



# Public Comment Response Summary as of April 11, 2018

HSIP: Parks Highway MP 305-325 Reconstruction  
Project No. Z606570000/0A45028

The following document summarizes the public scoping comments received by email, comment sheet, verbally, and phone by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) for the Parks Highway MP 305-325 Reconstruction Project; from March 14, 2016 to April 11, 2018. A public meeting was held of February 15, 2018 at the Nenana Community Civic Center at 723 North A Street, Nenana, Alaska. 26 People signed in. The team explained and answered questions about the proposed action to be undertaken by ADOT&PF. Meeting details can be found in the meeting summary. The majority of the comments outlined in the table below were in response to the February 15 public meeting and the preceding outreach materials.

Comment Category	Comment	Response
Curves	The curves at MP 316 are hazardous. Two back-to-back curves at this location are always icy and are the site for a lot of accidents and rollovers.	The curves at MP 316 will be realigned to meet current design standards for curvature and grade with the preferred alternative.
Curves	The curves at MP 320, 321, and 322 are a hazard and fixing them has been a long time coming.	The preferred alternative will improve the curves and grades in the MP 321 area to meet current design standards.
Drainage Issues	There are numerous areas of poor drainage that impact the highway.	Culverts will be added and replaced throughout the project area to improve drainage.
Drainage Issues	Expansion cracks seem to be getting worse with the warmer/wetter falls, and are a hazard during winter.	The proposed design will ensure sufficient non-frost susceptible material beneath the pavement to minimize the presence of cracking. In addition, improved asphalt products will be used, similar to the recent passing lanes project south of MP 305, which have been shown to crack less in cold temperatures.
Frost Heaves	Frost heaving occurs within the project area, and particularly between MP 315.5-316.	A detailed geotechnical investigation will be conducted after the environmental stage to identify areas where subexcavation is needed to reduce frost heaving. The area noted has also been identified as having insufficient drainage, which can also

Comment Category	Comment	Response
		lead to frost heave and will be improved with this project.
Grade	Reduce the proposed 4% grade at MP 313 by cutting the top of the hill off.	The MP 313 area will be reconstructed to ensure adequate sight distance for driveways and intersecting roads. Grades have been minimized to the extent practical to construct the roadway within the existing right-of-way.
MP 314	There is insufficient sight distance due to the knob at MP 314 that has led to fatal crashes and near misses.	Sight distance will be improved at MP 314 through re-design of the vertical alignment in this area, flattening backslopes, and clearing trees as needed.
Passing Lanes	The proposed passing lanes between MP 313.3 and 315.5 overlap with an area of high driveway density and agricultural development. This may create conflicts with speeding vehicles and slow moving agricultural and turning traffic.	The passing lanes have been revised to better match the area setting. The passing lane has been reduced to a southbound only passing lane beginning at the rest area to accommodate slow moving vehicles exiting the rest area or desiring to turn at the driveways along the west side of the highway from the rest area to MP 313. The added lane will also improve sight distance for drivers making left turns out of the driveways.
Passing Lanes	Passing lanes are needed in the project area.	Passing lanes will be added with this project.
Passing Lanes	Consider adjusting the MP 313.3 to 315.5 passing lanes to include the 4% climb northbound around MP 313. Moving the passing lane section start would improve traffic flow and safety.	The northbound passing lane has been adjusted to begin near the start of the 4% grade and continue as a truck climb lane until grades level off near MP 319.

