would be built at the existing ground elevation on both ends, flush with the surrounding neighborhood.

Figure 20 shows an example of a park built over a section of four-lane roadway in Duluth, Minnesota.

Figure 21 (on the following page) shows an example of a Seattle bridge design crossing over a depressed section of road with an extra-wide cross section. This type of design is proposed for Karluk and Medfra Streets to replace the existing at-grade crossings. Extra wide bridges would allow for a generous pathway buffer, landscaping, and visual/noise shielding from the traffic below.

To maintain 15th Avenue's local connectivity, it would be split into two, one-way streets with the westbound direction relocated to the northern edge of the 15th Avenue ROW and the eastbound direction relocated to the southern edge, parallel to the depressed parkway. Access to and from the Fairview Bypass would be provided via entrance and exit ramps east of Orca Street. Only needing one lane in each direction on the divided 15th Avenue is enabled by the regional traffic diverting onto the Fairview Bypass and is consistent with the lane reductions called for in the 2050 MTP.

East of Orca Street, 15th Avenue would be reconstructed as a four-lane parkway with a vegetated median and serve as the middle segment of the bypass. Active transportation facilities would be added along the southern edge of the parkway in the form of a landscape-separated, two-way cycle track and sidewalk.

This cross-section would curve northeastward before intersecting with Lake Otis Parkway and Merrill Field Drive (southern access). Roundabouts are proposed at this intersection and the Lake Otis Parkway and DeBarr

Figure 20: Example 'Cut-and-Cover' Park in Duluth, Minnesota.



Road intersection just to the south; however, intersection forms will be evaluated further during the NEPA phase.

The parkway would continue northeastward between the Merrill Field gravel runway tie-downs and Alaska Regional Hospital before curving northward under the med-evac taxiway and Airport Heights Drive, then tying into the Glenn Highway just east of Mountain View Drive. Ramps would connect to Penland Parkway, Airport Heights Drive, Mountain View Drive, and 5th Avenue using a grade-separated interchange with roundabouts.

The east entrance to Merrill Field Drive, currently across from Penland Parkway, would be relocated northward to the interchange ramp terminal at 5th Avenue and Mountain View Drive to reduce the need for a bridge over the parkway.

Due to its attractiveness to regional drivers, the Fairview Bypass would divert and absorb tens-of-thousands of vehicle trips per day from 5th, 6th, and 15th Avenues and the Ingra-Gambell couplet, allowing existing street capacities to be reduced. Various non-motorized improvements, parking, and/or landscaping configurations are possible while still staying within the 125-foot ROW (see **Figure 21**). This width would also support future bus lanes or additional travel lanes in the future (if needed) without needing additional ROW.

Figure 21: Proposed Concept for Crossings of Karluk and Medfra Streets.



This image shows a bridge of Island Crest Way over I-90 in Seattle. It depicts the concept proposed for crossings of Karluk and Medfra Streets. The extra-wide bridges would allow for a separated trail and landscaping, and shield surface users from the traffic below.

Gambell and Ingra Streets

Gambell and Ingra Streets would be reconstructed with fewer vehicle lanes each. Gambell Street would become a two-way main street with one lane in each direction and a 30-mph speed limit.

Ingra Street would also become a two-way street with one lane in each direction; but with a center, two-way, left-turn lane and a 30 mph speed limit.[2]

In both cases, the space from the removed lanes would be repurposed for sidewalks, on-street parking, bike lanes, bus lanes/stops, pedestrian amenities, snow storage buffers, or landscaping. Various configurations of non-motorized improvements and landscaping would be possible within the existing 60-foot ROW on both streets. **Figure 22** depicts this alternative's potential streetscape changes to Gambell and Ingra Streets.

[2] While the speed limits on Gambell/Ingra Streets are currently anticipated to be 20/30 mph, respectively, they may change during a future design process.

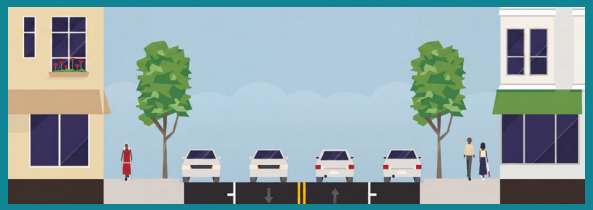
Figure 22: Main Street Concept on Gambell Street and Three-lane Concept on Ingra Street

Main Street (Gambell)

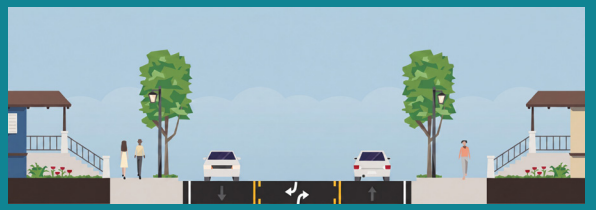
Main Streets provide for commercial and mixed uses, are pedestrian-oriented, and are transit-served. On-street parking offers benefits, including better land usage than dedicated parking lots, slower traffic, and better business access. On-street parking can also have drawbacks, including being less bike and pedestrian friendly, and hard to access when the road is congested.

Complete Street (Ingra)

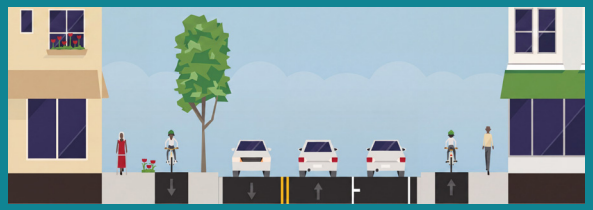
Two-way, left-turn lanes provide a center lane for left-turning vehicles. Lanes separate turning traffic from through-traffic, reducing congestion and improving safety and travel lanes, as well as providing space for emergency vehicles and snow storage.



Main Street Example



Complete Street Center Turn Lane Example



Main Street Example



Complete Street Greenway Example



West 4th Avenue, Anchorage Example



Spenard Road, Anchorage Example

Made with Streetmix with Revisions by HDR.

This graphic depicts possible cross-sections for a Gambell Main Street and Ingra Complete Street. The AMATS Non-motorized Plan calls for a priority pedestrian corridor and bikeway on both Gambell and Ingra Streets.

Figure 24: Hyder Woonerf Examples

Woonerf (Hyder)

A woonerf, sometimes called a living street, allows drivers, bicyclists, pedestrians, and others to share the space simultaneously. These are typically viewed as social spaces rather than vehicular spaces. The four vital elements of a woonerf are (1) well-defined entrances, (2) shared and well-marked spaces, (3) physical barriers to show traffic, and (4) landscaping.



Woonerf Example



Modern Woonerf Example



Hyder Pedestrian Boulevard/Fairview Greenway

Both the Fairview Greenway Trail from the 2050 MTP (Project #NMO182) and Hyder Pedestrian Boulevard or "Woonerf" (Project #NMO220) would be incorporated into this alternative (**Figure 23**). The Fairview Greenway Trail (i.e., Hyder Greenway) would be enhanced by extending it northward to create a continuous trail connection between the Ship Creek and Chester Creek Trails. This new route would create a loop trail around Anchorage's urban core (see **Figure 24**).

Figure 23: Trail Connections

Depicts the trail connection linking the Ship Creek Trail to the Chester Creek Trail creating a non-motorized regional loop that would directly benefit Fairview, Rogers Park, Airport Heights, Downtown, South Addition, and much of West Anchorage.

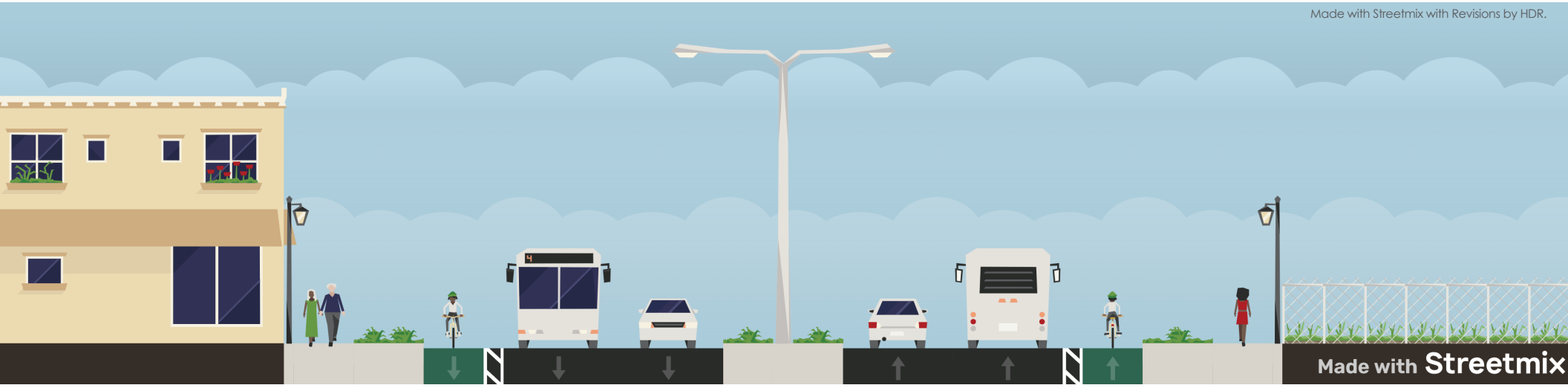


Fifth and Sixth Avenues

This PEL study recommends implementing the lane reductions/complete street improvements on 5th and 6th Avenues called for in the 2050 MTP under project CPS026: 5th & 6th Avenue Complete Streets (I to Reeve). One vehicle lane in each direction would be repurposed for protected bike lanes, upgrades to pedestrian infrastructure, green-scaping, and urban tree planting, as called for in the 2050 MTP (**Figure 25**).

Various non-motorized improvements, parking, and/or landscaping configurations are possible while still staying within the 100-foot ROW. This PEL recommends extending those improvements westward to Airport Heights Drive instead of ending at Reeve Boulevard (as proposed in the 2050 MTP) to allow Mountain View and Airport Heights neighborhoods to use the new complete streets to access Downtown and West Anchorage.

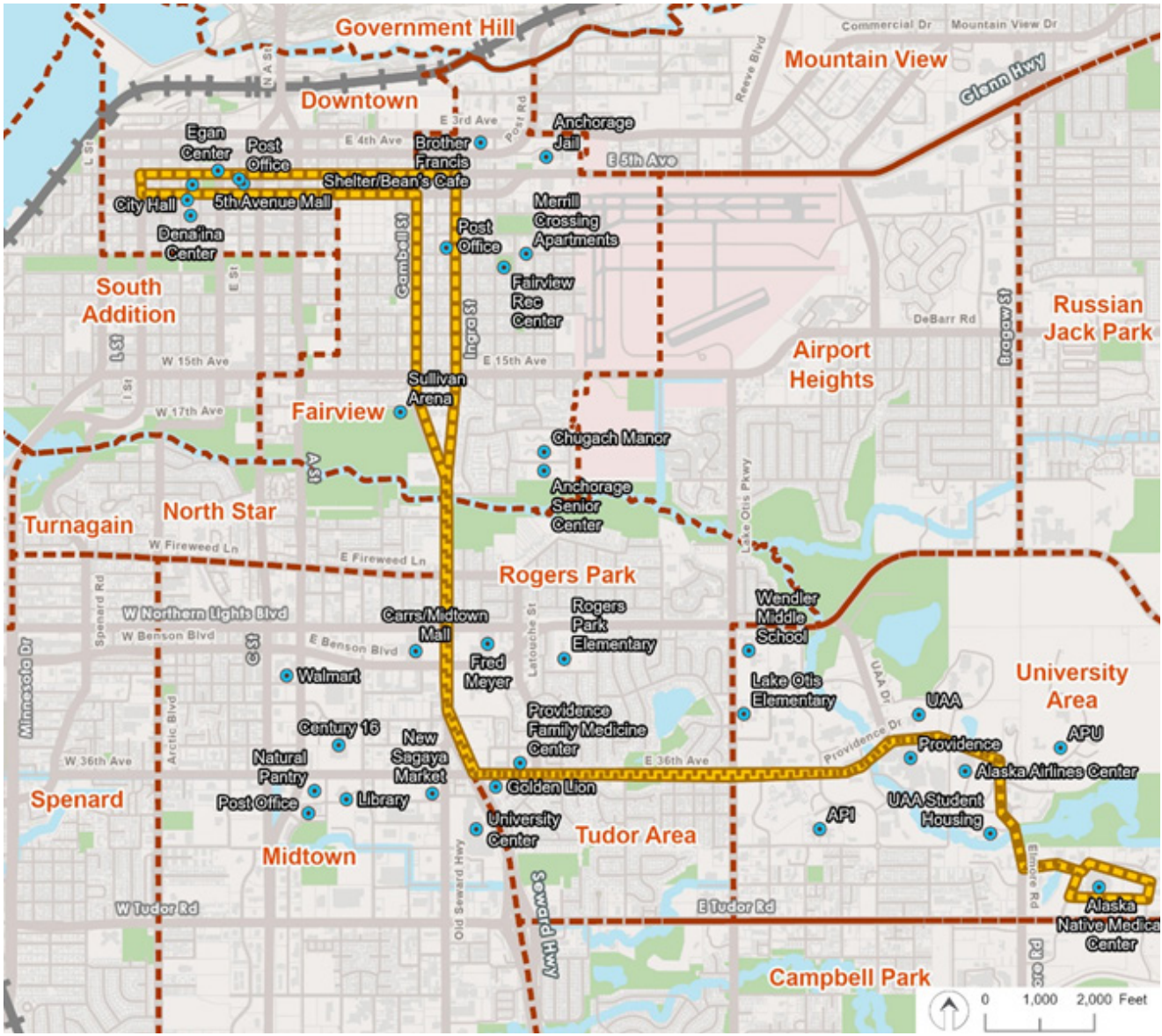
Figure 25: Potential Parkway: Seward-Glenn Highway and 15th Avenue: Ingra Street to Orca Street



Transit Recommendations

The PEL study tested a robust expansion of the People Mover transit system in Alternative 3 and forecasted potential ridership with the project's traffic model. One potential new route stood out: the Downtown-Midtown-U-MED route through Fairview. This would be a new bus route connecting Downtown, Midtown, and the U-MED District via Gambell and Ingra Streets and 36th Avenue (**Figure 26**). This route shows strong potential, accounting for 1,338 boardings—9.1 percent of the model's estimated systemwide total. It would link three major employment centers and connect Fairview, a transit-dependent neighborhood, to jobs, shopping, and services via Gambell and Ingra Streets. Further study and consideration for inclusion in People Mover's next plan update is recommended.

