Seward ↔ Glenn

CONNECTION

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

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES (PEL) STUDY

OCTOBER 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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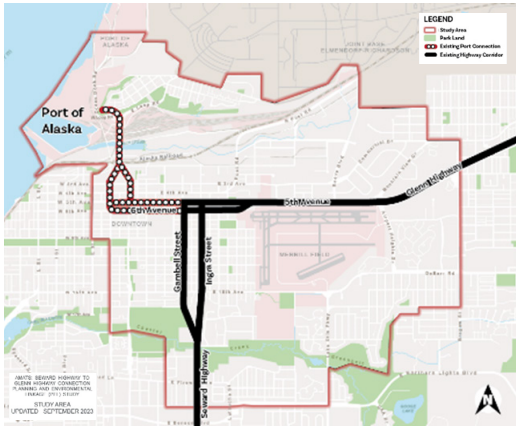
The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funding through Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS), conducted this Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study to evaluate options for improving mobility, safety, access, and connectivity among the Seward Highway near 20th Avenue, the Glenn Highway east of Airport Heights Drive, and the Don Young Port of Alaska (POA). The study's findings may inform future project development consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The PEL 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 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.

Figure ES–1: Study Area



Source: HDR

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

Based on identified needs, the PEL Study team defined the purpose of improvements as enhancing mobility, accessibility, safety, and

December 2024 Public Meeting.

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 and to improve neighborhood connections and quality of life, and support 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 alternatives that included an alternative that would enhance the adopted Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) with transit and demand management strategies; seven freeway alternatives; and three parkway alternatives. The No Action and Current MTP with no changes were also evaluated.

A new regional connection would feature a parkway design.

The 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; the Fairview Bypass as the base 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 traversing along the east and south sides of Merrill Field that includes robust landscaping, sidewalks, and biking facilities
- **An improved connection** to the POA from an interchange at Airport Heights Drive, traversing under Mountainview Drive and Commercial Drive down to a bridge crossing of Ship Creek and the Alaska Railroad line, then north of the rail yard to East Loop Road

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

The recommendations include a trail connecting Ship Creek to Chester Creek and a "Woonerf" along Hyder Street.

- **A reconstruction of Gambell and Ingra Street**s with a complete street design with 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 (UMED) District** via Ingra/Gambell Streets and 36th Avenue with transit signal priority
- **Other associated trail and roadway improvements**

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 the PEL Study results to streamline environmental review. After NEPA approval, projects can proceed to final design and construction.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

DOT&PF would like to thank the contributions of the community members who engaged in the PEL.

Thanks also goes to the following individuals:

AGENCIES AND TRIBES COMMITTEE

- **Emily Vullo** – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regulatory
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- **Bryan Hawkins** – Fairview Community Council
- **Kelly Ittenbach** – Fairview Community Council
- **Tom Schneider** – Fairview Community Council
- **Janel Walton** – Fairview Community Council
- **Chris Campbell** – Fairview Community Council
- **Karen Gonne-Harrell** – Fairview Community Council
- **Daniel Volland** – MOA, Anchorage Assembly
- **Christopher Constant** – MOA, Anchorage Assembly
- **Loki Gale Tobin** – Alaska Senate
- **Aaron Jonengelen** – AMATS Transportation Planning Manager
- **Chelsea Ward-Waller** – MOA Project Management & Engineering
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This planning document may be adopted in a subsequent environmental review process in accordance with 23 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 the FHWA and DOT&PF.

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

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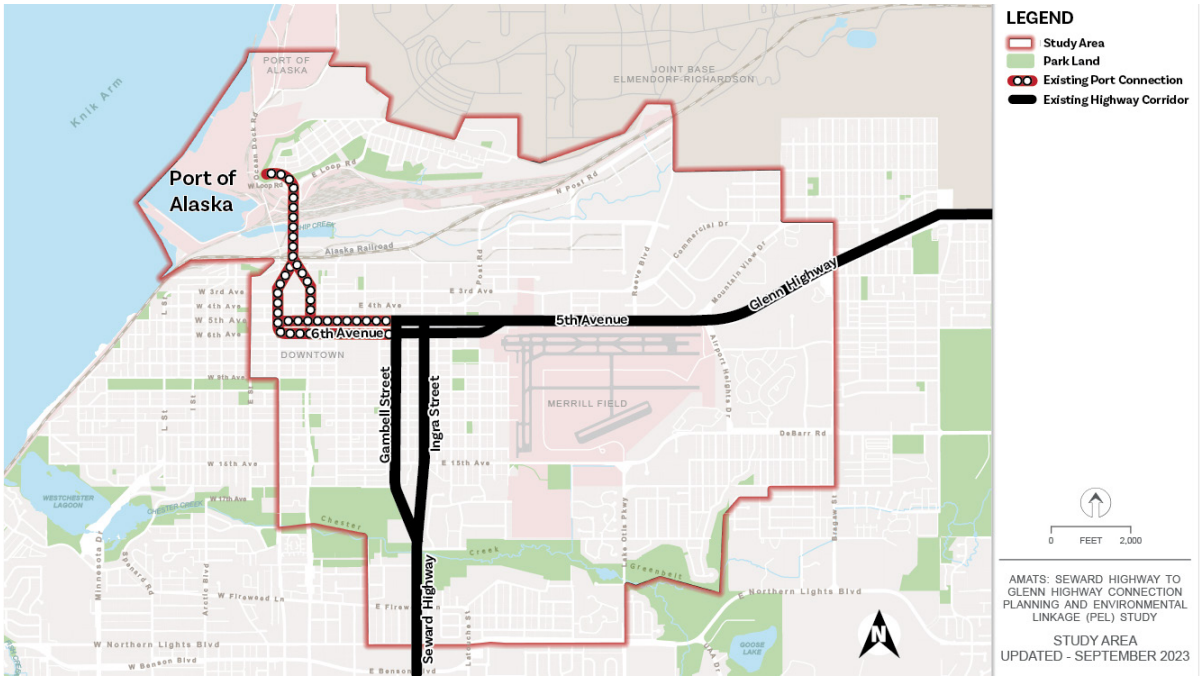
The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), with funding provided by Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS), conducted this Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study to identify and evaluate options to improve mobility, safety, access, and connectivity 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:The study boundary generally follows Bragaw Street on the east, Northern Lights 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 United States 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

Connecting the Seward Highway to the Glenn Highway was discussed as early as 1972 in the Anchorage Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). In 2001, AMATS conducted the East Anchorage Study of Transportation and identified that connecting the Seward and Glenn Highways was important 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 2025 LRTP. DOT&PF started a NEPA process for the H2H project; while the project was cancelled in 2010, it remained in both the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and Fairview Neighborhood Plan. 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, 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. The 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. 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,

> ***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***

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.

