



Sterling Safety Corridor Improvements Public Open House No. 1

Wednesday, June 26, 2024, 5-7 p.m., at the Soldotna Public Library
Community Room

Open House Summary.

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) and QAP, with DOWL and Stephanie Queen Consulting, hosted the first public open house for the Sterling Safety Corridor Improvements Milepost (MP) 82.5 to 94 project on Wednesday, June 26, 2024, in the Soldotna Public Library Community Room. Attendees began arriving for the event at 4:30 p.m. The meeting format was open house style, with no formal presentation. Attendees signed in and received informational materials including a Fact Sheet and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ). The open house featured project boards displaying key information such as the project area, timeline, crash statistics, traffic data, and potential design alternatives. Large roll plots of the project corridor were located on tables for attendees to discuss specific area concerns and document their comments. Project contacts were available for inquiries, while aerial roll plots invited attendees to pinpoint and discuss specific concerns within the project corridor. This event provided a platform for public engagement and feedback on the project's development.

The open house event was a significant gathering, drawing in a diverse group of over 80 attendees. This included members of the project team, interested members of the public, and elected officials who have a stake in the project's outcomes.

Question and Comments Summary.

The following comments summary is based on discussions with project team members, comments submitted in writing via comment forms, comments noted on the roll plots, and emails following the open house.

Safety, Traffic, and Congestion

- Concerns that improvements will increase highway noise and light pollution.
- Request to reduce the speed limit to 35 miles per hour (mph) north of Whistle Hill.
- Support for a separated multi-use path for pedestrians and bikers.
 - Request to provide access to pathway from both sides of the highway.
- Consider lighting the corridor to reduce vehicle and animal accidents.
- Comment that access to the Sterling State Weigh Station is a difficult maneuver for trucks and that trucks often stop traffic to get into the scale.



- Concerns with congested intersections and turning patterns at:
 - Scout Lake Loop Road
 - Robinson Loop Road
 - St Theresa Road
 - Deville Road
 - Murray Lane
 - Solid Rock Road
 - Birch Ridge Golf Course
 - Mackey Lake Road
- Concerns with parking to access Scout Lake.
- Concerns with access at Whisper Lake Street.
- Concerns with large dust clouds from all terrain vehicle (ATV) use.
- Concerns with lane striping visibility in the winter.

Corridor Design

- Request to move the traffic light by Fred Meyer's up the hill.
- Support of the five-lane roadway with center two-way left turn lane.
- Concerns with a five-lane roadway with center two-way left turn lane.
- Support of four-lane divided highway with depressed median.
- Concerns with a four-lane divided highway with depressed median.
- Request for more dedicated turn lanes along the corridor, including St Theresa Road.
- Request for a frontage road to be placed on state land as far away from houses as possible.
- Request for no median at Nina Robinson Avenue.
- Request for a traffic light at:
 - Forest Lane/Jim Dahler Road
 - On Par Lane
 - Mackey Lake Road
- Concerns with water from the highway flooding properties near Schultz Street.
- Request to improve the line of sight when heading southbound and turning left at Boundary Street.
- Request for a bridge over Soldotna Creek near Mackey Lake Road.

Maintenance and Operations

- Request for improved snow removal and additional maintenance funding.
- Concerns that if the highway is widened that snow removal efforts will push snow up onto houses.

General

- Requests for a formal presentation during the public meeting.
- Concerns with additional property loss from potential highway expansion.



Public and Agency Notice:

Project stakeholders were notified of the open house via the following methods:

- Newspaper advertisement in the Peninsula Clarion on June 8 and June 22, 2024.
- Radio advertisement on KSRM Kenai from June 17 to June 26, 2024.
- Radio advertisement on KDLL Soldotna from June 19 to June 25, 2024.
- Post card mailed on June 12, 2024.
- Email invites on June 11 and June 24, 2024.
- Facebook post from Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities on June 17, 2024.
- State of Alaska online public notice on May 28, 2024.

Action Items and Next Steps:

- Update FAQ Sheet based on comments and questions from the public.
- Post video presentation and Open House No. 1 Summary to the project website.
- Distribute public comments to the project team and respond to concerns.