Figure 26: Proposed Recommended Rapid Transit Route. This figure shows the proposed route of the recommended rapid transit route and some of the destinations that would be accessible.



Industrial Streets

- Industrial streets provide access to and from the POA for large vehicles such as trucks, trailers, and other delivery vehicles.
- Industrial streets typically consist of two to four wide travel lanes
- Bicycle and pedestrian travel should also be accommodated as well.



Example of an industrial street (Reeve Blvd in Anchorage).

Port Connection

A port connection to the IHS was considered in this PEL study. While multiple alignments were considered, they had unacceptable community impacts and were not favored by the freight community over existing routes. This PEL study recommends a Reconnaissance Engineering Study be conducted with a broader geographic scope than this study area as it can make a more detailed analysis of potential transportation infrastructure projects to improve connections between the POA, various freight hubs, and designated freight routes in Anchorage.

For additional information about the port connections considered in this PEL study, please see **Appendix M** *Level 2 Screening and Recommendations Report*.

Phasing Plan

Introduction

This PEL study identified a new critical transportation corridor important to maintaining NHS/IHS functionality and economic vitality that also reduce NHS/IHS impacts on Fairview and Downtown. A regional, NHS/IHS parkway connection that extends from the Glenn Highway to the Seward Highway is recommended.

This corridor can form the backbone of a future transportation network that supports regional freight movement, improves neighborhood safety, and maintains regional connectivity.

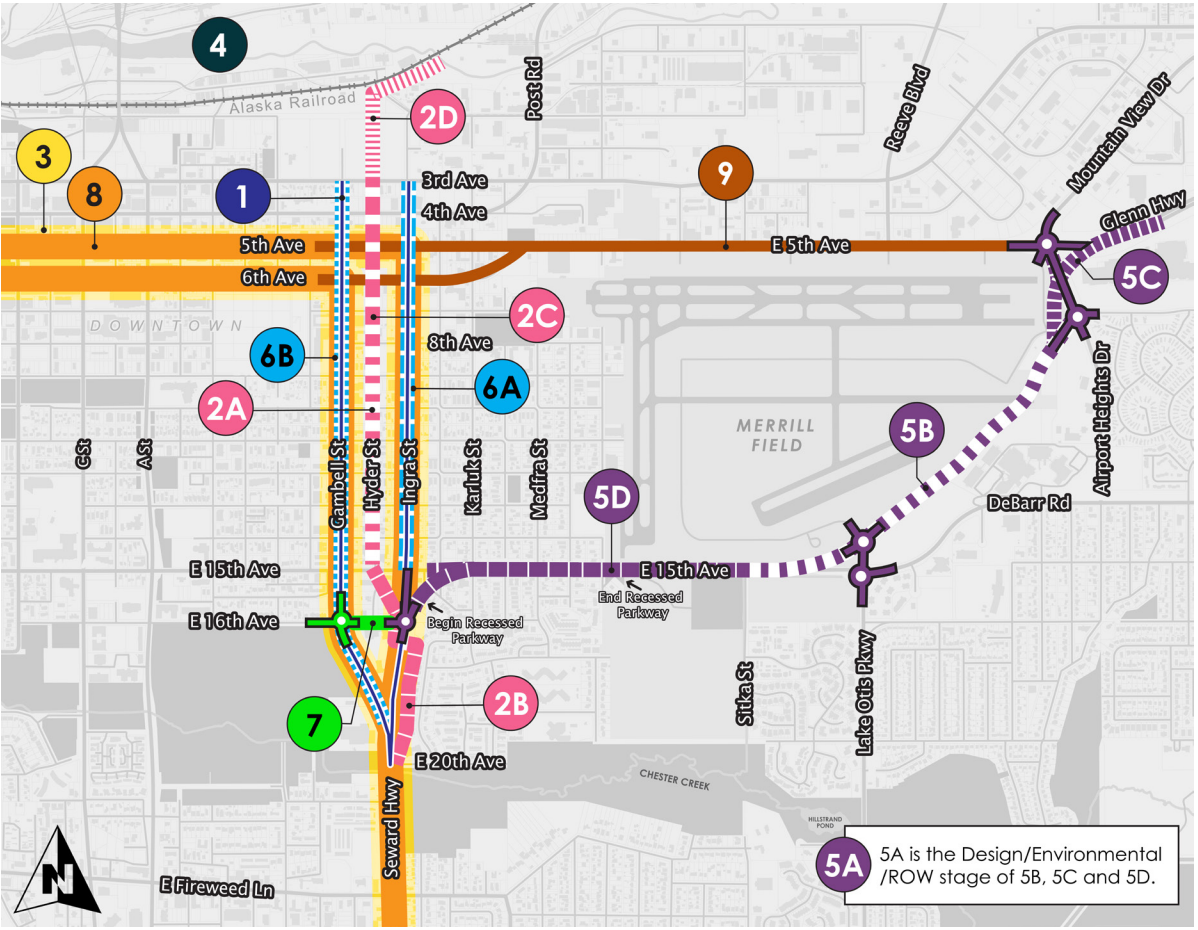
The ability of this corridor to be implemented incrementally over time is a key aspect of this vision. Rather than requiring a single, large-scale investment (e.g., a long tunnel), these improvements can be delivered through a series of fundable, standalone projects, each with independent utility and measurable benefits. This phasing approach allows for strategic investment aligned with funding availability, community priorities, and system performance goals.

The phasing plan, illustrated in **Figures 27 through 52** and summarized in **Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6**, proposes a sequencing of nine projects such that each project: (1) contributes to the overall system without causing disruptions or imbalances in traffic flow; and (2) provides compounding benefits to the network, with each subsequent project having its own unique benefits that stand on their own. The plan also integrates projects already included in the 2050 MTP, aligning near-term improvements already vetted by the community with long-term system functionality.



A path forward.

Figure 27: Phasing Plan: Overview Map.



This figure shows how the PEL study's recommended network can be implemented over time, aligned with ding availability, community priorities, and system performance goals.

Project Phase ID	Legend
1 Ingra-Gambell Couplet Lane Drops	
2A Hyder Pedestrian Boulevard	
2B Hyder Greenway – South Connection	
2C Hyder Greenway – North Connection (Stage 1)	
2D Hyder Greenway – North Connection (Stage 2)	
3 Downtown/Fairview/U-MED New Bus Route Implementation	
4 POA Freight Routes Reconnaissance Engineering Study	
5A Fairview Bypass – Environmental, Design, and ROW	
5B Fairview Bypass – Construction Stage 1 (Middle)	
5C Fairview Bypass – Construction Stage 2 (North)	
5D Fairview Bypass – Construction Stage 3 (South)	
6A Ingra Street Two-Way Conversion (Complete Street)	
6B Gambell Street Two-Way Conversion (Main Street)	
7 16th Avenue Extension	
8 Downtown/Fairview/U-MED Rapid Transit Implementation	
9 5th-6th Avenue Lane Drops and Complete Street	

Table 3: Phasing Plan Summary: To Begin Immediately

Project ID	Termini: To	Termini: From	Scope	Key Benefits and Alignment with Purpose and Need	Cost	Agency
1 **Ingra-Gambell Couplet Lane Drops**	20th Avenue	3rd Avenue	• Reduce 8-lane couplet to 6 lanes (3 lanes each road/direction) • Reduce posted speed from 35 to 30 mph • Reallocate space for non-motorized and snow storage improvements • Add speed feedback signs and/or other traffic calming measures • Interim solution until regional connections are built	• Includes early safety and livability improvements • Supports multimodal access • Sets stage for future couplet conversion to 2-way streets • Improves safety and accessibility • Reduces conflicting travel functions • Promotes community livability	**$12,000,000**	DOT&PF
2A **Hyder Pedestrian Boulevard**	15th Avenue	8th Avenue	• Convert Hyder Street to woonerf-style streetscape • Prioritize non-motorized user comfort and mobility • Reallocate vehicle lanes to: – Pedestrian boulevard – Landscaping – Greenway connection	• Improves local and regional non-motorized connectivity • Supports loop trail system around urban core • Enhances Fairview livability and community cohesion • Improves accessibility and safety • Promotes economic development and reinvestment in Fairview	**$4,500,000**	MOA or AMATS
3 **Downtown/ Fairview/U-MED New Bus Route Implementation**	5th Avenue	Providence Drive	• Proposed route: – 5th-6th Avenues: L to Ingra Streets – Gambell-Ingra-Seward Highway: 5th to 36th Avenues – 36th Avenue and Providence Drive through U-MED	• Improves accessibility and connectivity for transit-dependent residents, providing access to jobs, healthcare, services, and shopping • Supports economic revitalization • Reduces regional traffic impacts and non-motorized safety risk by removing regional vehicles from roadways • Reduces travel conflicts by reducing single-occupant vehicle reliance • Promotes livability and community cohesion • Builds ridership for future rapid transit	**$5,700,000** (operating cost assuming 15-minute headways) **$5,500,000** (capital costs)	MOA Public Transportation Department
4 **POA Freight Routes Reconnaissance Engineering Study**	Minnesota Drive/A-C Couplet/ Seward/ Glenn Highways	POA	• Study freight routes destined for POA from all areas of Anchorage via the Glenn Highway, Seward Highway, Minnesota Drive, and A-C couplet • Identify strategies and capital improvements needed to reduce POA traffic impacts on Downtown, Fairview, South Addition, Mountain View, and Government Hill neighborhood	• Provides a more in-depth look at freight movement to/from the POA • Identifies preferred route for POA traffic • Diverts trucks from Downtown, Fairview, and other neighborhoods • Improves freight safety and efficiency • Supports industrial access and connectivity	**$2,000,000**	DOT&PF or AMATS
5A **Fairview Bypass – Environmental, Design, and ROW**	Seward Highway	Glenn Highway	• 4-lane arterial parkway with vegetated median • ~40-mph speed limit (to be determined during NEPA) • Complete street design with separated/protected non-motorized facilities • Snow storage buffers • Parkway alignment through public land (not park land) • Roundabouts at 16th Avenue; Merrill Field Drive-Lake Otis Parkway-DeBarr Road; Penland Parkway-Airport Heights Drive; and 5th Avenue-Airport Heights Drive-Mountain View Drive intersections • Specific scope details included under each construction stage below	• Diverts regional traffic from Fairview • Improves safety with grade separations and roundabout designs • Completes regional parkway connection • Improves multimodal, freight, and commuter access • Reduces congestion and non-motorized crash risk on local streets • Provides traffic calming transition into Fairview via 16th Avenue roundabout • Improves mobility and safety • Reduces conflicting travel functions • Enhances neighborhood connections • Supports livability, community cohesion, and access to institutions	**$21,000,000**	DOT&PF

Table 4: Phasing Plan Summary: To Begin in 5–8 Years

Project ID	Termini: To	Termini: From	Scope	Key Benefits and Alignment with Purpose and Need	Cost	Agency
2B **Hyder Greenway – South Connection**	Chester Creek Trail	15th Avenue	• Connect the Hyder Pedestrian Boulevard to the Chester Creek Trail via a separated, shared-use pathway • Potentially feasible Seward Hwy crossing locations: – Along north bank of Chester Creek under new roadway bridge; or – Between 16th and 15th Avenues • Tunnel under 15th Avenue daylighting on north side of Hyder Street • Limit or prohibit vehicular access at 15th Avenue/Hyder Street/ 9th Avenue intersections	• Improves regional non-motorized connectivity • Supports non-motorized loop around Anchorage's urban core • Enhances multi-neighborhood livability • Promotes economic development and investment in Anchorage • Increases recreational opportunities in Anchorage	**$10,500,000**	MOA or AMATS
2C **Hyder Greenway – North Connection (Stage 1)**	8th Avenue	3rd Avenue	• Investigate tunnels or over-crossings at 5th and 6th Avenues • Investigate enhanced crossings at 4th, and 3rd Avenues	• Improves regional non-motorized connectivity • Supports non-motorized loop around Anchorage's urban core • Enhances multi-neighborhood livability • Promotes economic development and investment in Anchorage • Increases recreational opportunities in Anchorage	**$9,500,000**	MOA or AMATS
2D **Hyder Greenway – North Connection (Stage 2)**	3rd Avenue	Ship Creek Trail	• Connect the Hyder Greenway to the Ship Creek Trail via a separated, shared-use pathway • Investigate enhanced crossings at 3rd Avenue • Ship Creek Trail tie-in location to be determined during NEPA	• Improves regional non-motorized connectivity • Supports non-motorized loop around Anchorage's urban core • Enhances multi-neighborhood livability • Promotes economic development and investment in Anchorage • Increases recreational opportunities in Anchorage	**$9,000,000**	MOA or AMATS
5B **Fairview Bypass – Construction Stage 1 (Middle)**	Sitka Street	Penland Parkway	• New regional connection along southeastern edge of Merrill Field • Separated 2-way cycle track, sidewalk, and pedestrian-scale lighting on southern side of parkway • Landscaping • Noise mitigation, as required • Roundabouts at Merrill Field Drive-Lake Otis Parkway-DeBarr Road; and Penland Parkway-Airport Heights Drive intersections • Tie regional connection into new roundabout at Penland Parkway temporarily until interchange is built	• See Project 5A benefits, plus the benefits below • Begins pulling regional vehicles from Ingra-Gambell couplet and 5th-6th Avenues • Removes vehicular demand and non-motorized crash risk on DeBarr Road and Airport Heights Drive (south of Penland Parkway) • Improves safety and connectivity for non-motorized users between Fairview, Airport Heights, and Mountain View neighborhoods • Improves security for Merrill Field along its southern and eastern borders	**$60,000,000**	DOT&PF
5C **Fairview Bypass – Construction Stage 2 (North)**	Airport Heights / Glenn Highway Interchange		• New interchange to grade-separate the regional connection under Airport Heights Drive and tie directly into Glenn Highway • Keep Airport Heights Drive at existing elevation to not impact Merrill Field airspace • Install roundabout at 5th Avenue-Mountain View Drive-Airport Heights Drive • Relocate east access to Merrill Field Drive to new 5th Avenue-Airport Heights Drive roundabout • Terminate bicycle track and sidewalk at Penland Parkway roundabout • Improve non-motorized facilities within interchange	• See Project 5A benefits, plus the benefits below • Pulls more regional vehicles from Ingra-Gambell couplet and 5th-6th Avenues • Reduces vehicular demand and non-motorized crash risk at 5th Avenue-Mountain View Drive intersection by removing regional traffic • Improves safety and connectivity for non-motorized users between Fairview, Airport Heights, and Mountain View neighborhoods • Reconnects the Mountain View neighborhood with shopping and services across the Glenn Highway	**$45,000,000**	DOT&PF