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 the 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; and
10. **Enhance travel and tourism**.

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 project endeavored to meet the following objectives.

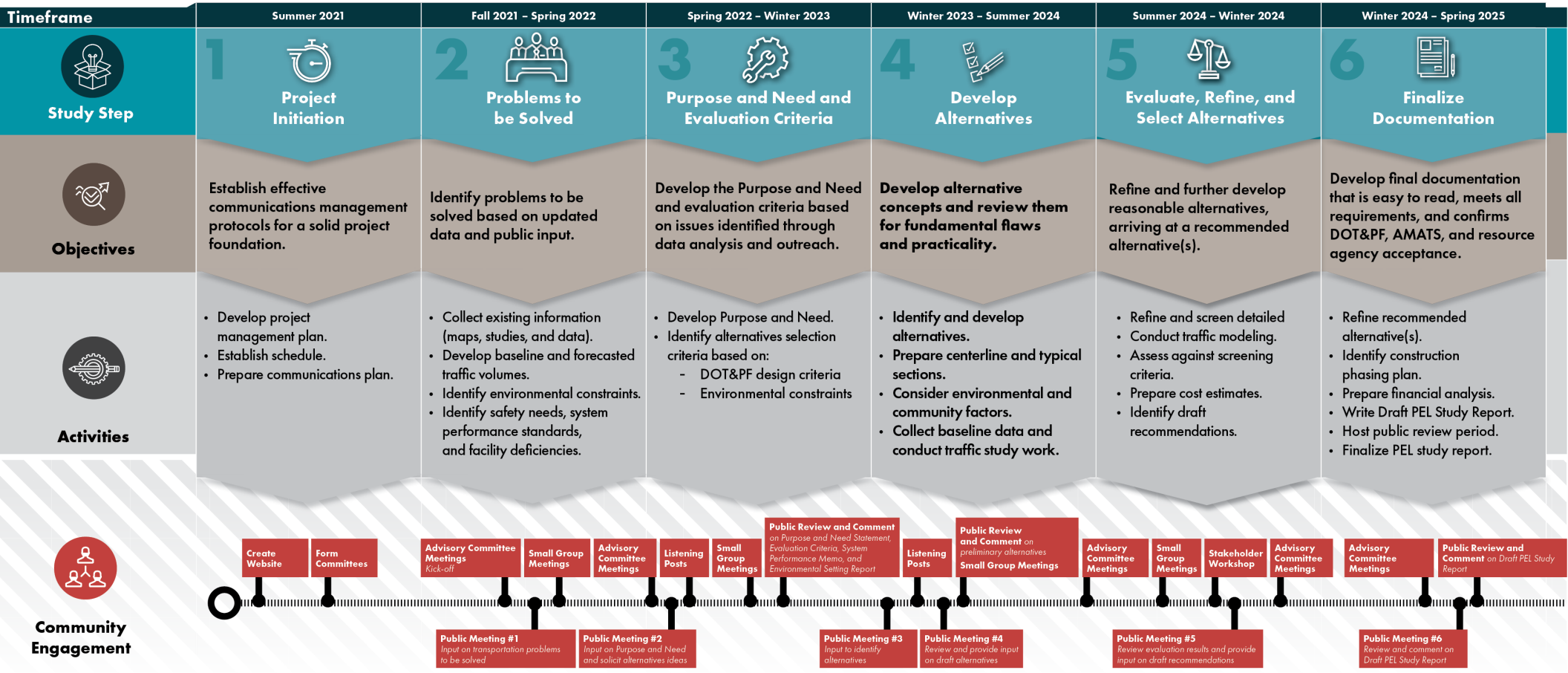
- **Re-examine anticipated traffic levels** to determine if a "freeway" is still the needed facility type and if so, where it would be;
- **Identify potential access improvements** for the POA to and from the highway system that could divert truck traffic from the Downtown and Fairview neighborhoods;
- **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 project 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 the PEL in accordance with DOT&PF's 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 a federal program (23 USC 327) that lets them 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, project committee meetings, small group meetings, listening posts, and online open house meetings occurred throughout the process. See Appendices A and B for details on the public involvement approach, and Appendix C for a chronology of public outreach activities supporting the PEL Study.

PUBLIC OUTREACH GOALS:

- **Raise awareness of the project** and 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 project, 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 the 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 the traveling public.

Phase 3: Purpose and Need. 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 will conclude with a public open house and comment period, offering the public and agencies an opportunity to review the draft PEL Study document, provide feedback, and help shape the direction of future environmental review under NEPA.

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 in 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: Outreach Chronology	Provides a chronology of outreach activities that supported the PEL process
Appendix D: System Performance Technical 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 Report	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 in fall 2019) based on mobile device location data
Appendix F: Travel Forecast Technical Memo	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, Technical Memo	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

2.0 PURPOSE AND NEED

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The objective of this project is to make it easier, safer, and more convenient for people and goods to move around the area connecting the Seward Highway, Glenn Highway, and POA. 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 project must also maintain the functions the connecting roads currently play as part of the National Highway System (NHS)—which supports regional travel, economic activity, and 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. Each of the needs are detailed in the following subsections.

PURPOSE:

This chapter presents a summary of the Purpose and Need Statement Technical Memo (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 the project aims to resolve:

1. **Need 1:** Reduce Conflicting Travel Functions
2. **Need 2:** Improve Safety
3. **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.

