



Airport Way/Steese Expressway Intersection Reconstruction Project

Project No. 0002(385)/NFHWY00245

Frequently Asked Questions

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1. What is happening at the intersection?

The Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) is pursuing safety improvements at the intersection of Gaffney Road, Airport Way, Richardson Highway, and the Steese Expressway (GARS) in Fairbanks, Alaska. This project is being developed under the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP).

2. What happened to the TUDI and DDI Interchange concepts?

Based on public feedback, requests to minimize property impacts, and responsible stewardship of budget resources, DOT&PF worked to identify two cost-effective concepts that still meet the goal of safety and traffic flow at the intersection while also taking the public and agency requests into consideration. Additionally, the new concepts considered offer decreased construction timelines and maximum flexibility for future options.

3. Why weren't those options considered before?

Interchange concepts were the primary alternatives initially being considered and analyzed. After public meetings, evaluation of impacts, results of the noise study, and budgetary considerations, the project team identified two new options that meet the desired project outcomes.

4. What are the two new concepts?

The two concepts considered are called "Continuous Flow Intersection (CFI)" and "Hybrid Continuous Flow intersection with Median U Turn (CFI-MUT)." These alternatives have been tested and proven during snowy conditions in several states such as Utah and Michigan.

5. Are these options safe? Do they meet the project goal of safety?

The CFI and CFI-MUT directly address the safety issues by minimizing potential conflict points within the intersection. Additionally, these concepts can be built more quickly than an interchange since they do not require a bridge.

6. Why do these options look so complicated?

From a map or bird's eye view, the CFI and CFI-MUT do look complex. However, travelers will be driving one route at a time. Drivers will also be assisted with signage, striping, and design features that will clearly lead drivers and pedestrians through the intersection. DOT&PF will conduct a driver awareness campaign prior to opening the intersection for locals and will work with mapping companies (Apple, Google, Garmin, etc.) to provide accurate navigation instructions for tourists.

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7. When will this happen?

Construction is tentatively scheduled for 2022, pending available funding.

8. What is the cost?

The project is about 90% federally funded with a state match. Construction cost estimates are still being developed, but the CFI and CFI-MUT cost about 1/3 of the cost for the interchange options. Project funding is allocated under the federally-funded Highway Safety Improvement Program.

9. What will happen to the bike path?

DOT&PF is designing a bike path from the intersection of Badger Road and the Old Richardson Highway to the intersection of Airport Way/Gaffney Road. This will connect the Badger Road area with the existing bike path that extends along the Chena River north of the proposed intersection. This project will coordinate with the bike path project to provide safe and efficient bicycle and pedestrian travel in the area of the intersection.

10. How can I learn more?

Visit the project website: www.GARSinterchange.com

Email: info@GARSinterchange.com