Table 5: Phasing Plan Summary: To Begin in 8–10 Years

Project ID	Termini: To	Termini: From	Scope	Key Benefits and Alignment with Purpose and Need	Cost	Agency
5D Fairview Bypass – Construction Stage 3 (South)	Ingra Street	Sitka Street	• Roundabout at 16th Avenue connects users to 15th Avenue-Ingra Street intersection and destinations to the north (e.g., Downtown, Government Hill) • Parkway depressed along 15th Avenue ROW through Fairview • 15th Avenue reconstructed between Ingra and Orca Streets as 1-way, single-lane couplet on opposite side of ROW • Bridges at Karluk and Medfra Streets maintain connectivity across 15th Avenue • Non-motorized-only bridge at Latouche Street and a park lid with landscaping covering the parkway at Nelchina Street improve neighborhood connectivity between north and south Fairview • Sidewalks, bike lanes, and multi-use paths along 15th Avenue at surface level • East- and west-bound access ramps to/from the parkway east of Orca Street • Vegetated median, snow storage buffers, 2-way cycle track, and sidewalk along the parkway east of Orca Street	• See Project 5A, plus the benefits below • Completes the Fairview Bypass corridor, providing maximum safety and livability benefits • Proposes lid over parkway at Nelchina Street below 300-foot length so freight vehicles with hazardous-materials-designated loads may use the bypass • Proposes a parkway lid less than 300 feet long, precluding requirements for emergency egress/shelter, fire suppression, ventilation, and other expensive infrastructure, thereby reducing capital and maintenance costs	**$96,000,000**	DOT&PF
6A Ingra Street Two-Way Conversion (Complete Street)	15th Avenue	3rd Avenue	• Convert to 2-way street with 1-lane each direction • Install center, 2-way left-turn lane • Reallocate previous vehicle lane as: – Bike lanes – Snow storage buffers – Sidewalks – Landscaping • Implement after Fairview Bypass is complete • Coor`dinate transit needs with Downtown/Fairview/U-MED Bus Rapid Transit (e.g., bus stops, bus-only lanes, signal preemption).	• Improves safety and livability • Supports economic revitalization • Restores neighborhood-serving street function • Supports land use transformation • Improve transit environment to support bus rapid transit in Project 8. • Improves safety and accessibility • Reduces travel conflicts • Promotes community cohesion	**$23,000,000**	DOT&PF
6B Gambell Street Two-Way Conversion (Main Street)	20th Avenue	3rd Avenue	• Convert to 2-way street with 1-lane each direction • Reduce posted speed from 30 to 20 mph • Reallocate previous vehicle lane as: – On-street parking – Sidewalks – Snow storage buffers – Landscaping and pedestrian amenities • Implement after Fairview Bypass is complete	• Improves safety and livability • Supports economic revitalization • Restores neighborhood-serving street function • Supports land use transformation • Improve transit environment to support bus rapid transit in Project 8. • Improves safety and accessibility • Reduces travel conflicts • Promotes community cohesion	**$20,500,000**	DOT&PF
7 16th Avenue Extension	Gambell Street	Ingra Street	• Two-way street • 25 or 30 mph speed limit to be determined during NEPA/design • New roundabout at Gambell Street & 16th Avenue intersection • Shared-use pathway on northern or both sides • Implement with Gambell Street 2-way conversion project	• Provides new east-west connection, reducing vehicular demand on 15th Avenue and Fireweed Lane • Provides alternate access to/from Downtown and the POA via the A-C couplet, reducing vehicular demand on Ingra and Gambell Streets • Enhances network resiliency, safety, and neighborhood character • Improves traffic flow for events at Sullivan Arena and Mulcahey Sports Complex • Enhances non-motorized access to Sullivan Arena and Mulcahey Sports Complex • Improves mobility and safety • Reduces travel conflicts • Promotes livability and access	**$10,500,000**	DOT&PF or AMATS
8 Downtown/ Fairview/U-MED Rapid Transit Implementation	5th Avenue	Providence Drive	• Upgrade proposed route in Project 3, connecting Fairview to key destinations with reduced headways, functioning like a street-level subway system • Provide frequent service with bus rapid transit-style elements as part of Projects 6A and/or 6B, depending on final routing	• Enhances benefits attributed to Project 3 • Improves connection between three employment centers: Downtown, Midtown, and U-MED • Reduces congestion and non-motorized safety risk by removing regional vehicles from roadways	**$9,560,000**	MOA Public Transportation Department
9 5th-6th Avenue Lane Drops and Complete Street	Gambell Street	Airport Heights Drive	• Remove 1-lane each direction and reduce posted speed • Protected bike lanes, sidewalks, snow storage buffers, and/or landscaping • Implemented after Fairview Bypass complete	• Improves pedestrian and bike safety • Supports Downtown walkability • Reduces regional traffic impact	**$30,500,000**	DOT&PF or AMATS

Table 6: Phasing Plan Schedule Summary

Project Phase ID	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
1 Ingra-Gambell Couplet Lane Drops	E. & Design	Construction									
2A Hyder Pedestrian Boulevard	Environmental & Design		Construction								
2B Hyder Greenway – South Connection		Environmental & Design		Construction							
2C Hyder Greenway – North Connection (Stage 1)		Environmental & Design			Construction						
2D Hyder Greenway – North Connection (Stage 2)		Environmental & Design			Construction						
3 Downtown/Fairview/U-MED New Bus Route Implementation	★										
4 POA Freight Routes Reconnaissance Engineering Study	Study										
5A Fairview Bypass – Environmental, Design, and ROW	Environmental & Design										
5B Fairview Bypass – Construction Stage 1 (Middle)						Construction					
5C Fairview Bypass – Construction Stage 2 (North)								Construction			
5D Fairview Bypass – Construction Stage 3 (South)									Construction		
6A Ingra Street Two-Way Conversion (Complete Street)						Environmental & Design				Construction	
6B Gambell Street Two-Way Conversion (Main Street)						Environmental & Design				Construction	
7 16th Avenue Extension						Environmental & Design				Construction	
8 Downtown/Fairview/U-MED Rapid Transit Implementation											★
9 5th-6th Avenue Lane Drops and Complete Street						Environmental & Design				Construction	

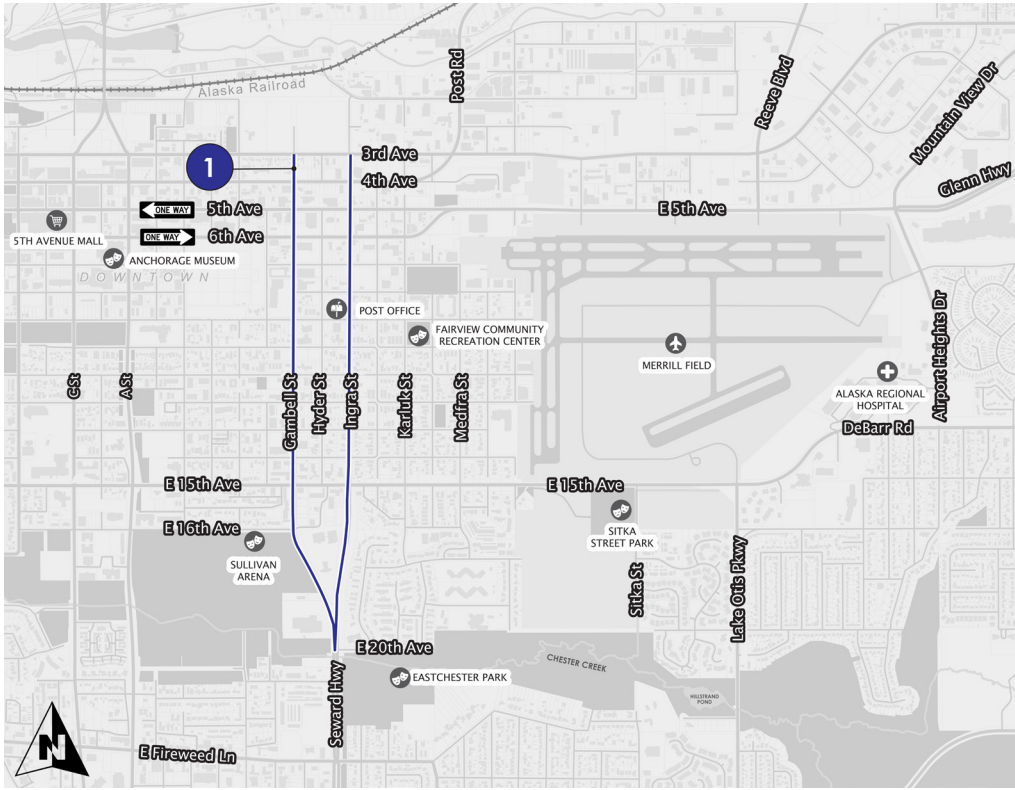
1 Project 1: Ingra-Gambell Couplet Lane Drops

This initial phase focuses on converting the existing Gambell and Ingra Street couplet from an eight- to a six-lane configuration (**Figure 28**). As an interim solution, this project delivers immediate benefits to the Fairview neighborhood by leveraging existing roadway capacity. Removing one lane in each direction creates space for pedestrian and bicycle improvements, enhancing safety, accessibility, and neighborhood livability. While not a permanent fix, this early action project demonstrates the value of phased investment and sets the stage for more transformative changes in future phases.

Importantly, this PEL study does not recommend jumping directly to a full main street design on Gambell Street or implementing a 3-lane road diet on Ingra Street, without first constructing the regional connection between the Seward and Glenn Highways. Such reductions in capacity would leave regional traffic with no viable alternative routes, leading to increased congestion on Gambell and Ingra Streets, and diversion to other neighborhood streets. This project strikes a balance, delivering visible improvements and community benefits while preserving enough capacity to maintain system performance until the broader network is in place.

Project 1 supports the purpose by improving safety and livability for all users, especially pedestrians and bicyclists, while maintaining the functionality of the NHS and IHS. It addresses the need to reduce conflicting travel functions by preserving regional capacity during the interim phase and promotes community livability by reclaiming space for non-motorized users and enhancing the public realm.

Figure 28: Phasing Plan: Phase 1 (Ingra-Gambell Couplet Lane Drops)



PHASE LEGEND

Phase 1

The graphics presented here are high-level iterative interpretations and are not to scale. The roadway line weights are not indicative of ROW limits or actual road width.

2 Project 2: Hyder Pedestrian Boulevard and Greenway

Project 2 supports the study purpose by improving accessibility and safety for non-motorized users and enhancing community cohesion through better neighborhood connections. It addresses the need to promote livability and economic development by creating a high-quality public realm and supports safety through separated facilities. It also complements regional mobility improvements by providing alternatives to vehicle travel and reinforcing multimodal connectivity.

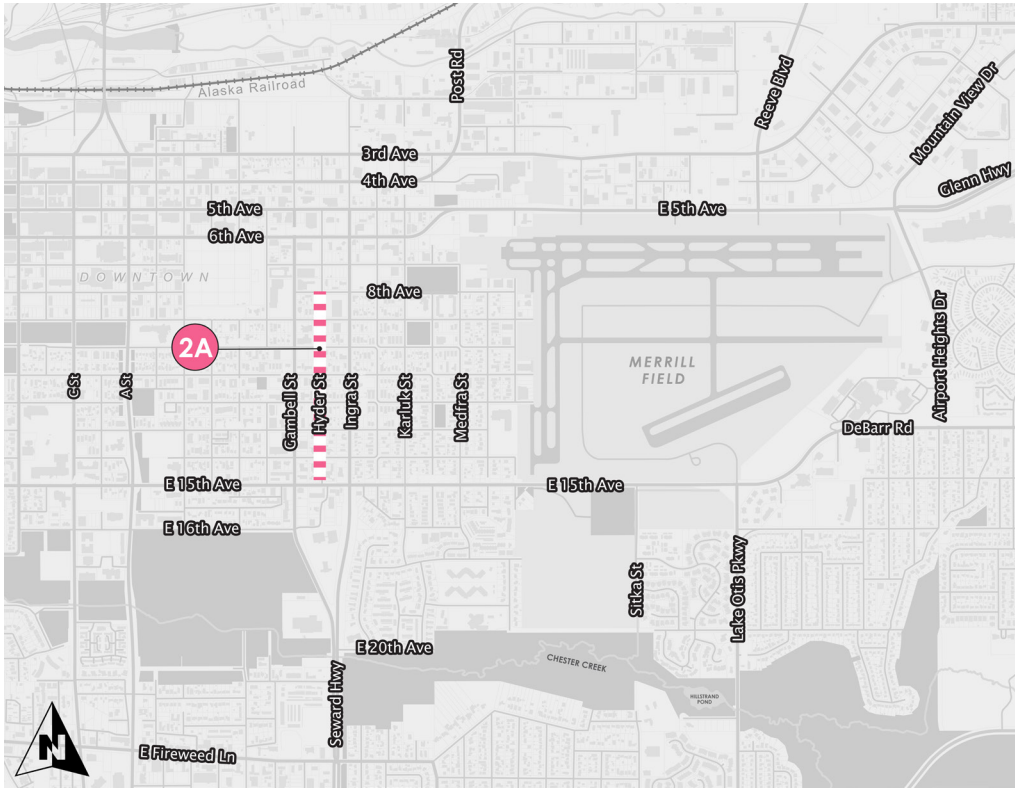
Project 2 advances two pedestrian-focused projects identified in the 2050 MTP: the Hyder [Greenway (aka Fairview Greenway Phase I) and the Hyder Pedestrian Boulevard. While these projects are independent of the regional vehicle connection, they play a critical supporting role by enhancing pedestrian safety, connectivity, and multimodal access—particularly in the Fairview neighborhood.