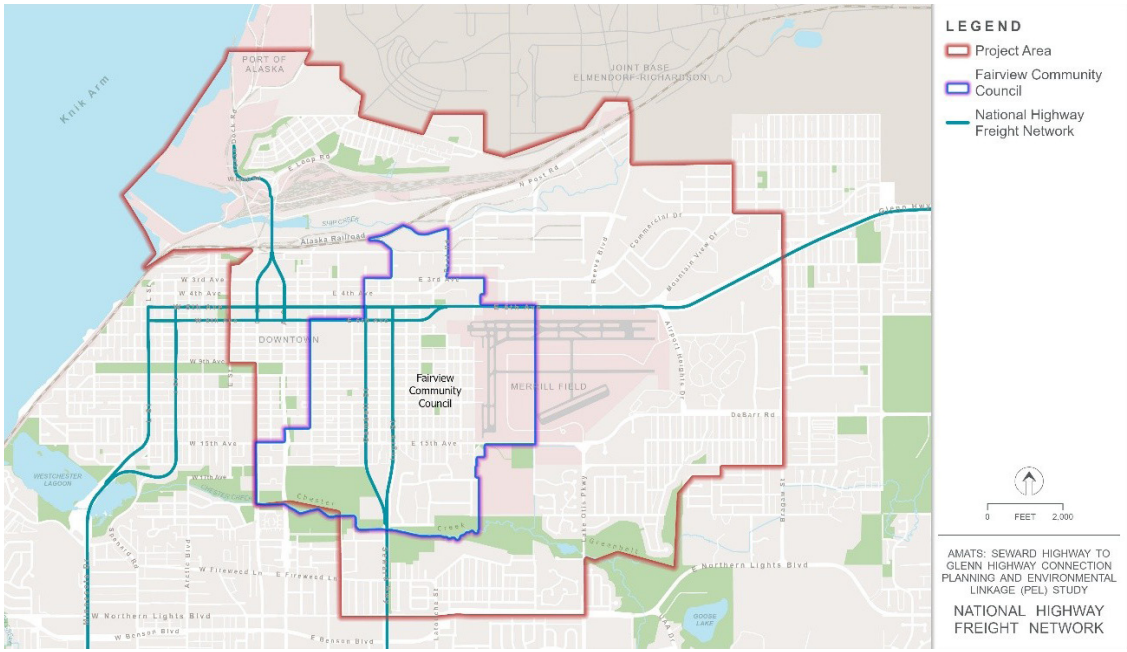
The Seward-Glenn Highway corridor in Anchorage serves dual, often conflicting roles. As part of the NHS, the corridor is designed for efficient regional travel and freight movement, particularly to and from the POA, Downtown, and Midtown. At the same time, these roads function as local streets, providing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

REGIONAL FREIGHT AND ECONOMIC ROLE

The corridor carries some of the highest traffic volumes in the state, exceeding 50,000 vehicles per day in certain segments. It supports a vital freight route 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 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.

Figure 3: The National Highway Freight network is routed 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.



LOCAL MOBILITY AND ACCESS CONFLICTS

Despite its regional role, the corridor is lined with intersections and driveways that serve local streets and properties. This lack of access control creates conflicts between high-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.

NON-MOTORIZED IMPACTS

Conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists are particularly poor. In Fairview and adjacent areas, walking and biking are common due to low car 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 Street 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 car 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.

Utility Pole in Sidewalk.

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.

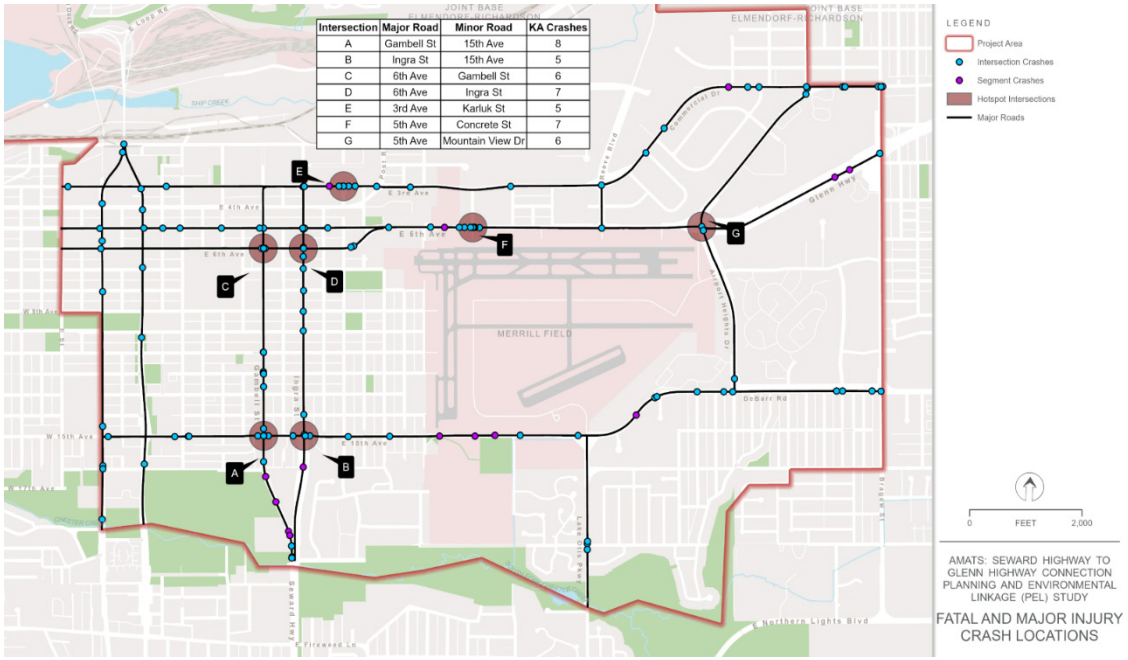
The study area includes some of Anchorage's most dangerous corridors and intersections, with a concentration of severe crashes that underscore the need for safety improvements. Data from the 2018 *Vision Zero Action Plan* and Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) traffic records reveal a pattern of fatal and 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.

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

Figure 4: Fatal and major crash locations.



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.

NONMOTORIZED 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 routes, likely due to higher traffic volumes and speeds. 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.

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 Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program, matched by the MOA. The program provides 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, like 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 & Fairview Neighborhood Plan.
- **Reduce the highway's impact.** Be innovative with options, like 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

DOT&PF has coordinated extensively with the committee managing the grant.

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, high-speed roads and substantial truck traffic, 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, Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2040, 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, 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 2014b:36)***

Transportation improvements in the 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 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.

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

LAND USE & 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.

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

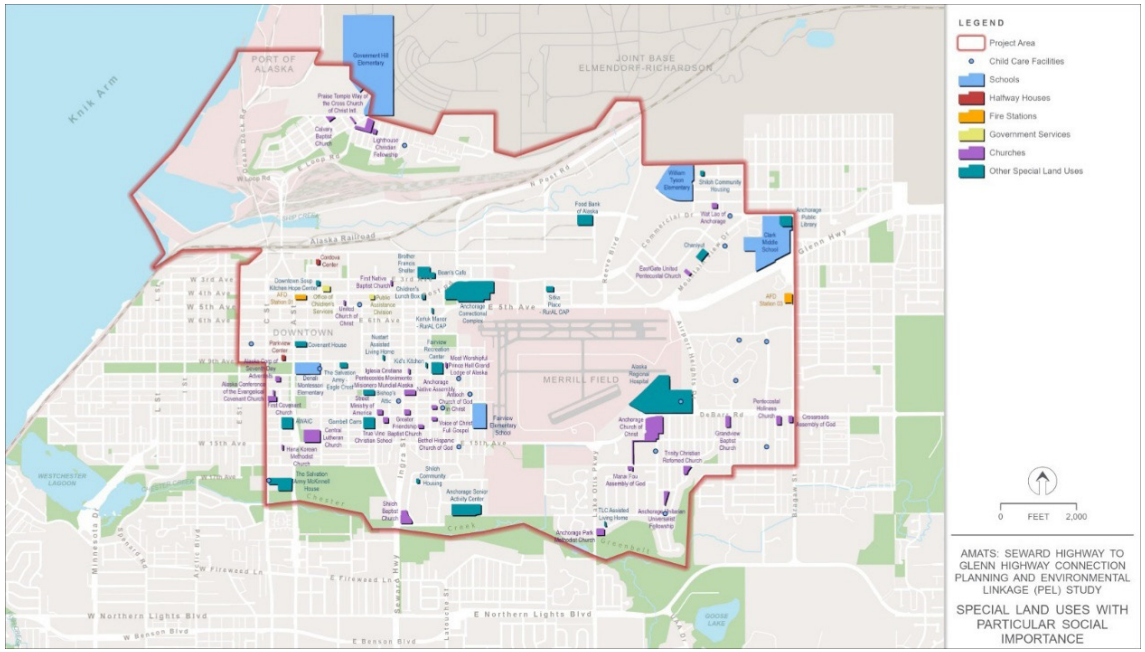
Due to the location of the port and industrial-designated land uses, Gambell and Ingra Streets experience heavy truck traffic.

