

# **APPENDIX O**

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## **Community Focus Group Meeting #2 Summary**

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# WORKSHOP SUMMARY- DRAFT



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Prepared by:	Taylor Horne, HDR
Project:	Egan Drive and Yandukin Intersection Improvements Project – SFHWY00079
Meeting Subject:	Community Focus Group Workshop #2
Meeting Date/ Time:	Wednesday, July 01, 2020 9:00 am – 12:00 pm
Location:	WebEx
Meeting Website:	<a href="https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/708d8eda417f44bfb3e73a06c2113206">https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/708d8eda417f44bfb3e73a06c2113206</a>

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Group Members and Attendees:	PROJECT TEAM	CFG MEMBERS
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**Bold:** in attendance

**Jim Brown, DOT&PF**  
**Joanne Schmidt, DOT&PF**  
Ben Storey, DOT&PF  
**Marie Heidemann, DOT&PF**  
Verne Skagerberg, DOT&PF  
**David Epstein, DOT&PF**  
**Christy Gentemann, DOT&PF**  
Ryan Bare, DOT&PF  
**Emily Haynes, DOT&PF**  
Jill Taylor, DOT&PF  
**Joseph Galgano, DOT&PF**  
Sam Dapcevich, DOT&PF  
**Doug Kolwaite, DOT&PF**  
**Taylor Horne, HDR**  
**Gina McAfee, HDR**  
**Chase Quinn, HDR**  
**Aurah Landau, HDR**  
**Josie Wilson, HDR**  
**Jeanne Bowie, Kinney Engineering**  
**Michael Horntvedt, Parametrix**

OTHER ATTENDEES

**Representative Andi Story**  
**Senator Jesse Kiehl**  
**Cathy Schlingheyde, Office of Sen. Kiehl**  
**Mike Lesmann, DOT&PF**  
**Denise Guizio, Juneau Capital Transit**  
**Jerry Godkin, Juneau Airport**  
**David Blommer, Bicknell, Inc.**

**Scott Gray, DOT&PF**  
Sgt. Nick Zito, Alaska State Troopers  
**Trp. Christopher Umbs, Alaska State Troopers**  
Roscoe Bicknell IV, Bicknell, Inc.  
Richard Peterson, Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska  
William Ware, Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska  
Royal Hill, Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska  
John Hawkins, Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska  
**Michelle Hale, City and Borough of Juneau**  
**Richard Etheridge, City and Borough of Juneau**  
Ed Foster, City and Borough of Juneau  
**Hal Klum, City and Borough of Juneau**  
Alex Pierce, City and Borough of Juneau  
**Irene Gallion, City and Borough of Juneau**  
**Patty Wahto, City and Borough of Juneau**  
David Campbell, City and Borough of Juneau  
**Lt. Scott Erickson, City and Borough of Juneau**  
Mike Stoll, Fred Meyer  
**Charlie Williams, Juneau Chamber of Commerce**  
**Mike Satre, Juneau Chamber of Commerce**  
Mike Rose, Juneau Christian Center  
**Rob Welton, Juneau Freewheelers**

## Summary of Community Focus Group Workshop #2

### 1. Workshop Welcome, Roll Call, Housekeeping Items – Josie, Aurah

- Josie welcomed everybody to the second in the series of Community Focus Group (CFG) meetings to discuss progress on the Egan / Yandukin Intersection Improvements Project. She oriented attendees on how to navigate the workshop website and participate in the meeting. She held roll call and Aurah assisted individual participants with audio and visual challenges.

### 2. CFG Role Review – Jim

- On behalf of the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), Jim thanked CFG members for joining the workshop, said he would prefer to meet in person, and summarized that the role of the CFG is to:
  - Provide input to the Project Team on behalf of the entities you represent
  - Keep your workplaces, neighborhoods, organizations, and community groups informed of project progress
  - Serve as an ambassador for the project in the community

### 3. Agenda Review – Jim

- Jim provided an agenda overview for the workshop. Agenda items were:
  - Recent Work and Results from Public Outreach
  - Area and Data
  - Purpose and Need
  - Intersection Improvement Alternatives
  - Screening Criteria
  - Next Steps

### 4. Project Presentation – Taylor, Jim, Jeanne

- Taylor summarized stakeholder and public outreach efforts from winter 2019/2020.
  - The project is in the planning and public outreach phase. The Project Team is working to find the best improvement options for this intersection by examining:
    - Interim solutions that offer high-value, low-cost options to improve safety; and
    - Potential long-range solutions for the intersection and corridor
  - At the last CFG meeting in November, the Project Team presented traffic and accident data and the group workshopped the project purpose and need.
  - After that, the Project Team hosted a public meeting, an online open house, and a comment period ending in late December to ask people what they thought about the intersection.