Project 2 would be implemented as 4 projects:

- **2A: Hyder Pedestrian Boulevard**
- **2B: Hyder Greenway – South Connection**
- **2C: Hyder Greenway – North Connection (Stage 1)**
- **2D: Hyder Greenway – North Connection (Stage 2)**

Project 2A: Hyder Pedestrian Boulevard. In this project, Hyder Street would be transformed into a pedestrian boulevard or woonerf between 15th and 8th to prioritize non-motorized user comfort and mobility in a shared space.

Figure 29: Phasing Plan: Phase 2A Hyder Pedestrian Boulevard



PHASE LEGEND

Phase 2A

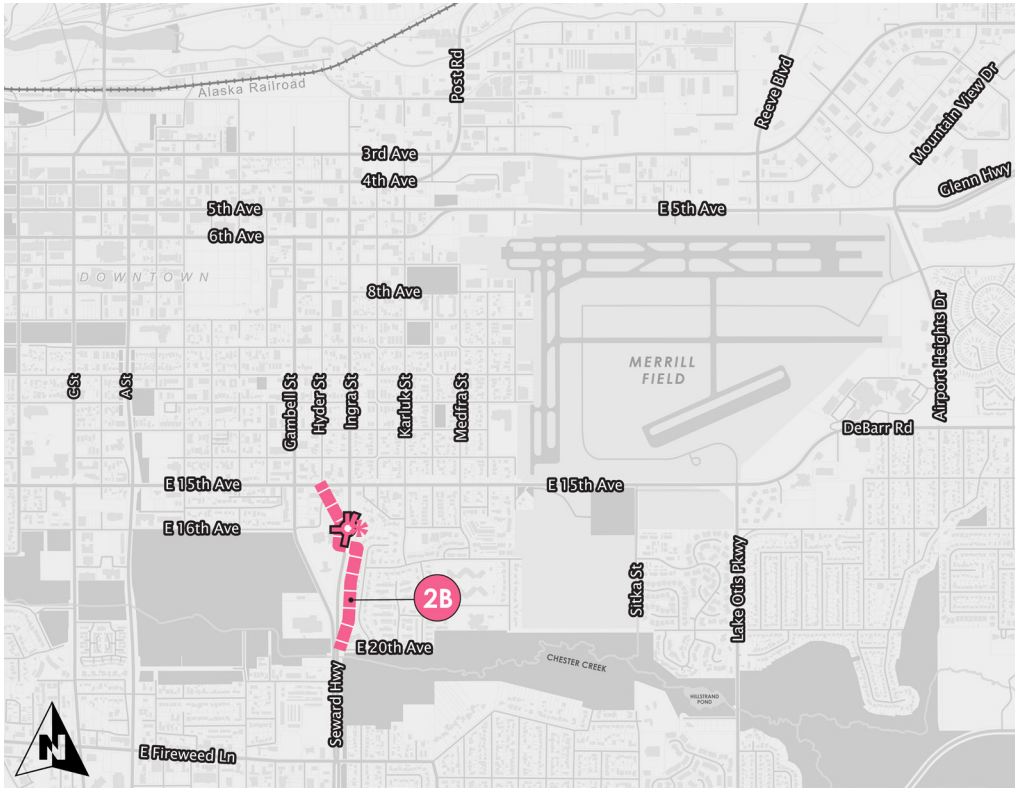
The graphics presented here are high-level iterative interpretations and are not to scale. The roadway line weights are not indicative of ROW limits or actual road width.

2

Project 2B: Hyder Greenway – South Connection includes a separated pathway along the eastern side of Ingra Street from the existing Chester Creek Trail to just south of 15th Avenue. From there, it transitions into an enhanced tunnel under Ingra Street, continues northwestward to a second tunnel under 15th Avenue, and emerges onto the Hyder Pedestrian Boulevard (Project 2A).

The route assumed in the PEL is the route proposed in the 2050 MTP, which requires a tunnel under the Seward Highway. Should that continue to be the preferred route, it is essential that the tunnel crossing under the Seward Highway—located within the Project 5 footprint—be coordinated and constructed concurrently with Project 5. This avoids costly rework and ensures seamless integration of the pedestrian network with the regional connection.

Figure 30: Phasing Plan: Phase 2B Hyder Greenway – South Connection



PHASE LEGEND

Phase 2B

*The Reconnecting Communities team is considering other potential routing for this project, which will be further evaluated during the NEPA phase.

The graphics presented here are high-level iterative interpretations and are not to scale. The roadway line weights are not indicative of ROW limits or actual road width.

2

Project 2C: Hyder Greenway – North Connection (Stage 1) This PEL study recommends extending the Hyder Greenway northward to create a continuous non-motorized corridor connecting the Chester Creek Trail to the Ship Creek Trail (see **Figure 18**). This extension would complete a loop trail through West Anchorage, linking the Fairview Greenway, Ship Creek Trail, Anchorage Coastal Trail, and Chester Creek Trail. This extension would be done in two stages. The first stage would connection 8th Avenue to 3rd Avenue.

Figure 31: Phasing Plan: Phase 2C Hyder Greenway – North Connection (Stage 1)



PHASE LEGEND

Phase 2C

*The north connection point to Ship Creek trail shown here was not thoroughly vetted by the PEL team or the public and should be investigated and determined during the environmental process for this project.

The graphics presented here are high-level iterative interpretations and are not to scale. The roadway line weights are not indicative of ROW limits or actual road width.

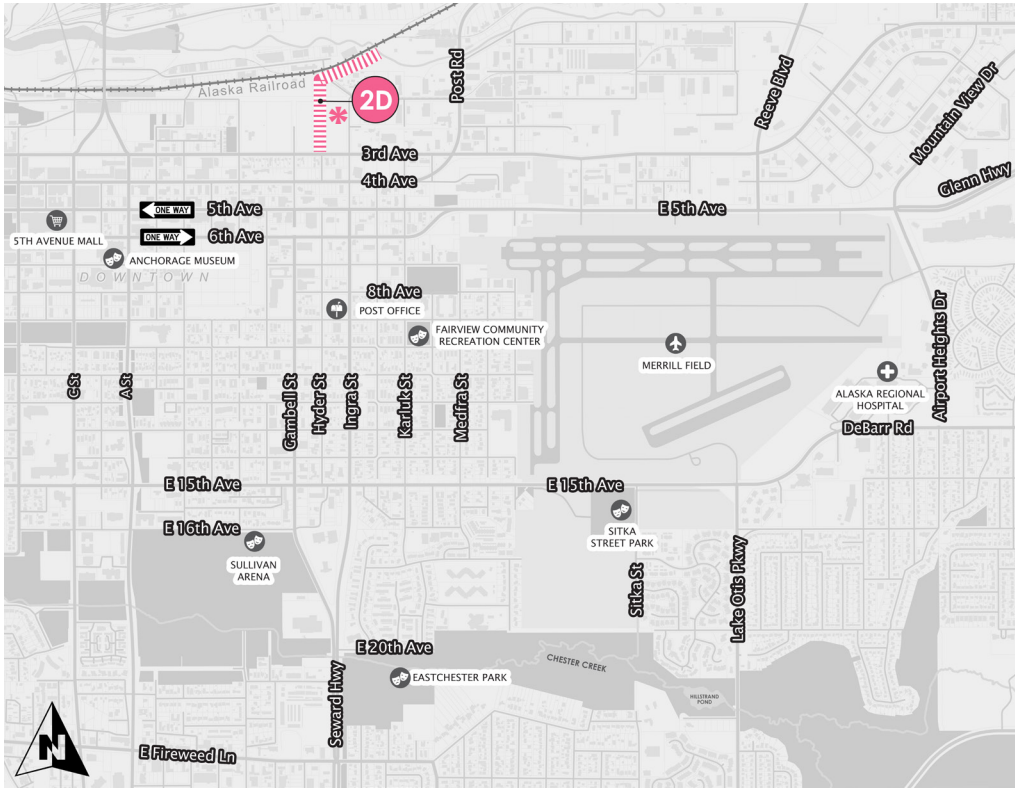
2

Project 2D: Hyder Greenway – North Connection (Stage 2)

In **Project 2D**, the Hyder Greenway would be extended from 3rd Avenue to the Ship Creek Trail, completing the final segment of the non-motorized corridor (see **Figure 32**). The completed connection would enhance neighborhood connectivity, support active transportation and recreation, and strengthen multimodal access throughout the Fairview area and the broader community.

The project would also complete the long-term vision of a looped trail system connecting the Fairview Greenway, Ship Creek Trail, Anchorage Coastal Trail, and Chester Creek Trail. Realizing this vision will require close coordination with ARRC to identify an acceptable and feasible location for the Hyder Greenway to connect with the Ship Creek Trail.

Figure 32: Phasing Plan: Phase 2D Hyder Greenway – North Connection (Stage 2)



PHASE LEGEND

Phase 2D

*The north connection point to Ship Creek trail shown here was not thoroughly vetted by the PEL team or the public and should be investigated and determined during the environmental process for this project.

The graphics presented here are high-level iterative interpretations and are not to scale. The roadway line weights are not indicative of ROW limits or actual road width.

3 Project 3: Downtown/Fairview/U-MED New Bus Route Implementation

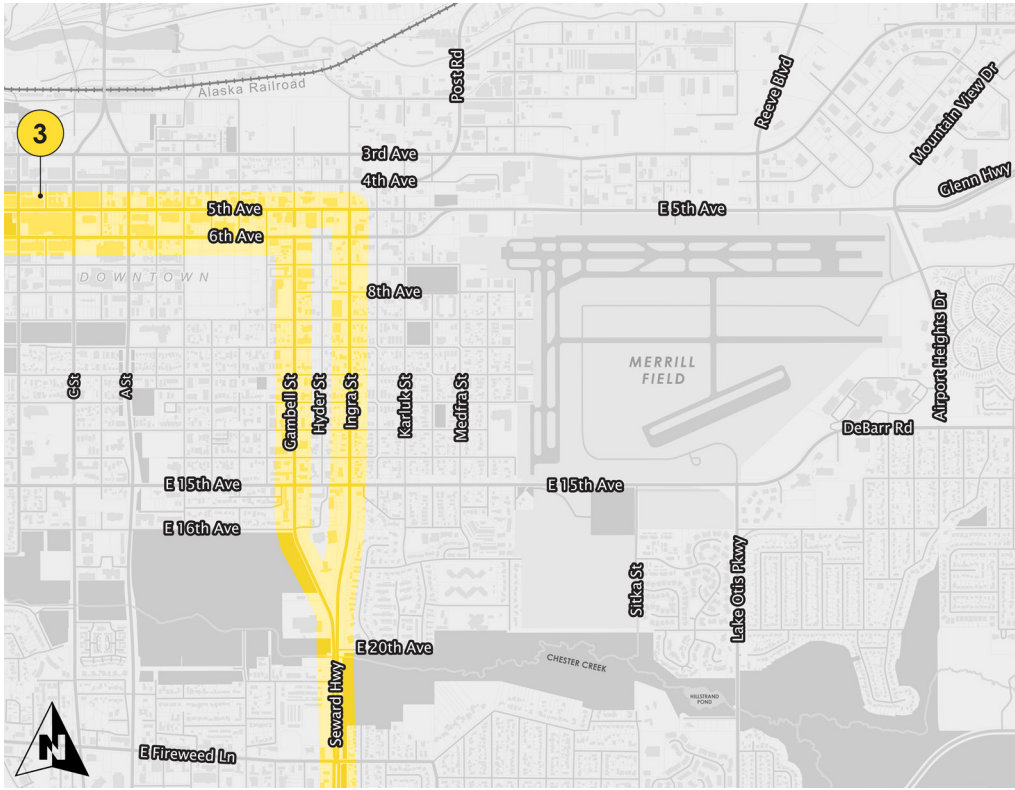
Project 3, the Downtown/Fairview/U-MED Bus Route is a proposed new People Mover route, designed to connect Fairview—a transit-dependent neighborhood—with three major employment centers: Downtown, Midtown, and the U-MED District. The route would travel along 5th-6th Avenues, Gambell and Ingra Streets, and 36th Avenue (see **Figure 33**). The frequency of this route is to be determined but is likely to have headways between 10 and 30 minutes.

This route would provide immediate benefits to riders. By improving access to jobs, healthcare, and shopping, and reducing reliance on single-occupant vehicles, the route would support economic revitalization, enhance mobility, and foster greater community cohesion and livability.

This project should be coordinated with Project 1 so improvements such as bus stops and pedestrian amenities can be incorporated when Project 1 is constructed.

This project would also help create demand for Project 8. As Project 8 incorporates bus rapid transit-style elements and higher frequencies, it would be more expensive to operate. Having a high ridership level would help justify the enhanced service. It would also allow time to develop employment and population densities along the route that are needed to support a rapid transit system.

Figure 33: Phasing Plan: Phase 3 Downtown/Fairview/U-MED New Bus Route Implementation



PHASE LEGEND

Phase 3

The graphics presented here are high-level iterative interpretations and are not to scale. The roadway line weights are not indicative of ROW limits or actual road width.