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 Avenue connection.

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 (**Figure 5**). Community facilities and public services may be publicly operated or operated by for-profit or non-profit organizations.

Figure 5: 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/Gambell Steets, 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) has 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.

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.

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 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 Anchorage'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 (UMED) 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 Interstate Highway System 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 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 (Figure 6). 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, high speeds, and congestion. The current design does not meet modern standards and lacks adequate pedestrian, bicycle, and non-motorized connections—key needs for surrounding neighborhoods. These

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

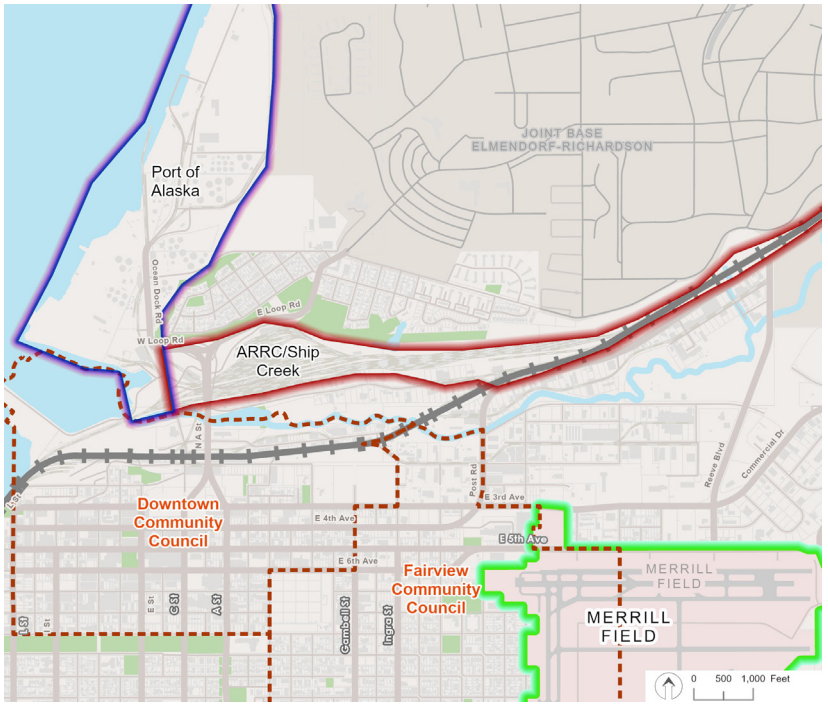
conditions particularly impact Fairview, a lower-income area with higher reliance on walking, biking, and transit.

PORT. The POA is located in the northwestern corner of the study area (**Figure 7**). The POA is a major asset to the regional 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 (POA 2021). 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.

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, air taxi, and maintenance companies, and flight schools. Most of the operations at the airport are general aviation. Taxiway

Figure 7: 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.



Q provides direct access to the Alaska Regional Hospital Emergency Room, enabling medevac 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 UMED 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, 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 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. Of these properties, 116 are buildings, 5 are historic districts, 3 are sites, and 1 is a 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 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, the airport, and the hospital district such as parks and historic sites. These assessments 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

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 in 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 U.S. Department of Transportation Act.

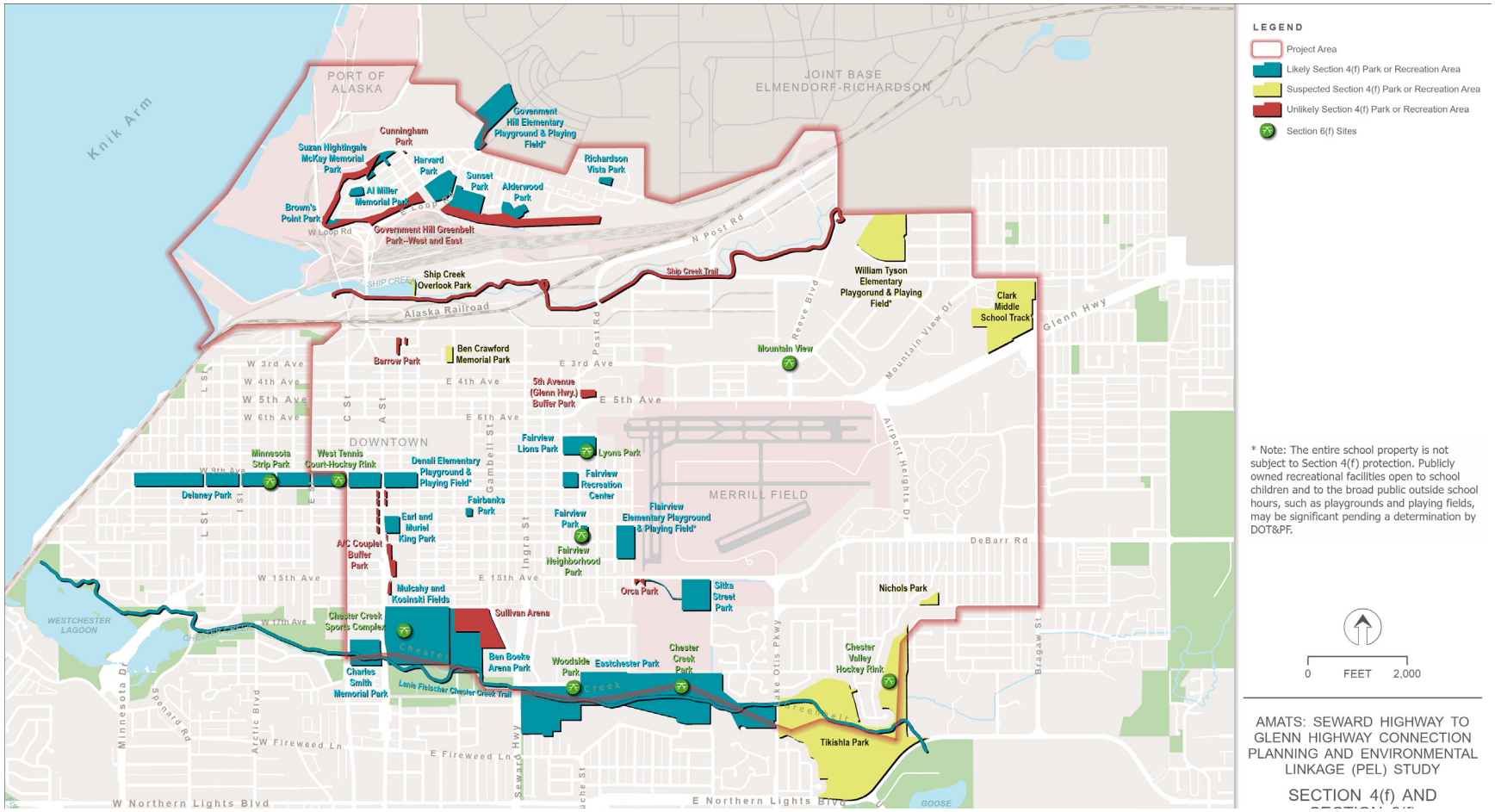
Mount Susitna exist, roadway users and viewers may be especially sensitive to changes.