- More than 100 people attended the public meeting, 168 people visit the online open house, and over 50 folks attended CFG and agency meetings. There was quite a bit of conversation on social media about the intersection as well.
- Jim highlighted public comments and explained the Highway Safety Improvement Plan (HSIP) nomination and process.
  - We've received lots of feedback, including 132 discreet comments. Many people highlighted safety and alternate routes as primary needs to meet when improving the intersection.
  - In response to the high interest in improving safety in the intersection area, DOT&PF recently submitted a funding request through the HSIP for a near-term, lower-cost project that can reduce the number and likelihood for serious crashes at the intersection.
- Jeanne explained the HSIP nomination.
  - People commented that when heading southbound and turning into Fred Meyer, they cannot tell if a northbound vehicle is in the right turn lane into Fred Meyer or in the right through lane.
    - Offsetting the right turn lane and placing reflective markers will help distinguish which lane northbound travelers are in.
  - We also heard people say they aren't confident that northbound vehicles turning into Fred Meyer will yield to southbound vehicles turning into Fred Meyer.
    - A concrete curb traffic island will be added so that it will not be a question if there is an open space available to you to complete your left turn across the two lanes of northbound traffic. It will help drivers make the turn with confidence.
  - Additionally, DOT&PF is proposing to adjust the left turn locations in both north and southbound directions to reduce the total width of pavement drivers must cross to complete the left turns.
  - The final component in the submitted HSIP nomination is lowering the posted speed limit to 45 miles per hour (mph) during the darker, poor-weather winter months. This is because both reduced visibility and roadway conditions have been identified as contributing to the number and severity of crashes.
- Jim added that the proposal must compete for funds, and the Egan / Yandukin intersection improvements project is continuing.
  - This HSIP nomination will be scored against other proposed safety improvements throughout the state. The Project Team will know in September/October whether or not the proposal is accepted.

- If funded, the HSIP nomination package would be moving in the next year, with the goal of finishing construction by fall 2022 at the earliest.
- HSIP implementation will also include coordination with local law enforcement and a public education campaign.
- Other identified needs such as alternative routes and bicycle and pedestrian improvements are not met by this smaller-scale HSIP project.
- Those will be addressed in the intersection improvement project Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) process that is ongoing.

- Discussion:

**Irene:** How will the HSIP nomination scenario relate to Mendenhall Loop, in consideration for the yield? This area shows a similar route, but it's still rough for folks driving. There is still a hesitation for turning. How do we make the drive for this when there is still a difficulty at the Mendenhall Loop intersection?

**Jeanne:** This does look like Mendenhall Loop with the short lane. It does have some congestion with the lane merging for drivers (left turners might not want to go to Fred Meyer and right turners might need to change lanes to go to Fred Meyer), but this focuses on showing the right turners that they need to yield to left turners, to alleviate some of that confusion.

**Michelle:** Is this proposal we are looking at relatively low cost?

**Jim:** Yes, this is looking at \$1.5M and is good for the HSIP proposal.

**David E.:** Yes, HSIP does not do very large projects like Sunny Point interchange, which was \$10M, and budget this year is \$65M and will need to be spread around other regions. This is relatively low and has a good chance of being funded.

**Question:** Is this a temporary or permanent fix?

**David E.:** This is an interim step for what comes out of the PEL study. This is something that is relatively low cost, and can be done relatively quickly.

**Jim:** This could become the long-term fix, but will depend on the effectiveness, as it will improve safety. But it will depend on what happens going through the rest of the PEL process, as other needs were identified for improvements.

**Sen. Jesse Kiel:** Will the seasonal speed limit change speed through signage alone, or will there be other physical elements that might change driver behavior?

**David E.:** The basic project will be signage, but the specifics on the nature of the signs and where they go will be discussed later.

**Michelle:** Will the seasonal speed limit be from the McDonald's intersection to Sunny Point both ways?

**David E.:** The 45-mph speed limit sign will start about 825 feet on the Juneau side of Egan-Yandukin and extend all the way to Loop Road. Not just to McDonald's.