4

Project 4: POA Freight Routes Reconnaissance Engineering Study

This PEL study explored multiple ways of providing improved access to the POA from the IHS. However, all the options had unacceptable impacts to residential areas, and conflicts with ARRC facilities. Additional feedback indicated that the routing would not be heavily used by the freight community so it may not have enough traffic to justify the construction cost.

A Reconnaissance Engineering Study will allow continued examination of potential connections to the POA. Such a study will allow a more in-depth engineering analysis than was possible in this planning-level PEL study, which only focused on a connection to the Seward and Glenn Highways when connections to other designated freight routes and various freight destinations in Anchorage could improve freight travel efficiency and reduce existing impacts to neighborhoods and the Downtown commercial district (see **Figure 34**).

Figure 34: Freight traffic uses the study area to connect to the POA.



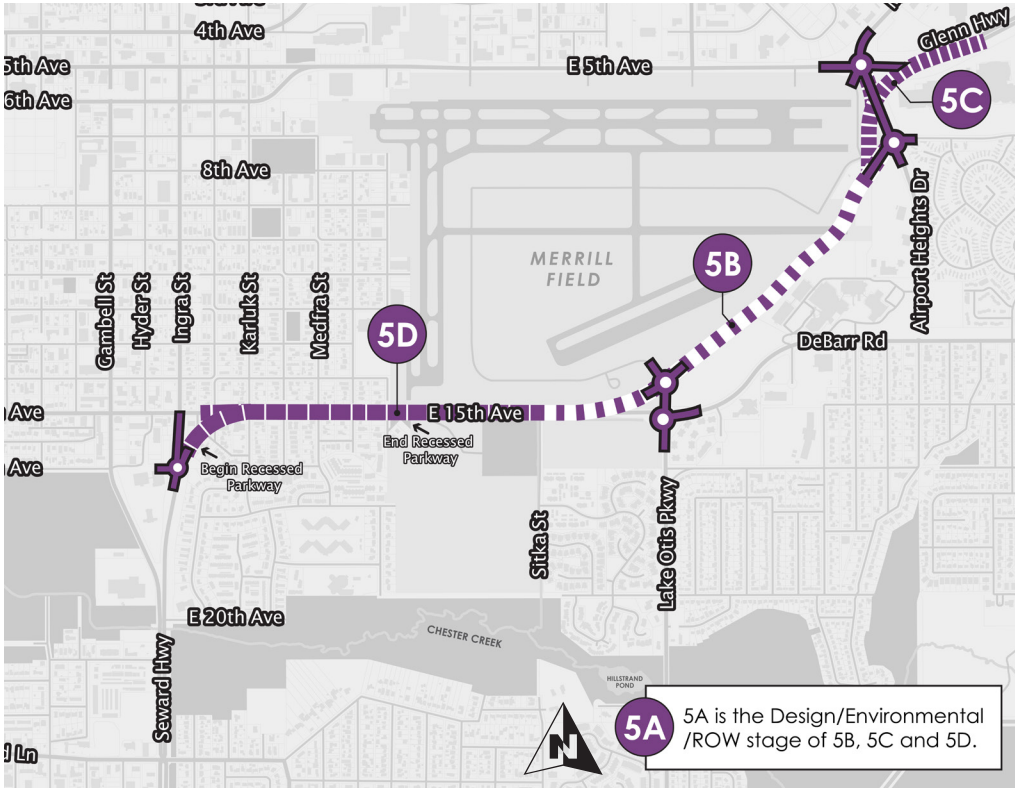
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Project 5: Fairview Bypass

Project 5, the Fairview Bypass[3] would create a regional parkway connection between the Seward and Glenn Highways' intersections with Airport Heights Drive and 20th Avenue, respectively, within the existing 15th Avenue ROW from Ingra Street to Lake Otis Parkway before traversing along the eastern and southern sides of Merrill Field. The parkway would include robust landscaping, sidewalks, and biking facilities (see **Figure 35**).

[3] In the Draft PEL Study Report, the Fairview Bypass was described as three separate projects with discrete NEPA phases. Based on comments, DOT&PF determined to advance the Fairview Bypass as one project (described here from south to north). However, DOT&PF anticipates having an environmental analysis, design, and ROW phase for the entire Fairview Bypass corridor that would be split into three construction phases to spread out funding needs and impacts on businesses, residents, and the traveling public

Figure 35: Fairview Bypass Phasing Plan



The graphics presented here are high-level iterative interpretations and are not to scale. The roadway line weights are not indicative of ROW limits or actual road width.

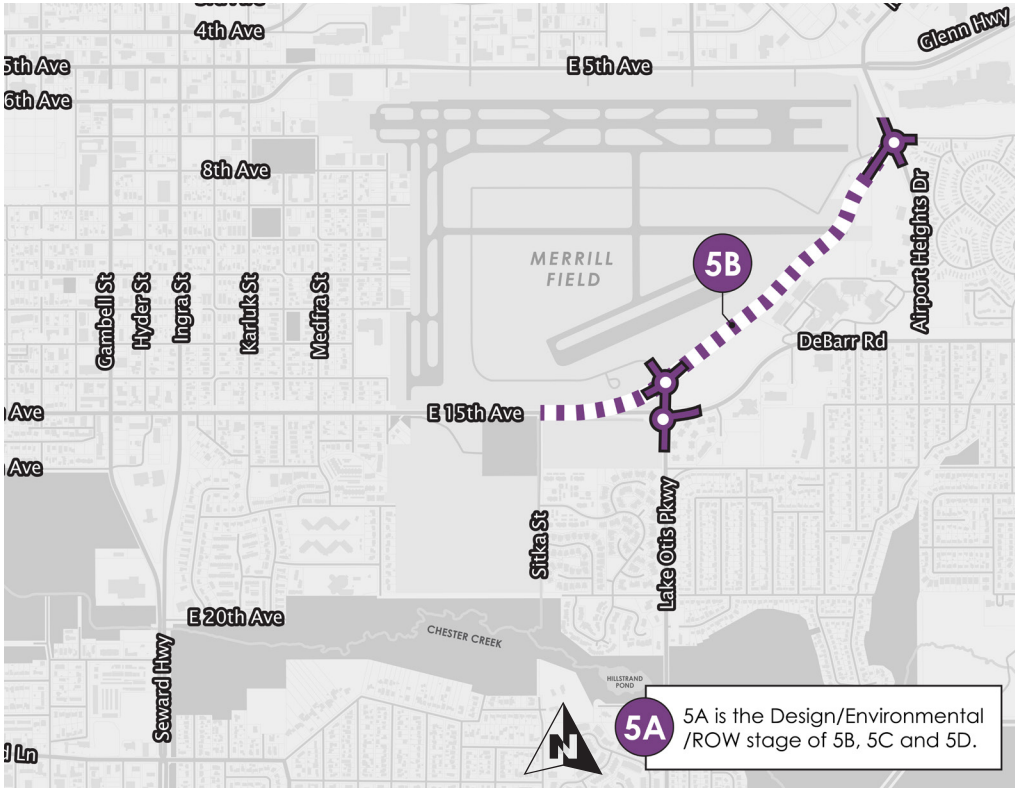
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The Fairview Bypass would consist of the following four phases:

- **5A: Environmental, Design, and ROW**
- **5B: Construction Stage 1 (Middle)**
- **5C: Construction Stage 2 (North)**
- **5D: Construction Stage 3 (South)**

Project 5 creates a critical connection between the Seward and Glenn Highways via a depressed roadway section built beside and lower than 15th Avenue. Surface-level connectivity is preserved in Fairview by reconstructing 15th Avenue, which would be reconstructed as a one-lane-each-direction couplet at its existing elevation along the northern and southern sides of the existing ROW. The design proposes a four-lane, two-way facility with a landscaped center median, helping to divert regional traffic away from Gambell and Ingra Streets, and reduce traffic volumes in the Fairview neighborhood and on numerous roadways throughout the study area (see **Figure 36**).

Figure 36: Phasing Plan: Phase 5B – Construction Stage 1 (Middle)



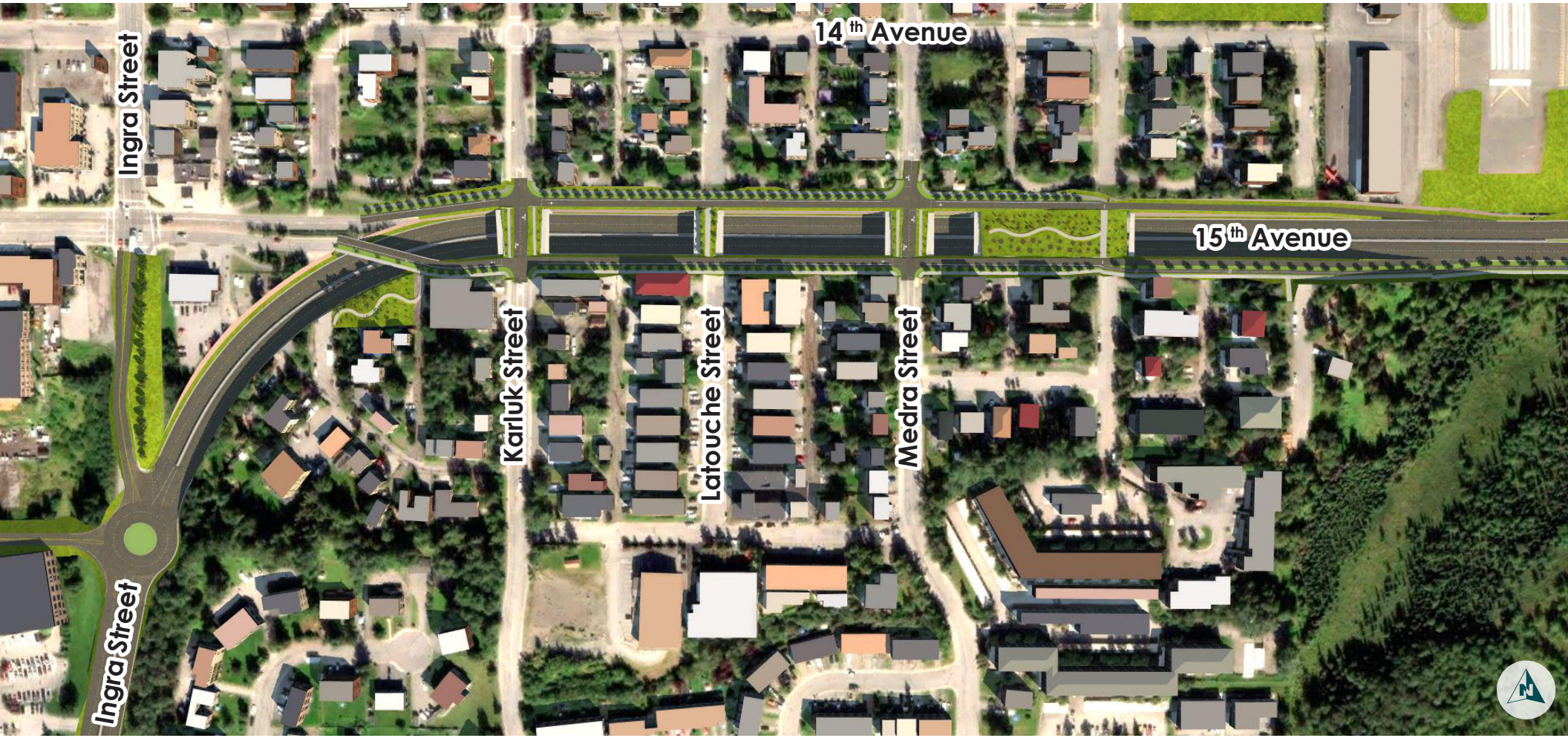
PHASE LEGEND

Phase 5B

The graphics presented here are high-level iterative interpretations and are not to scale. The roadway line weights are not indicative of ROW limits or actual road width.

Figure 37: Project 5: Fairview Bypass Southern Segment through Fairview.

Starting at the southern end of the project, the parkway would be depressed to go under cross streets such as Medra and Karluk Streets. The addition of non-motorized crossings and a park built on a structure over the roadway help maintain and improve neighborhood connectivity.



5

Phase 5B – Construction Stage 1 (Middle) and **5D – Construction Stage 3 (South)** are especially important because 15th Avenue is already showing signs of congestion. While the 2050 MTP calls for reducing lanes on this section of 15th Avenue to one lane in each direction, this design achieves that goal while also providing the necessary capacity to prevent overloading the corridor with diverted regional traffic.

By including wide bridges at Karluk and Medfra Streets—with generous landscaping and a multimodal north-south connection—this design ensures that neighborhood connectivity is preserved and enhanced. The use of cut-and-cover techniques and grade separation improves safety while minimizing community disruption (**Figures 38 and 39**).

Together, Projects 5B and 5D will create a regional parkway connection by transforming 15th Avenue into a true urban parkway.