Key visual areas in the study include neighborhoods, greenbelts, commercial zones, Downtown, industrial sites, the airport, and the hospital district.

Recreation and Section 4(f)

Section 4(f) originated in the Department of Transportation Act, a federal environmental protection statute specific to U.S. Department of Transportation-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 (**Figure 8**).

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



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

WETLANDS

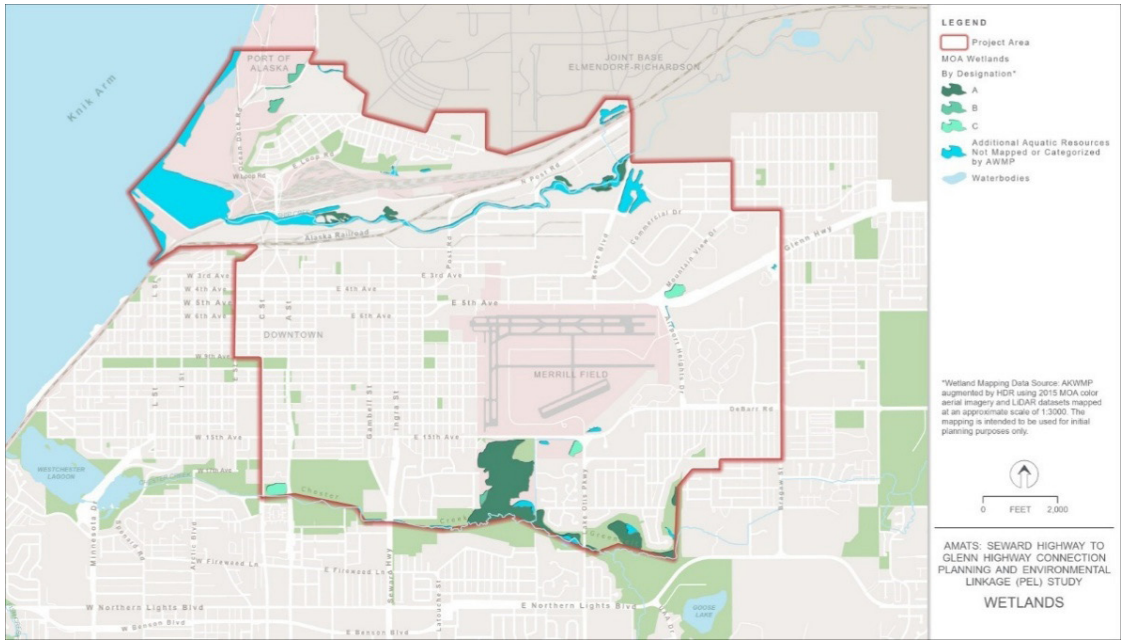
Wetlands occur in discrete locations within the study area, most notably along the Ship and Chester Creek waterways (**Figure 9**). Any construction project actions that add fill within these boundaries would require a permit.

WATERBODIES

Ship Creek traverses the upper third of the study area. Its watershed is a 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.

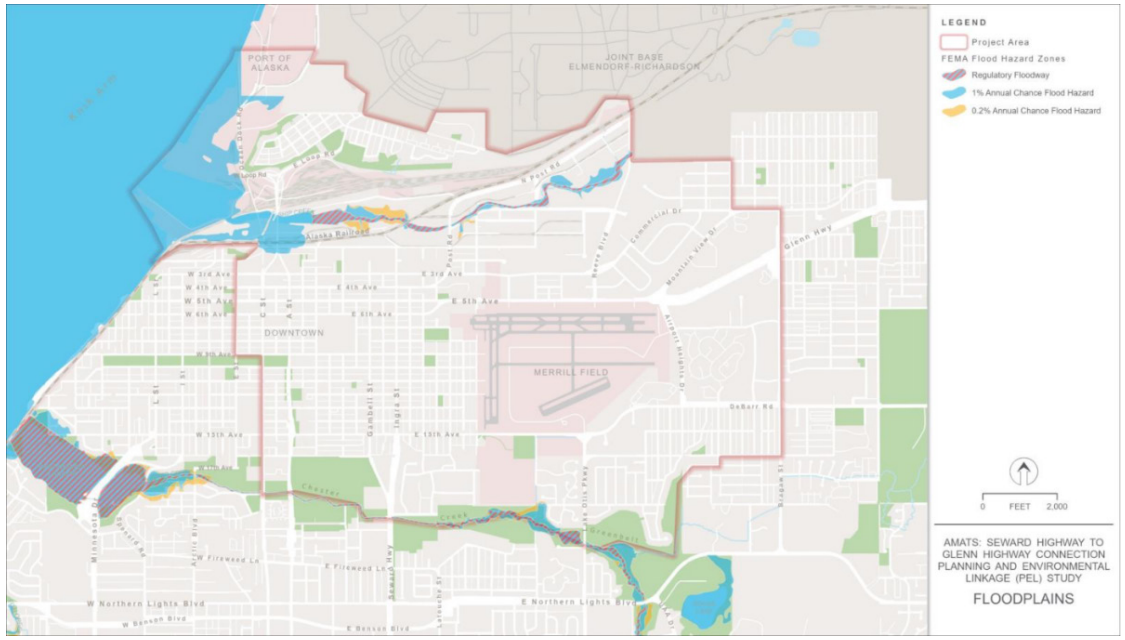
Figure 9: **Wetlands within the study area.**



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 (**Figure 10**). Flooding typically results from snowmelt,

Figure 10: Floodplains within the study area.