Comment Category	Comment	Response
Passing Lanes	Remove or adjust the MP 313.3 to 315.5 passing lane to not include the Little Goldstream Creek Bridge and area of high driveway density to save money.	The passing lanes have been revised to better match the area setting. The passing lane has been reduced to a southbound only passing lane beginning at the rest area to accommodate slow moving vehicles exiting the rest area or desiring to turn at the driveways along the west side of the highway from the rest area to MP 313. The added lane will also improve sight distance for drivers making left turns out of the driveways.
Paving	Please pave private driveways that open onto the Parks Highway within the project area, if possible.	All driveway aprons that intersect the Parks Highway will be paved with this project as a means to protect the Parks Highway pavement.
Pullouts	Consider the pullouts at MP 90 of the Parks Highway for examples of what could be done within the agricultural area.	The passing lanes have been revised to better match the area setting. The passing lane has been reduced to a southbound only passing lane beginning at the rest area to accommodate slow moving vehicles exiting the rest area or desiring to turn at the driveways along the west side of the highway from the rest area to MP 313. The added lane will also improve sight distance for drivers making left turns out of the driveways.
Pullouts	There are only 2 or 3 pullouts for north bound traffic and they are not real truck friendly. Recently the State put in a south bound pullout on a top of Skinny Dick which is a nice addition. There may be a place on the North bound side for a similar pullout. There is also a need for a pullout at the top of Bonanza on North bound lane to remove tire change in winter time.	Existing pullouts will be reconstructed and/or relocated to better accommodate truck traffic. A new pullout is also being constructed near MP 319 opposite the existing scenic view turnout to accommodate northbound vehicles. In addition, the project will improve grades and curvature to improve drivability and traction.  The Bonanza area is outside the project limits.

Comment Category	Comment	Response
Realignment	<p>Realign the Parks Highway behind the agricultural lands to eliminate conflicts between agricultural traffic and Parks Highway traffic.</p>	<p>Crashes in this area (MP 313-316) can be mitigated with minor realignments and grade improvements to provide sight distance and meet current design standards, as shown in the proposed design. A realignment of the magnitude requested could result in significant environmental impacts due to the large quantity of wetlands along the backside of the agricultural land, add new Alaska Railroad crossings, and increase maintenance costs due to increased lane-miles and poor subsurface conditions. The Parks Highway is an Interstate highway, and the DOT's primary responsibility for Interstate highways is to ensure the mobility and safety for the traveling public.</p>
Realignment	<p>The Parks was built and designed, in the early 70's, when the speed limit was 55 mph. The speed was raised to 65 mph years ago, so it could use some upgrades. Most corners between Nenana and Fairbanks need more "super" in them for the higher speeds.</p>	<p>The proposed design will improve roadway curvature by bringing all curves into compliance with current design standards for the posted speed.</p>
Recreation	<p>A four-lane highway between MP 314-316 would increase risk to Nenana students accessing a cross country ski trailhead at MP 315 (west side of road).</p>	<p>The passing lanes have been revised to better match the area setting. The passing lane has been reduced to a southbound only passing lane beginning at the rest area to accommodate slow moving vehicles exiting the rest area or desiring to turn at the driveways along the west side of the highway from the rest area to MP 313. The added lane will also improve sight distance for drivers making left turns out of the driveways.</p>
Recreation	<p>New trail system is currently located along the powerline within the agricultural area.</p>	<p>The project will not impact the powerline in this area.</p>
Rest Areas	<p>Closed rest areas during the winter are being used without the facilities being open due to the rest area signs on the highway.</p>	<p>We have referred this comment to our local M&amp;O staff.</p>

Comment Category	Comment	Response
Rest Areas	The rest area at MP 315 is seen as a noise, pollution, crime, trespassing, and loose dog nuisance. It is also in a dangerous location. Its seasonal closure results in human waste entering Little Goldstream Creek, which is used for garden irrigation. It also reduces the potential for economic benefits of travelers using the public rest area and visitor center in Nenana.	Alterations to the existing rest area are not within the scope of this project.
Seeding	Do not use foxtail grass for right-of-way seeding.	The Department requires certified weed free seed, which would include an exclusion for foxtail grass. Foxtail often comes in after project seeding through natural processes as it is more resilient to life in gravelly soil than most grasses.
Sight Lines	Encroaching willows need to be controlled.	The proposed project will clear trees and brush to provide sight distance.
Speeding	Consider reducing the speed limit in two project areas: MP 313.3-315.5 area and 313.3 and 317 to reduce conflicts with turning vehicles.	Speed limit reductions are not typically part of capital projects, but can be requested by local governments through our Traffic & Safety section. Typically a speed study is conducted, and speeds are set based on the 85 <sup>th</sup> percentile speed.
Traffic Patterns	There are a lot of slow moving agricultural vehicles that cross and utilize the highway within the project area.	DOT has a permit process for truck crossings signs if this is a regular event that drivers need advanced warning for.