Beginning at Sitka Street, Project 5B (middle segment; **Figure 40**) continues eastward on public property between Alaska

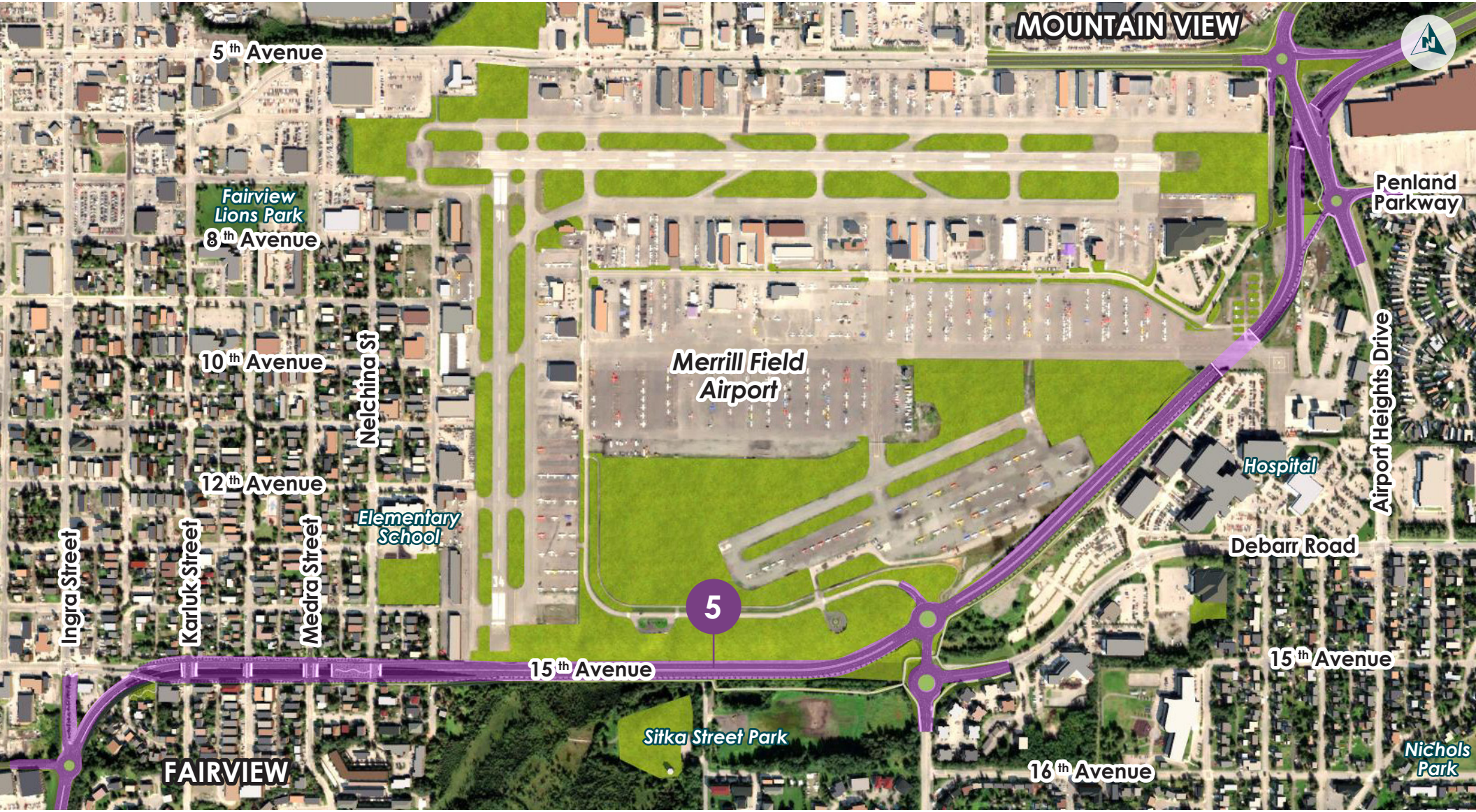
Figure 38: Parkway Visualization #1. The parkway would be depressed through south Fairview, allowing cross-streets and pathways to bridge over the trench to maintain neighborhood connectivity



Figure 39: Parkway Visualization #2. To help maintain community cohesion, the depressed parkway allows a park to be placed over a portion of the roadway. This visualization shows a 300-foot-long parkway cap between Medfra and Nelchina Streets.



Figure 40: A Plan View of the Entire Recommended Fairview Bypass



5

Regional Hospital and Merrill Field, ultimately connecting to Penland Parkway. This alignment minimizes impacts on private property while enhancing access to key community institutions (**Figure 41**).

The proposed design reconstructs the corridor with a complete street design that includes a wide, landscaped median and a two-way cycle track or multi-use pathway, sidewalk, and pedestrian-scale lighting, on the southern side of the roadway, opposite Merrill Field.

Two major roundabout intersections are proposed to support this new configuration (**Figure 42**). A double roundabout would connect Lake Otis Parkway, DeBarr Road, and Merrill Field Drive to the regional parkway, improving traffic flow and safety at this complex junction.

A second roundabout would connect Penland Parkway, Airport Heights Drive, and Merrill Field Drive to the parkway, providing efficient access and reinforcing the corridor's role as a regional connector with local sensitivity. The regional connection would tie into the Penland Parkway roundabout until Project 5C is constructed.

A taxiway bridge would be constructed over the bypass, maintaining a dedicated, continuous access between Merrill Field and Alaska Regional Hospital to support fixed-wing med-evac access (see **Figure 41**).

Figure 41: Parkway Visualization #3. Proposed medevac taxiway bridge over the Fairview Bypass connecting Merrill Field directly to Alaska Regional Hospital.

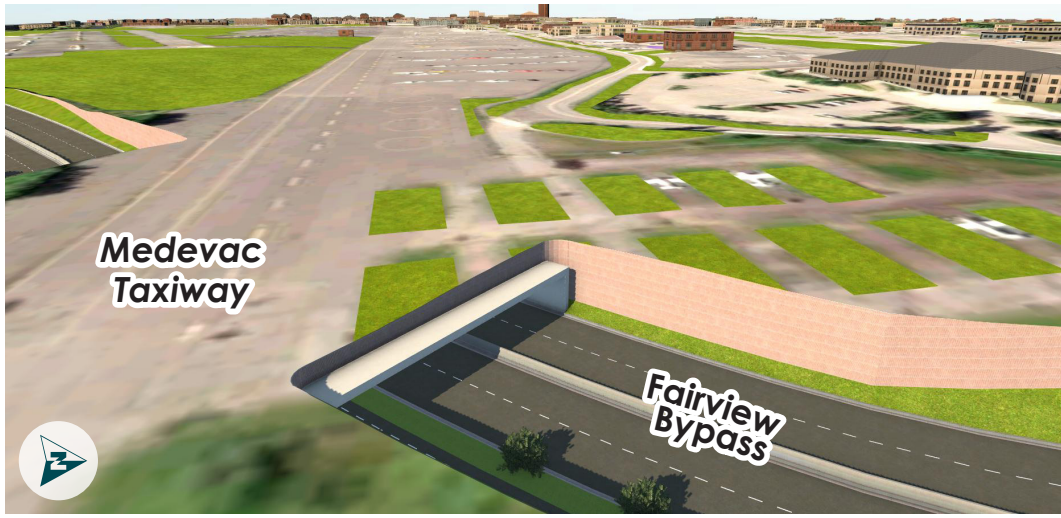




Figure 42: Roundabout Visualization. Roundabouts would connect to Airport Heights Drive at Penland Parkway and 5th Avenue

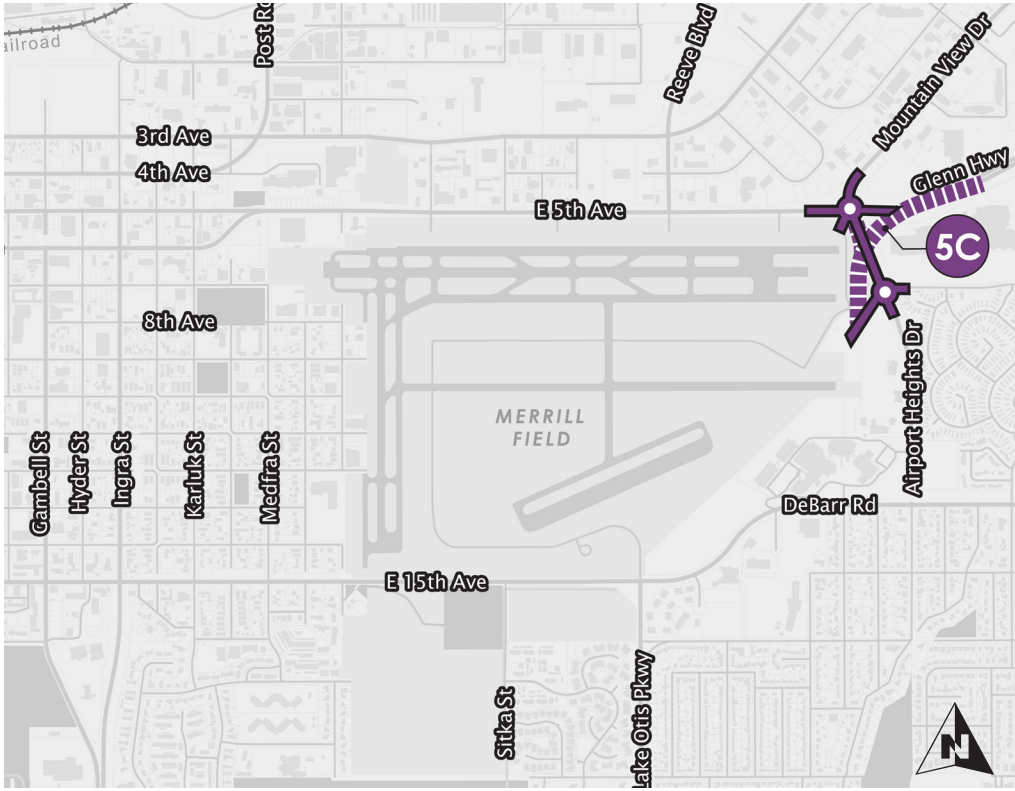
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Phase 5C – Construction Stage 2 (North) constructs a grade-separated interchange at the existing Glenn Highway, 5th Avenue, and Mountain View Drive intersection and the Airport Heights Drive and Penland Parkway intersection (**Figure 43**). The Glenn Highway would be realigned southwestward to connect directly to the regional parkway, with the mainline depressed under Airport Heights Drive to maintain uninterrupted regional traffic flow and avoid conflicts with Merrill Field airspace. As the highway approaches the interchange, design cues would transition it into a slower-speed, urban-friendly facility, supporting a more context-sensitive approach to regional mobility.

In its final configuration, the interchange would take the form of a "dogbone" roundabout interchange, combining the roundabout at Penland Parkway with the new roundabout at 5th Avenue/Mountain View Drive. This design simplifies traffic operations while maintaining high-capacity regional movement.

The final interchange configuration will be selected during the NEPA phase.

Figure 43: Phasing Plan: Phase 5C – Construction Stage 2 (North)



PHASE LEGEND

Phase 5C

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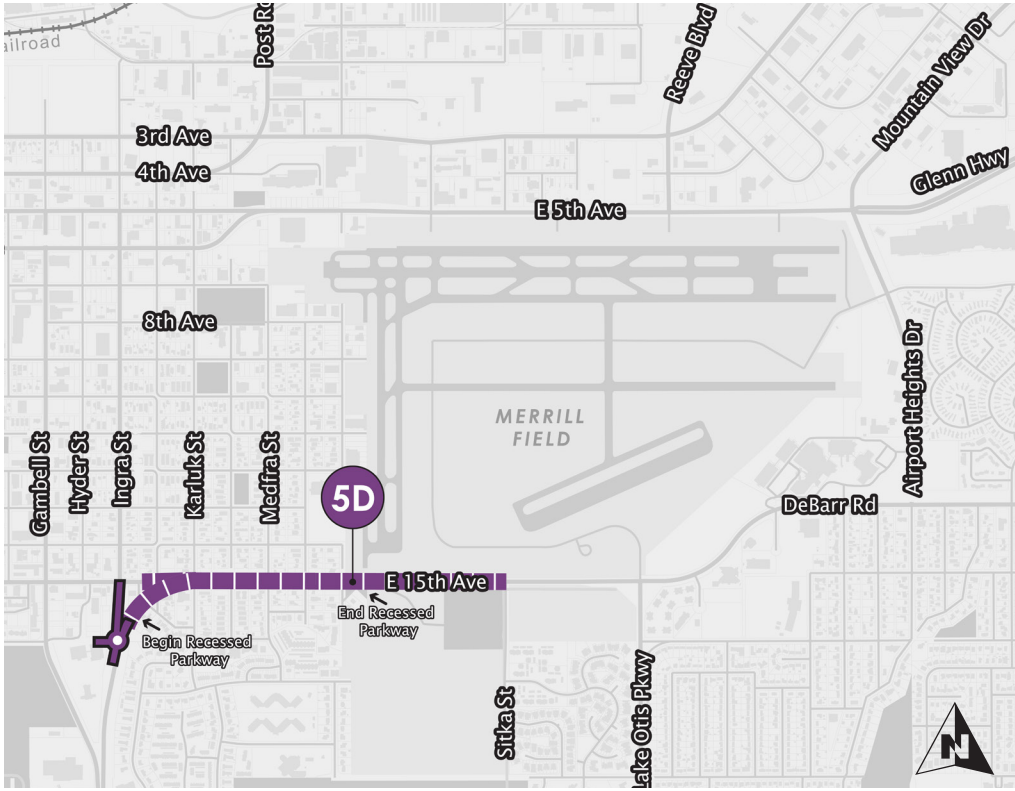
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Phase 5D – Construction Stage 3 (South) would complete the southern end of the regional connection between Ingra and Sitka Streets. It would construct the depressed section of 15th Avenue through Fairview. It would also reconstruct 15th Avenue between Ingra and Orca Streets as a one-way, single-lane couplet. The couplet would have sidewalks, bike lanes, and multi-use paths to improve non-motorized connectivity. This would be further enhanced by a non-motorized crossing at LaTouche Street and a park lid with landscaping covering the parkway at Nelchina Street to improve neighborhood connectivity between north and south Fairview (see **Figures 44 and 45**). This segment would also have bridges above the parkway at Karluk and Medfra Streets to maintain local connectivity. The recommended bridges are wide enough to have landscaped setbacks with a separated multi-use pathway (see **Figure 16**). The result would be a safer, more attractive, and multimodal-friendly corridor that supports both regional mobility and neighborhood quality of life.

A roundabout would be constructed at 16th Avenue to connect northbound users to the 15th Avenue and Ingra Street intersection, and tie into the recommended 16th Avenue extension.

With the completion of this project, the corridor connecting the Seward and Glenn Highways would be fully established. Regional traffic would be more evenly distributed between the new parkway and routes into Downtown Anchorage, helping to reduce congestion on Gambell and Ingra Streets, and improving conditions in the Fairview neighborhood.

Figure 44: Phasing Plan: Phase 5D – Construction Stage 3 (South)



PHASE LEGEND

Phase 5D

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The project supports the overarching purpose of improving mobility, accessibility, safety, and community livability within the corridor by enhancing how people and goods move between the Glenn and Seward Highways and through the surrounding neighborhoods.