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 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 in 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 in 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.

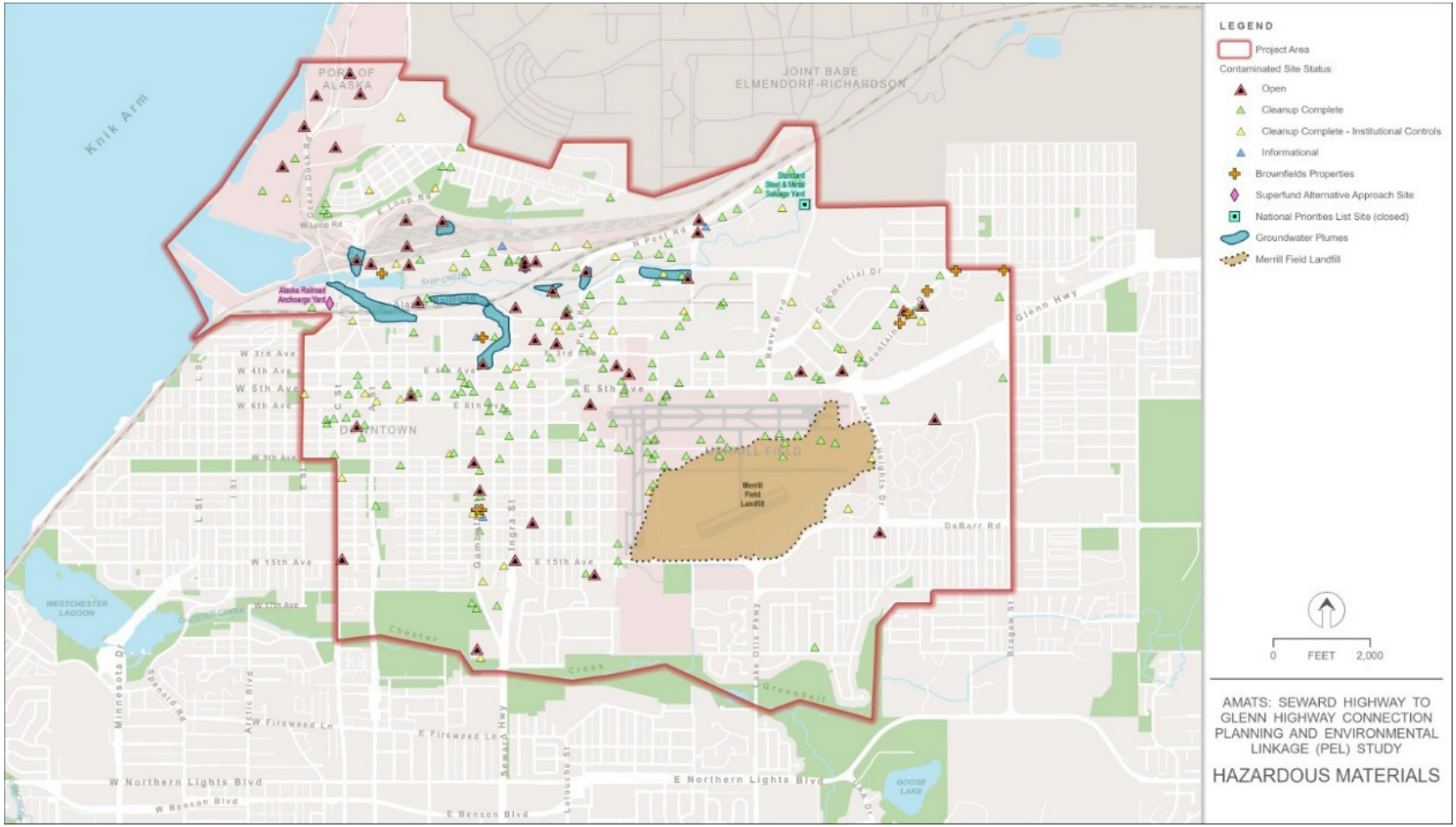
HAZARDOUS WASTE

A review of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation Contaminated Sites Database indicated 39 open contaminated sites occur within the study area (ADEC 2021) (**Figure 11**). Among the listings are 8 groundwater plumes, 2 superfund sites, and 24 brownfield properties. Of particular note is the Merrill Field Landfill. The Merrill Field Landfill 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.**



4.0 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 feedback from the public and agencies 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: Design criteria were established 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.