**Michelle:** Would one option be to reduce speed November 2020 to January 2021 using those big signs that DOT&PF uses to announce highway work?

**Jim:** We are looking at it and have been discussing it over the last week; however, the HSIP nomination is submitted as a "package," so it's not yet known if the team can start using pieces of it prior to the outcome of the HSIP.

- Taylor finished the project update.
  - He explained that the Project Team has completed major work since November 2019 on Purpose and Need, alternatives, and screening.
  - He requested that the CFG members provide feedback on the alternatives and draft Level 1 screening criteria.

## 5. Area and Data – Taylor

- Taylor provided a short navigation tutorial on the area and data section of the website so people can review that information later on their own.

## 6. Purpose and Need – Michael H.

- Michael H. explained that the project Purpose and Need statement evolved in response to public comment.
- The primary purpose is to improve safety for all users at the intersection. Secondary purposes address creating route diversity, improve access for people walking, cycling, or using any other active transportation mode, and to maintain traffic flow through the area.
- Several other economic considerations were added as additional goals for the project.
- DOT&PF's Statewide Environmental office has approved the draft Purpose and Need. The language will officially remain a draft until it is adopted in a later environmental process used to develop a project.
- Discussion:

**Irene:** Appreciates the inclusion of land use. There's a possibility that there will be a Comprehensive Plan created at some point, which has been delayed due to budget cuts, but this might be helpful for melding land use issues with what DOT&PF is trying to accomplish.

**Michelle:** The information was captured very well; it previously seemed a bit convoluted, but this has captured it well.

**Rich:** So far it looks good.

**Scott E.:** No comments, looks good.

**Mike Satre:** Appreciates land use, as it is changing in this area.

## 7. Intersection Improvement Alternatives – Jeanne



- Over the last few months, the Egan / Yandukin Project Team has developed a draft range of 15 alternatives for improving the intersection and 6 design features called Compatible Elements that may overlay the alternatives.
- Many of the public comments on the project contained specific design suggestions. Those were included in the draft range of alternatives. The Project Team sometimes used more than one of these ideas in an alternative.
- The various design features and alternatives are grouped into types for review: Compatible Elements, Intersection, Closure, and Overpass/Interchange.
- Jeanne explained each of the six Compatible Elements that layer over alternatives: Travel Demand Management, Intelligent Transportation Systems, Flashing Intersection Ahead or Signal Ahead Sign, Median Crossover, Frontage Road to Nugget, and Grade Separated Connection between Yandukin Drive and Glacier Lemon Road.
- Discussion:

**Rep. Andi Story:** The non-motorized access makes me want to go back to the first option presented and ask, is there signage for non-motorized access at the McDonald's intersection, communicating that this is where you cross to a bike and pedestrian crossing, and Egan Drive is not a legal option to bike or walk. I know current signage, but I am thinking larger signage or some other way to get attention. The people I see on Egan walking—there have been few, but I have seen them—I always wonder if they are tourists.

**David:** I'm not sure if there will be larger signage for bikers and pedestrians, as there is already a place for them to cross. As a signalized intersection, Nugget has a marked crosswalk across Egan Drive, along with pedestrian signal ("Countdown") signal heads.

**Jeanne:** Alternatives that will be provided shortly will show more opportunities to cross, and it will be easier for them to cross.

**Irene:** How is the elevated bridge different than an overpass?

**Jeanne:** This would not allow access from the side roads onto Egan Drive or from Egan Drive onto the side roads.

**Denise:** I think the #5 Compatible Element would be the only option that would still give Fred Meyer service from Capital Transit without having to double back from Sunny Point. When there is an accident at the intersection, we end up having to turn around on private property to pick up passengers to go back inbound.

- Jeanne described how to read the graphics of the alternatives.
  - The upper right-hand corner has the three “needs” for the project. This shows the purpose met by each alternative. There is also a Compatible Element circle that shows which of the Compatible Elements could be included in the improvements.

- Click left and right through intersection alternative groups to see all alternatives. Click on the alternatives to see larger versions without the overlay text boxes.
- Jeanne then explained each alternative.
  - Intersection Alternatives
    - INT—1: No Build – HSIP Alternative Safety Improvements
    - INT—2: Partial Access Signalized Intersection
    - INT—3: Full Access Signalized Intersections
    - INT—4: Move Signalized Intersection from Glacier/Nugget to Egan / Yandukin Intersection

Example: If you're coming from downtown, you'd come to Egan / Yandukin and turn left to go toward the airport or housing back there, no longer being able to turn left at Nugget.
    - INT—5: Roundabout Intersection

This would be two lanes. Right now it is not designed for non-motorized access, but signals could be added for non-motorized access.