The project reduces conflicting travel functions by clearly separating regional and local circulation, minimizing traffic that currently divides Fairview along Gambell and Ingra Streets, and establishing modern, safer designs—such as grade separations, roundabouts, and complete street intersections—that better serve all users, including pedestrians and bicyclists.

The project strengthens community cohesion and supports economic vitality by improving connections between neighborhoods and key regional destinations, enhancing access to important institutions, and reducing the burden of through traffic on local streets, all while completing critical links in the multimodal transportation network and creating a more attractive, livable public realm.

Figure 45: Gambell Street at 9th Avenue



6 Project 6: Ingra Street Two-Way Conversion (Complete Street) and Gambell Street Two-Way Conversion (Main Street)

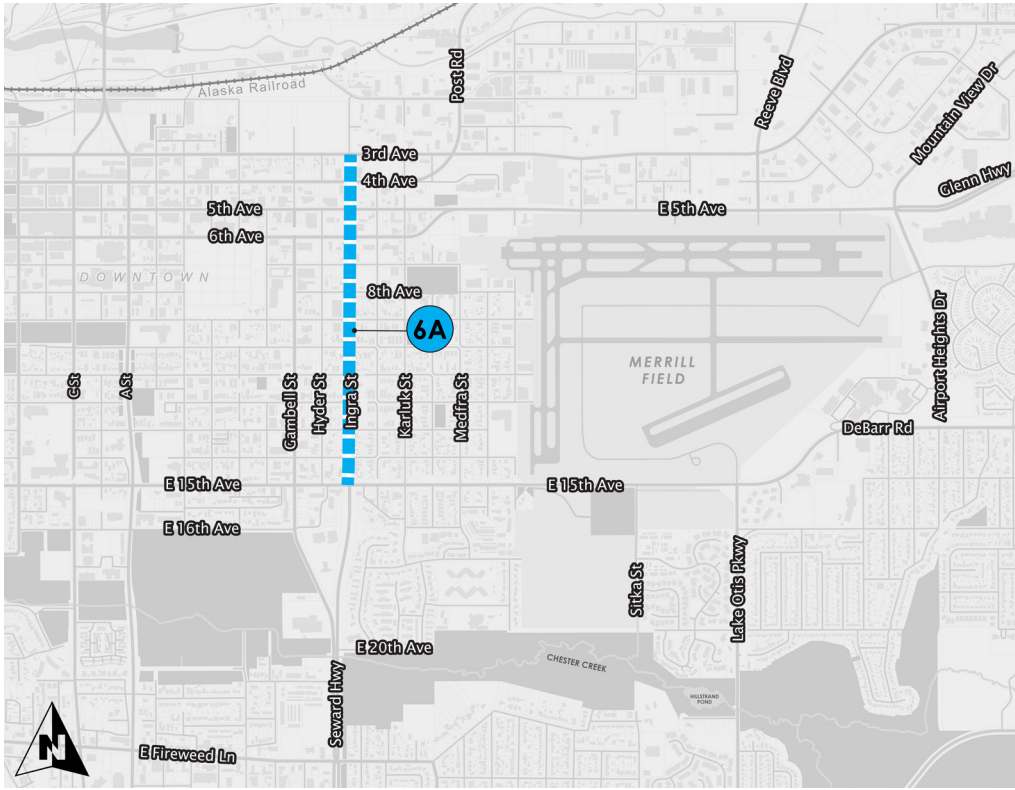
Project 6 builds upon the interim improvements made in Project 1 by fully transforming Gambell and Ingra Streets into complete streets that prioritize safety, multimodal access, and neighborhood livability. This project is not recommended until the regional parkway connection between the Seward and Glenn Highways (Project 5) is complete. Only when NHS traffic has viable alternate routes, can the function of Gambell and Ingra Streets be safely and effectively reimagined.

Project 6 would be implemented as two projects:

- **6A: Ingra Street Two-Way Conversion (Complete Street)**
- **6B: Gambell Street Two-Way Conversion (Main Street)**.

In **Project 6A Ingra Street Two-Way Conversion (Complete Street)**, Ingra Street would be reconstructed as a three-lane, two-way street—one lane in each direction with a center, two-way, left-turn lane—with a 30-mph speed limit, and similar multimodal and streetscape enhancements (see **Figure 46**).

Figure 46: Phasing Plan: Phase 6A Ingra Street Two-Way Conversion (Complete Street)



PHASE LEGEND

Phase 6A

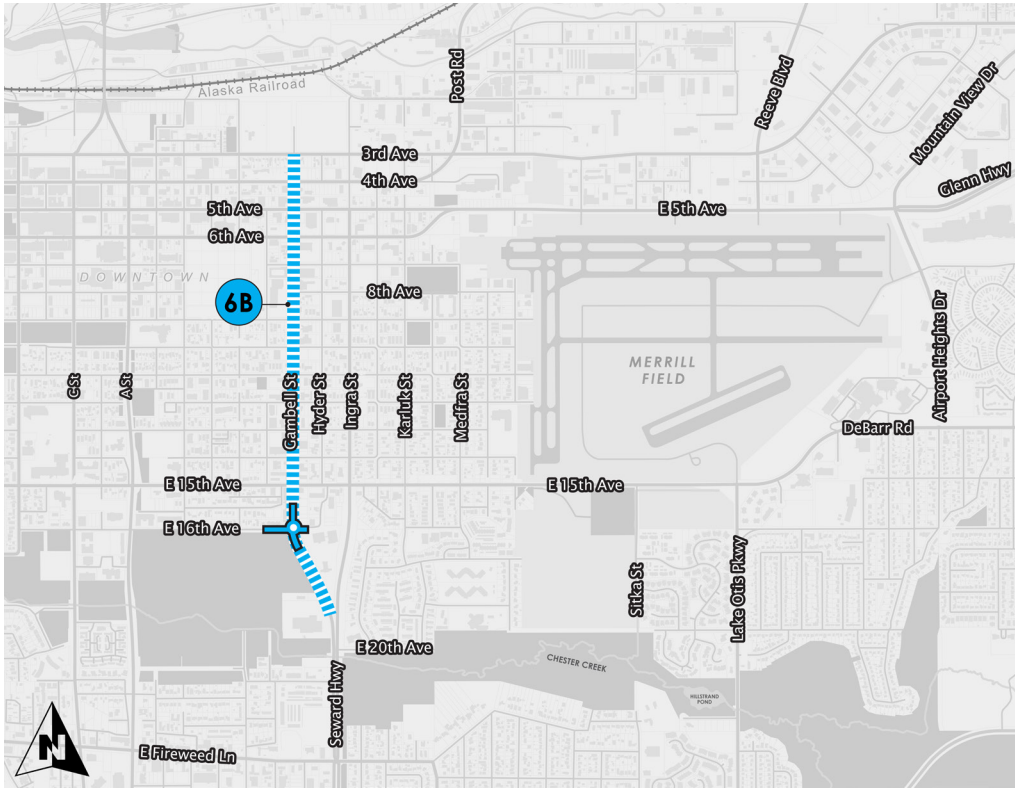
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Project 6B Gambell Street Two-Way Conversion (Main Street), would reduce Gambell Street to a two-lane, two-way street—one lane in each direction—with a 30-mph speed limit. The space reclaimed from the removed lanes would be repurposed for sidewalks, protected bike lanes, parking, or landscaping, all within the existing 60-foot ROW (see **Figure 47**).

This transformation would significantly calm traffic, improve safety for all users, and support the Fairview neighborhood's vision for a more walkable, livable environment. It would also allow Fairview to reclaim and transform the land uses along these corridors, which have long been constrained by wide, high-speed streets dominated by regional through-traffic. By restoring these streets to a neighborhood-serving scale, the project supports economic development and revitalization efforts that have been hampered for decades. The streets can once again function as local assets—supporting small businesses, housing, and community life—rather than dividing the neighborhood as the eight-lane couplet currently does.

Figure 47: Phasing Plan: Phase 6B Gambell Street Two-Way Conversion (Main Street)



PHASE LEGEND

Phase 6B

The graphics presented here are high-level iterative interpretations and are not to scale. The roadway line weights are not indicative of ROW limits or actual road width.

Figure 48: Visualizations showing Gambell Street Two-Way Conversion (Main Street) and Ingra Street (Complete Street)





6

Project 6 supports the project purpose by enhancing safety, accessibility, and livability for all users, particularly pedestrians and bicyclists. It improves safety through traffic calming and complete street design, and promotes community livability and economic development by enabling land-use transformation and restoring neighborhood-serving street functions (see **Figure 48**). This project also strengthens community cohesion by reconnecting the Fairview neighborhood and aligning with local plans for a more people-centered street environment.

7

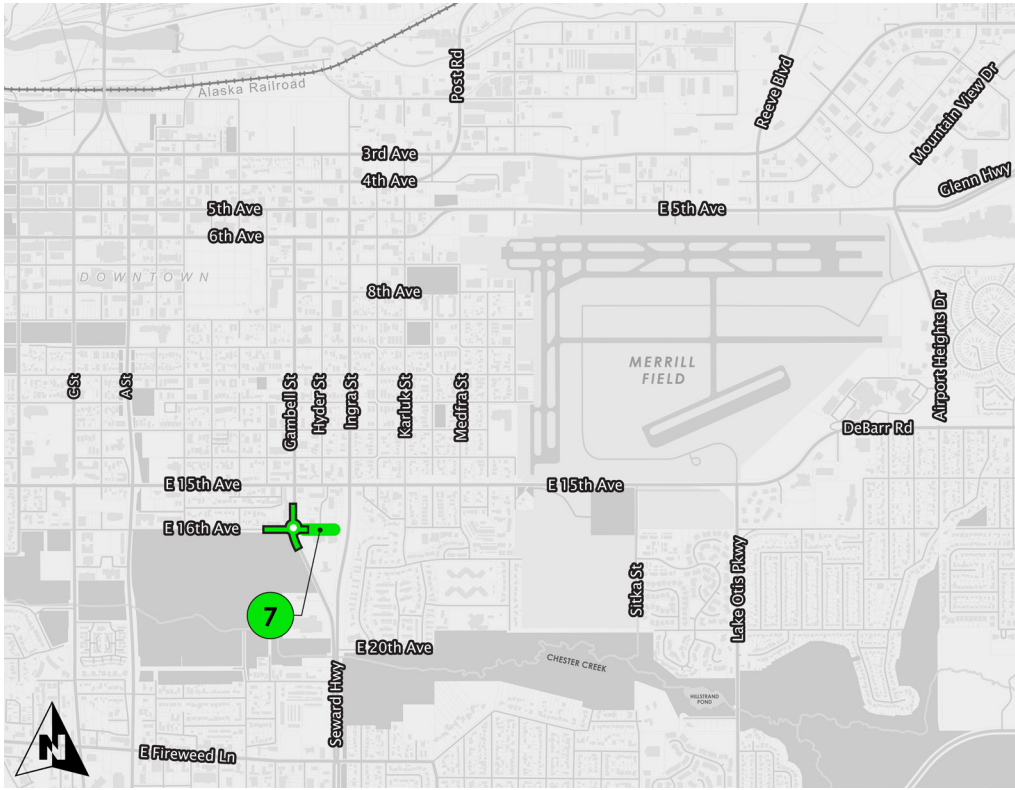
Project 7: 16th Avenue Extension

Project 7 extends 16th Avenue eastward to Ingra Street, creating a new east-west connection that improves access and circulation in the Fairview area (**Figure 49**). This project must follow the completion of Project 5D as it ties into the roundabout at Ingra Street that would be constructed during that phase. However, it can be implemented at any point afterward, offering flexibility in scheduling and funding. The project includes a new roundabout at the intersection of 16th Avenue and Gambell Street.

This new connection enhances access to key destinations such as the Sullivan Arena and Mulcahy Stadium, improving traffic operations during events. It also provides an alternative route to A and C Streets farther west, helping to divert traffic heading Downtown or to the POA, away from Gambell and Ingra Streets, thereby reducing congestion and improving neighborhood livability.

Project 7 supports the project purpose by improving mobility and accessibility for both local and regional users, particularly during high-demand events. It addresses the need to reduce conflicting travel functions by offering alternative routing for regional traffic, improves safety through modern roundabout design and traffic calming, and promotes community livability by reducing pressure on neighborhood streets and enhancing access to community amenities. The project also contributes to community cohesion by reinforcing the transition from regional to local travel environments.

Figure 49: Phasing Plan: Phase 7 (16th Avenue Extension)



PHASE LEGEND

Phase 7

The graphics presented here are high-level iterative interpretations and are not to scale. The roadway line weights are not indicative of ROW limits or actual road width.