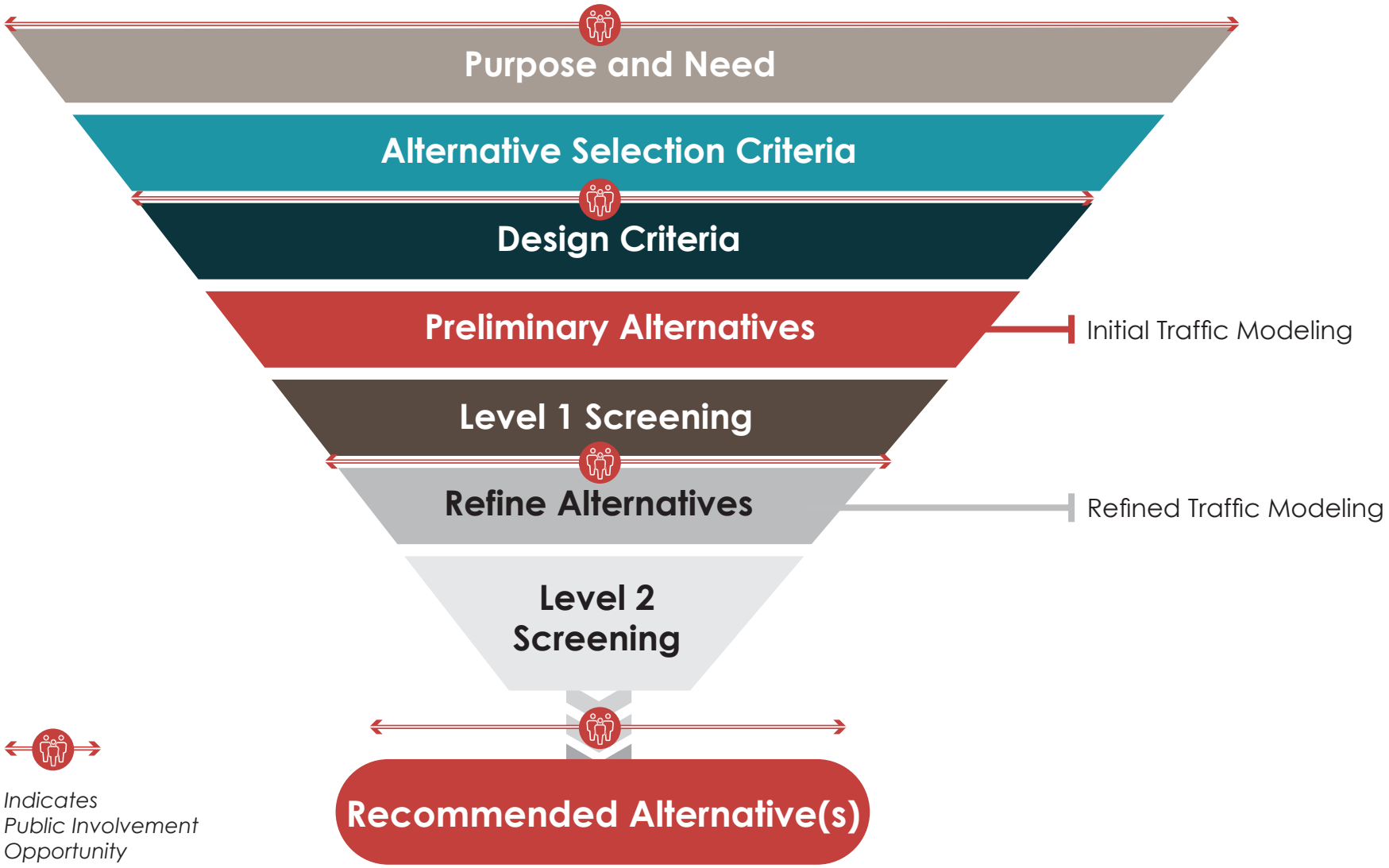
4. Alternatives Development: Using prior studies, public input, and adopted plans, the PEL Study team developed multimodal alternatives that address the Purpose and Need. The alternatives were shared with the public and stakeholders and refined through ongoing feedback.

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: Alternatives that passed Level 1 screening were refined based on feedback to improve design and reduce impacts on communities and the environment.

7. Level 2 Screening: In Level 2 Screening, the refined alternatives were evaluated 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 which may be advanced into preliminary engineering and NEPA.


Purpose and Need
Alternative Selection Criteria
Design Criteria
Preliminary Alternatives
Initial Traffic Modeling
Level 1 Screening
Refine Alternatives
Refined Traffic Modeling
Level 2 Screening
Recommended Alternative(s)
Indicates Public Involvement Opportunity

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 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 Department of Transportation Act 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. Safety 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. Lower stress 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 Build Condition

Nonmotorized Mobility and Accessibility

- Pedestrian Level of Traffic Stress
- Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress

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 and fuel, 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 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 in study area that have a peak period Level of Service of D or better
- Peak period delay

Livability

- Consistency with Adopted Plans
- Right-of-way 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 historic resources. Considering these impacts during planning is essential to identifying environmentally responsible alternatives and complying with permitting and regulatory requirements.

LEVEL 2 SCREENING CRITERIA

Environmental Impacts

- Land Use
- Social Impacts
- Relocation Impacts
- Economic Impacts
- Joint Development
- Impacts on Pedestrians and Bicyclists
- Air Quality Impacts
- Noise Impacts
- Water Quality Impacts
- Permits
- Wetland Impacts
- Water Body 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. 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

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 (**Figure 12**). Using this input, the team developed and refined a range of multimodal transportation concepts, including road and non-motorized options. 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.

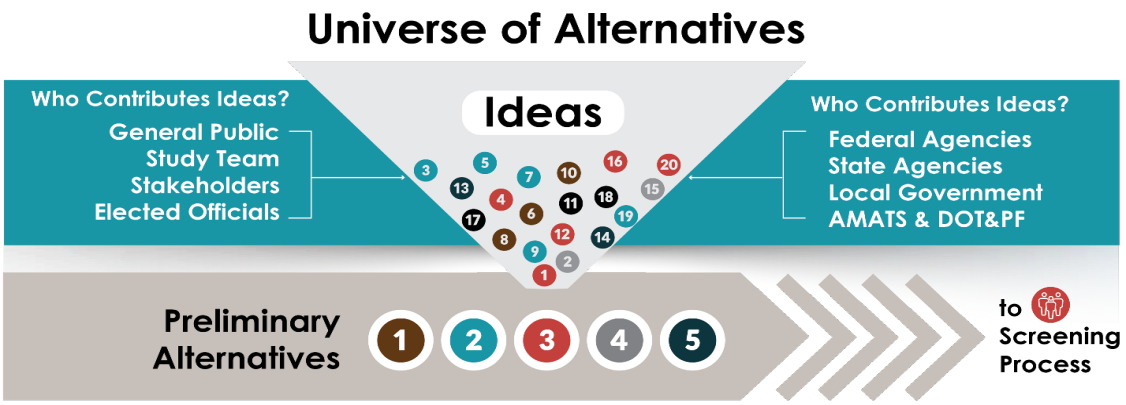
NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

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 of the projects adopted in MTP 2050, 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 2050 MTP Alternative tests improvements recommended in the 2050 MTP, which does not include a new freeway connection between the Glenn and Seward Highways. It includes lane reductions on Gambell and Ingra Streets and 5th and 6th Avenues, paired with non-motorized upgrades. While it does not create a dedicated POA connection, it features improvements to Whitney Road, and includes Phase 1 of a Fairview Greenway and a woonerf-style (i.e., a shared space that blends pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle use in a low-speed, community-oriented environment) Hyder Street.

Figure 12: **The PEL Study team collected ideas from a considerable engagement effort.**



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	**Improve Non-Motorized Travel and Livability**	**Reduce Travel Conflicts and Improve Safety**	**Improve Regional Travel**	**Consistency with Adopted Plans**
• A main street design on Gambell Street • A complete street or woonerf design on Ingra and/ or Hyder Street • Reduced lanes on 5th and 6th Avenues and Gambell and Ingra Streets • Pedestrian bridges (over depressed freeway alternatives)	• Regional trail connecting Chester Creek Trail to Ship Creek Trail to form a loop around Anchorage's urban core (via proposed Fairview Greenway connection, Ship Creek Trail, Coastal Trail, and Chester Creek Trail) • Pedestrian accommodations via bridges or tunnels across major roadways • Roadway bridge over Chester Creek at the Seward Highway to improve pedestrian undercrossing comfort and return the creek to natural settings for fish passage • Trail connections from Bragaw Street to Reeve Boulevard	• Reduce local and regional travel conflicts with tunnels or routing to bypass neighborhoods • Providing a route to the POA so truck traffic can avoid neighborhoods • Improve freight movement, reduce conflicts, and improve safety • Increase freight mobility by keeping trucks on freeways and rerouting them to industrial streets without stop lights	• Provide a regional connection from the Seward Highway to the Glenn Highway	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 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 routes. This alternative also promotes remote activities such as telework and e-learning, 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 as a three-lane road, 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.