**Rep. Andi Story:** With a traffic signal at Yandukin, It seems like a long crossing time; would that hold up traffic if a pedestrian is crossing?

**Jeanne:** This cannot be done on its own, which is why it's a Compatible Element, and not just an alternative on its own.

**Jerry:** Removing the left turn at Nugget intersection will certainly increase traffic on Yandukin.

- INT—6: Two Signalized T-Intersections
- INT—7: Relocate Intersection to Southeast of Church

**Michelle:** For this alternative, what would be the access to the Bicknell property?

- INT—8: Diverted Left Turn Intersection

This is used more in the lower 48, but not in Alaska. This includes three lights, but if they are timed well, you would likely stop at only one of them. The main benefit is at the main intersection, to be able to travel at the same time. This is more efficient for traffic flow, but takes up more space.

**Rep. Andi Story:** It seems like a lot is going on for drivers to be aware of. It seems this would slow us all down.

**Michelle:** Though maybe slowing us all down is not such a bad thing.

**Jerry:** Alternative 8 looks like it swoops down considerably to the south onto airport property that is slated for development.

**Jim:** Things that have greater impact are going to score lower in the analysis.

- INT—9: Diverging Diamond Intersection Pair (Nugget and Yandukin Intersection)

If coming from downtown to go to the airport, you'd come to a signal at Glacier Lemon to cross to the other side of the road. Now, when we make the left turn, it would act like a right turn, so the vehicle does not cross traffic.

**Sen. Jesse Kiel:** The diverging diamond seems to favor northbound traffic to the airport and southbound traffic to Fred Meyer/Juneau Christian. Is that the greater demand?

**Jeanne:** It is a pretty big turning movement at Yandukin, and there is a lot of traffic coming from downtown and turning toward the airport. This hasn't been fully analyzed.

**Michelle:** I am just putting this in as a placeholder so I don't forget. Will you be able to provide easy Google search instructions that will direct people to this interactive document we are looking at? I want to bring this up at an Assembly meeting without having to say the actual URL, but I want to be sure people can quickly get to this. Maybe an email once it is posted, or maybe a big button on the page or something. Thanks.

**Sen. Jesse Kiel:** I don't have numbers, but I think through-traffic is the greatest need. (Turning movements are the greater safety issue, but this is not the bulk of the vehicles.) Consider the extremely high possibility that I'm misunderstanding how the diverging diamond would flow.

**Jeanne:** This does introduce a second signal to Egan, but it is a really efficient signal. If I come to the first signal, I only have to wait for one movement to go, then I have a second signal. If it can be timed correctly, I won't need to stop at the second signal, and if I do need to stop, I would only need to wait for one movement.

## ○ Closure Alternatives

- CLS—1: Southbound Left Closure at the E/Y Intersection and Two-Way Frontage Road to Nugget  
Extending Glacier Lemon all the way down to Nugget
- CLS—2: Median Closure and Two-Way Frontage Road to Nugget from E/Y Intersection
- CLS—3: Median Closure at E/Y Intersection, Interchange at Nugget Intersection

## ○ Interchange/Overpass Alternatives

- OVP—1: Single Point Urban Interchange

Ramp traffic all meets at one signal under the bridge. This allows all movements at this intersection.

**David** clarifies that a person going towards the airport could still go up to the Nugget intersection. **Jeanne** confirmed that intersection would not be altered.

- OVP—2: Diamond Interchange  
Egan Drive traffic goes over the intersection with no stop. All alternatives allow non-motorized traffic under the bridge.
- OVP—3: Split Diamond Interchange Pair (Nugget and Yandukin Intersections)

**Denise:** There would have to be a bus pulloff and pad for a shelter built on Glacier Lemon Road behind Fred Meyer on both sides if traffic is diverted there.

**Rich E.:** Good for now. Some of these are very complex.

**Michelle:** Wonderful designs with a lot of creativity, but will be interested in the relative cost of the alternatives, as this will play into the success of getting them in place.