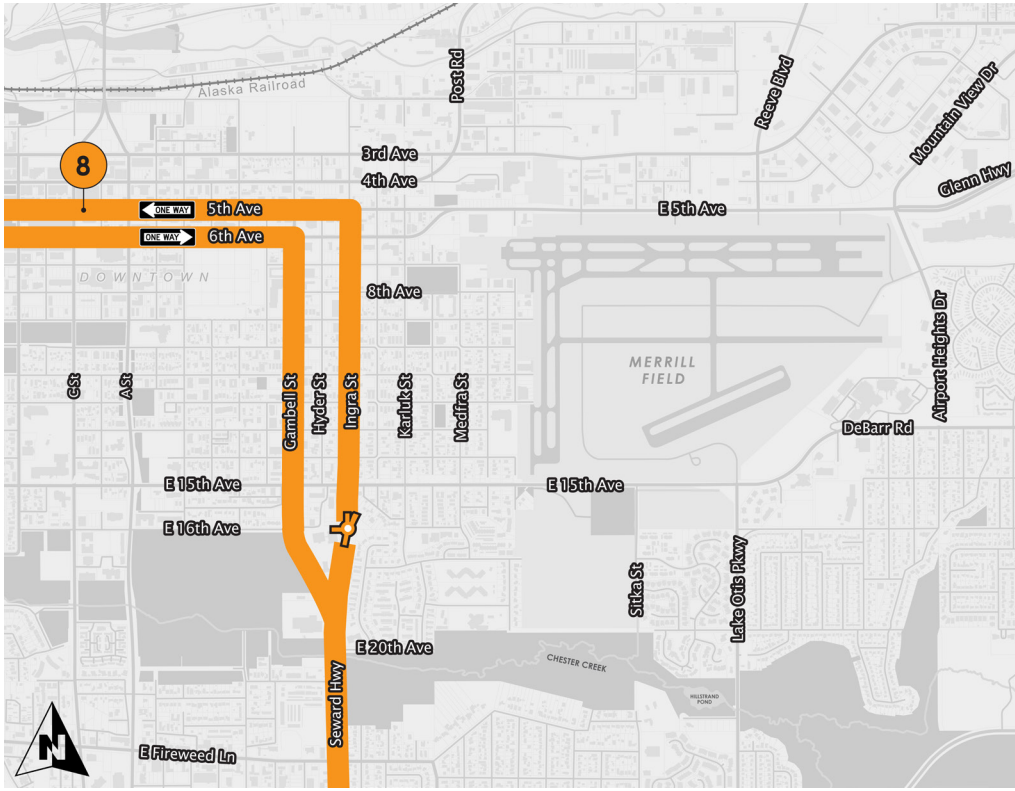
8

Project 8: Downtown/Fairview/U-MED Rapid Transit Implementation

Project 8 Downtown/Fairview/U-MED Rapid Transit Implementation the Downtown/Midtown/U-MED Rapid Transit is a proposed enhancement to the Project 3 transit service (see **Figure 50**). The rapid transit system would offer frequent service and incorporate bus rapid transit-style elements. By improving access to jobs, healthcare, and shopping, and reducing reliance on single-occupant vehicles, the route would support economic revitalization, enhance mobility, and foster greater community cohesion and livability.

While this project could be implemented at any point during this PEL's implementation, its success would be significantly strengthened by integrating transit-supportive streetscape and roadway design features into the corridor's planned upgrades—specifically, the redesigns of 5th and 6th Avenues (Project 9) and Gambell and Ingra Streets (Project 6). Recommended enhancements could include dedicated bus lanes, transit signal priority, upgraded shelters, pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, and multimodal connections such as protected bike lanes and mobility hubs. These elements would improve rider experience, operational efficiency, and safety, while reinforcing the route's role in advancing equitable, accessible, and sustainable urban transportation.

Figure 50: Phasing Plan: Phase 8 Downtown/Fairview/U-MED Rapid Transit Implementation



PHASE LEGEND

Phase 8

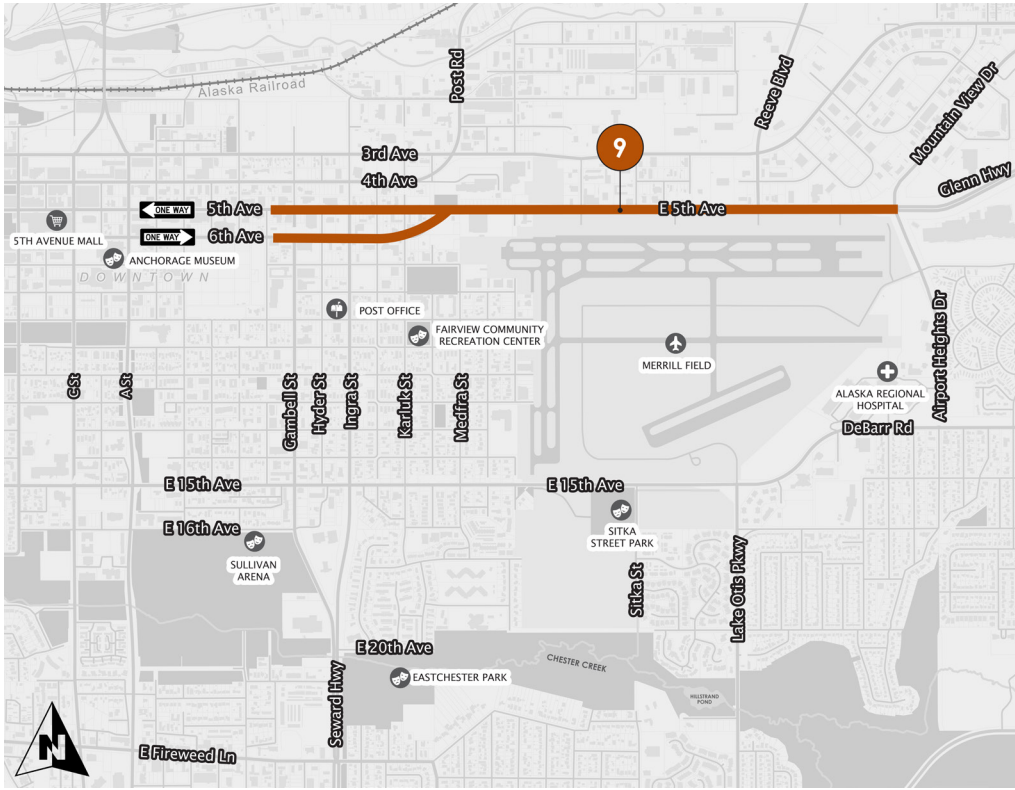
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Project 9: 5th-6th Avenue Lane Drops and Complete Street

Project 9 5th-6th Avenue Lane Drops and Complete Street implements a complete streets redesign of 5th and 6th Avenues, as identified in the 2050 MTP. From L to Medfra Streets, 5th and 6th Avenues operate as a one-way couplet, each currently with three lanes. This project would reduce each street to two lanes, reallocating space for protected bike lanes, upgraded pedestrian infrastructure, and potential greenscaping and urban tree planting (see **Figure 51**).

Figure 51: Phasing Plan: Phase 9—5th-6th Avenue Lane Drops and Complete Street



PHASE LEGEND

Phase 9

The graphics presented here are high-level iterative interpretations and are not to scale. The roadway line weights are not indicative of ROW limits or actual road width.

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From Medfra Street to Airport Heights Drive, where the couplet currently merges into a six-lane arterial, the project would reduce the corridor to four lanes—two in each direction—again using the reclaimed space to implement complete street features (see **Figure 52**). This transformation would create a more balanced, multimodal corridor from Downtown to East Anchorage.

However, this PEL study recommends that this project not be implemented until additional study has been performed, showing that 5th and 6th Avenues be reconfigured without compromising regional mobility. At that point, the function of these corridors can shift from high-capacity regional routes to more comfortable, pedestrian-oriented, urban streets.

Project 9 supports the purpose by enhancing safety, accessibility, and livability for non-motorized users along a key urban corridor that bisects northern Fairview. It improves safety through traffic calming and complete street design; and promotes community livability and economic development by creating a more walkable, attractive, and connected urban environment that can act as a gateway from the Glenn Highway into Downtown.

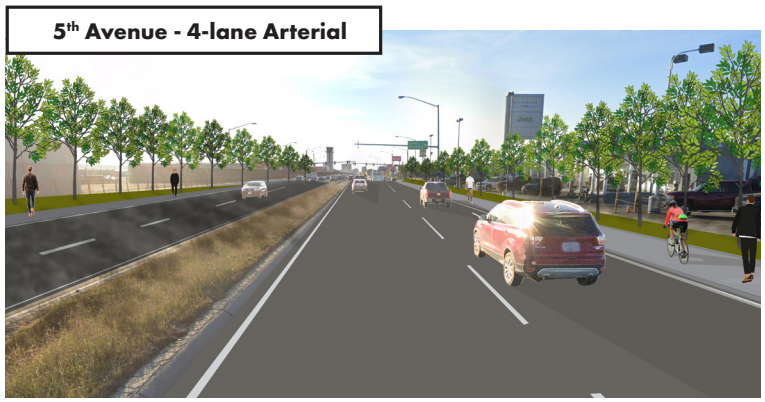


Figure 52: Visualization showing 5th Avenue Lane Drops and Complete Street

Conclusion

Together, these projects form a comprehensive, flexible, and forward-looking strategy to improve mobility, safety, accessibility, and livability across the PEL's study area. Each project has been carefully sequenced to ensure it delivers independent utility while contributing to the broader vision of a connected, multimodal system linking the Seward and Glenn Highways. The phasing logic reflects a deliberate balance—early projects provide immediate community benefits and system relief, while later phases build on that foundation to complete critical regional connections and enable transformative local improvements.

Importantly, this plan supports affordable and fundable implementation by breaking the Fairview Bypass corridor into manageable, standalone projects that can be programmed and constructed incrementally, over about a decade. This approach allows for strategic investment aligned with funding availability, community priorities, and system performance goals, while maintaining flexibility to adapt to future needs. As a whole, the phasing plan represents a practical and visionary path forward to satisfying the purpose and need established for the PEL study.



6 Linkage to NEPA and Next Steps

6.0 Linkage to NEPA and Next Steps

How PEL Findings Can Inform the NEPA Process

The results of PEL studies can be used to inform and streamline the NEPA process by identifying issues, needs, and potential alternatives early in project development. When appropriately documented and accepted by lead agencies, data and decisions from the planning phase—such as purpose and need, preliminary alternatives, and community input—can be carried forward into NEPA, reducing duplication of effort and accelerating decision making. This integration supports a more efficient, transparent process, improves coordination with stakeholders, and helps avoid delays by addressing potential environmental and community concerns early on.

Decisions Made and Data Developed During this PEL Study

This PEL study has developed the following planning products that can be used in subsequent NEPA processes.

Purpose and Need

DOT&PF developed a Purpose and Need Statement (see Chapter 2) that documents the problems to be solved and the objectives it hopes to achieve with the development of the recommended projects (Chapter 5). The Purpose and Need Statement is supported by the following documentation:

- **Appendix D**: *System Performance Memorandum*
- **Appendix E**: *Origin-Destination Study Memorandum*
- **Appendix F**: *Traffic Forecast Technical Memorandum*
- **Appendix G**: *Pedestrian and Bicycle Study*
- **Appendix H**: *Purpose and Need Statement*

Basic Description of the Environmental Setting

DOT&PF developed a summary of the environmental conditions to support the PEL study evaluation. The environmental setting can also be used to jump start the NEPA evaluation. A summary of the environmental setting is found in Chapter 3 and is supported with more details in the following appendices:

- **Appendix D:** *System Performance Memorandum*
- **Appendix J**: *A Basic Description of the Environmental Setting Report*

Identification of the General Travel Corridor and Mode(s)

DOT&PF recommends a mix of multimodal improvements that include roadways, transit, and non-motorized facilities. The recommended travel corridor to supplement the connection of the Seward and Glenn Highways is the Fairview Bypass route. The associated port connection will be determined by the recommended POA Freight Routes Reconnaissance Engineering Study, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness and benefits from the Fairview Bypass connection. The recommendations are summarized in Chapter 5 and details are available in:

- **Appendix M**: *Level 2 Screening and Recommendations Report*

Preliminary Screening of Alternatives and Elimination of Unreasonable Alternatives

This PEL study evaluated a full range of alternatives that included the No Action Alternative, the MTP 2050 Alternative (as adopted with no additional improvements), the MTP + Alternative (a transit and demand management-focused alternative that adds enhancements to MTP 2050), seven freeway connection alternatives, and three parkway alternatives. The development and screening of alternatives was completed using agreed-upon criteria and considerable stakeholder outreach.

DOT&PF eliminated freeway connection alternatives and Parkway Alternative D through the Chester Creek Greenbelt in Level 1 screening. Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 were eliminated in Level 2 screening. The alternatives development and screening process is summarized in Chapter 4 and is supported by the following documentation:

- **Appendix I**: *Recommended Alternative Selection Criteria Technical Memo*
- **Appendix K**: *Detailed Alternatives Report*
- **Appendix L**: *Alternatives Refinement and Initial Screening*
- **Appendix M**: *Level 2 Screening and Recommendations Report*
- **Appendix O**: *Renderings*

Preliminary Identification of Environmental Impacts

DOT&PF evaluated the recommended alternative using environmental criteria in the Level 2 screening, which is summarized in Chapter 4. Those impacts provide a preliminary (planning-level) evaluation of potential environmental impacts, which will aid in jumpstarting the NEPA process. Additionally, key issues that may still need further evaluation during NEPA are identified in Chapter 5. The following document provides additional details on potential environmental impacts:

- **Appendix M**: *Level 2 Screening and Recommendations Report*

Recommendations for Study Area Improvements and Phasing

Based on Level 1 and Level 2 screening and public as well as agency input, DOT&PF identified Alternative 5 Fairview Bypass as the recommended improvement scenario, which includes a mix of roadway, non-motorized, and transit improvements. The recommended improvements and phasing are summarized in Chapter 5 and supported by the following documentation, which provides additional details.

- **Appendix M**: *Level 2 Screening and Recommendations Report*

Next Steps

This PEL study identified transportation improvements through a process that evaluated potential alternatives and considered environmental, community, and cost factors. The next step toward implementation is to adopt the recommendations into the AMATS MTP. To do this, the study recommendations must go through the AMATS Technical and Policy Committees, who will determine if the recommendations align with regional goals and demonstrate consistency with the MTP's performance measures, fiscal constraints, and public priorities. Adoption into the MTP involves coordination with AMATS staff and committee members, additional public review, and a formal amendment or update to the MTP to include the recommended projects.

Once included in the MTP, specific projects can be prioritized for near-term funding and implementation through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a shorter-range document that programs projects for funding within a 4- to 5-year window. Projects added to the TIP must have secured or anticipated funding. With a project in the TIP, DOT&PF will add projects to the Alaska Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, which allows design funding to be obligated and the NEPA process to begin for projects using federal funding on the NHS. The planning and environmental groundwork laid during the PEL study should streamline NEPA documentation and decision making. During the NEPA phase, additional public involvement, engineering, and environmental analysis will occur. NEPA approval serves as the critical milestone to allow the project to advance into ROW acquisition, final design, and ultimately construction. Together, these steps create a path from planning to project delivery, turning a community vision into real-world transportation improvements.



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