**Rep. Andi Story:** When there is an interchange at an overpass, it will likely be more cost, but when doing this for the long run, the serious injuries and crashes that happen here will impact the high priority of which alternative to choose. Safety and pedestrian access is high priority.

## 8. Screening Criteria – Michael

- Michael described the screening process and the screening criteria developed based on the purpose and need.
  - Screening Process: 1. Describe Needs, 2. Develop Alternatives, 3. Screen Alternatives
  - Use a two-level screening system to analyze qualitative information.
  - Level 1 screening criteria are drafted for your comments:
    - Safety is the primary purpose for the project, so if one of the safety criteria is not met, the alternative will be screened out.
    - Providing alternate driving routes and improving non-motorized access are also important project purposes.
    - Other criteria that will be used for screening in Level 1 of the screening process are those related to economic growth, the environment, cost, and traffic operations.
- Discussion:

**Sen. Jesse Kiel:** are these in priority order?

**Michael:** Only in that the primary and secondary needs are the top two priorities. The two secondary needs are not in any specific order, and the other considerations are all equally weighted.

**Irene:** in regard to land use, several land owners are at the end of planned improvements. They might be impacted by some of these alternatives. Where will someone's current land use fit into the considerations? Is there a timeline of Level 1 and Level 2 evaluations so they know when they can evaluate to continue or pause their improvements?

**Michael:** This would be incorporated in land use plans. We cannot provide a timeline, but Level 2 screening would be happening at end of the PEL process with a preferred alternative(s) in early 2021. The next step would be to move into the next environmental process, design, and then construction.

**Taylor:** The timeline would look at collecting comments through July 10, 2020. Then Level 1 screening, and another meeting would happen at the end of August 2020, at which we would have draft Level 2 screening measures (quantitative) with a smaller number of alternatives. Draft Level 2 screening measures would be the opportunity to present the plans that have been adopted to dive down into the details (e.g., who owns these properties, what are the exact impacts).

**Jim:** Irene's project being identified should not be put on hold due to this screening process. There are a lot of alternatives, but this screening process will reduce them to possibly five, which might not impact that project.

**Michelle:** Can we verify that HSIP is on a parallel track to get funded in the shorter term, while at the same time moving forward with exploring these alternatives?

**Jim:** That is correct.

**Irene:** Level 1 criteria are dead on with primary and secondary needs. There is consideration in moving some emergency housing shelter operations closer to the airport, which would increase pedestrian traffic in this area. Alternatives that do not accommodate pedestrians at the Egan / Yandukin intersection are not as attractive at this point.

**Jim:** Thank you; many of these alternatives can be weeded out, so be sure to use the comment section to bring up these concerns.

## 9. Next Steps – Jim

- Jim provided information on next steps.
  - After this workshop is complete and comments are submitted, the Project Team will compile input and send each participant and group member a summary.
  - Suggestions on the draft range of alternatives and Level 1 screening measures will be incorporated.
  - The Project Team will then screen each alternative with the Level 1 screening measures and draft the Level 2 screening measures. Both of those will be shared in the next CFG meeting.
  - September is a tentative date for the next Public Open House meeting.
  - CFG members are requested to provide comments on the range of alternatives and draft Level 1 screening criteria. Comments are most useful by July 10, 2020.
- Discussion:

**Rep. Andi Story:** Cost ranges - how is that prioritized in DOT&PF funding if the community decides an alternative is best for safety and safe movement, and that is a more expensive alternative?

**Jim:** This is factored into the scoring, but will not sacrifice safety for a result of cost, since safety is the priority for the improvements.

**Marie:** When there is a preferred alternative to move forward, cost is not an explicit consideration, but it may become another consideration. It will play a role in the feasibility of getting the project on the books, but we will want to move forward with a project that addresses safety.

## 10. Comment Form – Josie

- Josie provided information on the comment form and what to expect after this workshop.
  - Everyone will receive a link to the workshop website in an email.
  - The website will have all information presented along with a comment form and a survey to provide feedback on how the virtual workshop went.
- Josie restated that comments would be most useful by July 10, 2020.
- She added that CFG members can contact the Project Team using the contact information on the last page of the website.
- Discussion:

**Michelle:** Will you also capture the comments we've made today as we went, in case we don't remember them?

**Josie:** Comments made today will be recorded and included in case they are not included by individuals in their formal comment submittals.

CFG members were asked for any final questions or thoughts. Nobody had additional comments, and several participants thanked the Project Team for the workshop.

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