Image Source: MOA Public Transportation

FREEWAY CONNECTION ALTERNATIVES

The PEL Study team developed seven freeway connection alternatives. (A, B, AB1, AB2, C1, C2, 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. The freeways would include fenced right-of-way and interchanges with minimal landscaping and no sidewalks or paths in a 150- to 200-foot right-of-way. The posted speed limit would be 55 miles were routed to try to avoid impacts by depressing some sections through neighborhoods or routing around the southern and eastern sides of Merrill Field to try to minimize impacts on established neighborhoods. See Appendix K Detailed Alternatives Report for detailed information on the freeway alternatives advanced to Level 1 screening.

PARKWAY 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). The parkway alternatives are multimodal roadway alternatives based on an arterial street design (not a freeway). Parkway alternatives are proposed with 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, separated multi-use pathways for active transportation users, space for landscaping, and tunnels or bridges to reduce surface impacts and promote the reconnection of neighborhoods. See Appendix L *Alternatives Refinement and Screening Report* for details on the Parkway Alternatives advanced to Level 1 screening.

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. 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 properties; whereas, Parkway AB—using tunnels beneath Fairview and the Mountain View industrial area—achieves a similar alignment with far fewer impacts. C1 and C2 were dropped for comparable residential, parkland, and historic resource impacts that Parkway C largely avoids. Freeway 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.

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 3** identifies the alternatives advanced from Level 1 to Level 2 screening (along with the new naming conventions).

The Level 2 screening evaluated these remaining alternatives in greater detail

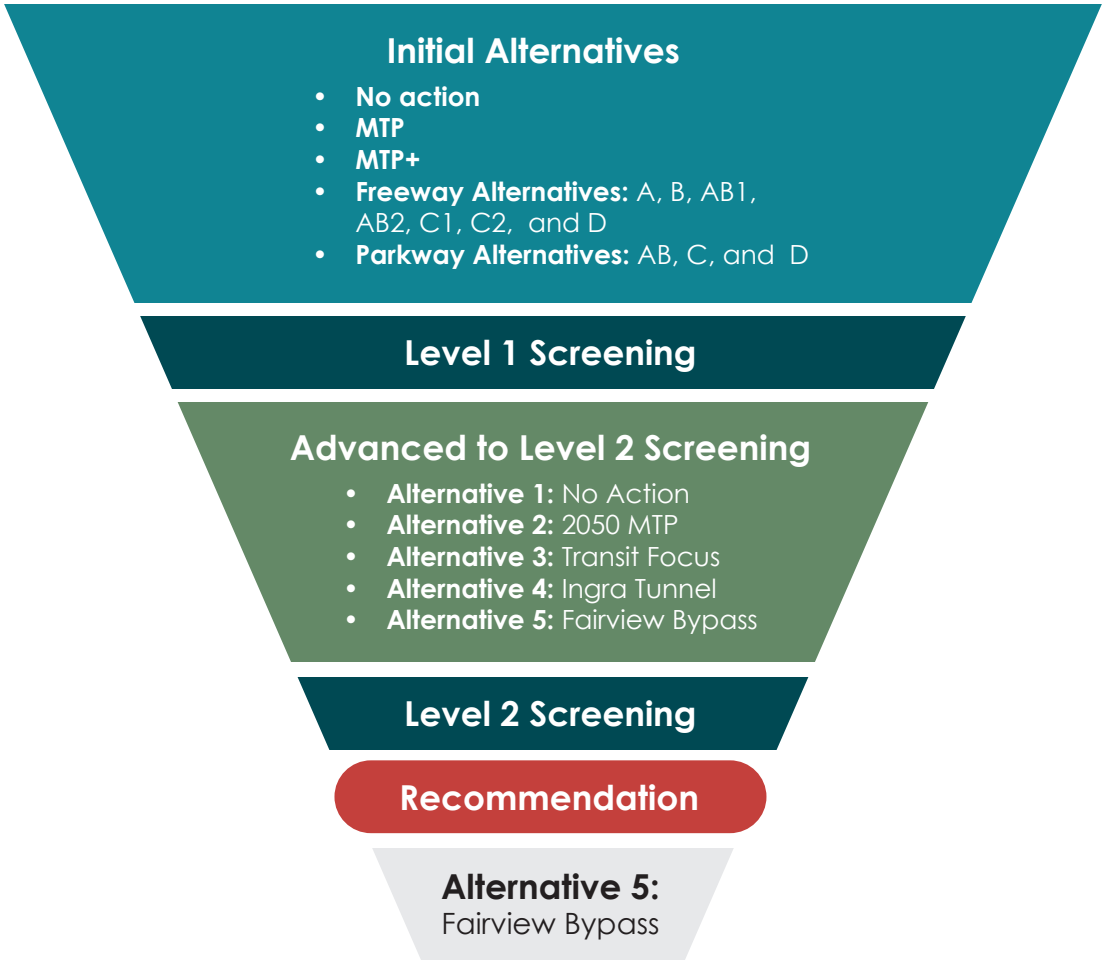


Table 2: Alternatives advanced to Level 2 screening

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

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 project'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, but without a new regional connection, they shift traffic-related impacts to other neighborhoods, and Alternative 3 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 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 Fairview Bypass 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.

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 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.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Balancing Regional Mobility and Community Goals.

The Fairview Bypass (Alternative 5) 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, and landscaping.

This shift unlocks opportunities for redevelopment aligned with local plans and supports Fairview's goals for walkability, safety, and livability. The parkway's alignment—largely 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.

Alternative 5 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 Fifth and Sixth Avenues allows them to be rebuilt as complete streets as called for in the 2050 MTP, while maintaining regional mobility.

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

To address freight connectivity to the port, a new connection would be built to connect a new interchange at Airport Heights/Glenn Highway across the Ship Creek Valley. This route minimizes the need for freight to stop at cross streets and railroad tracks by using bridges. This route provides resiliency should the A/C Bridge need repairs or replacement and provides an alternative freight route that diverts trucks from downtown and Fairview.

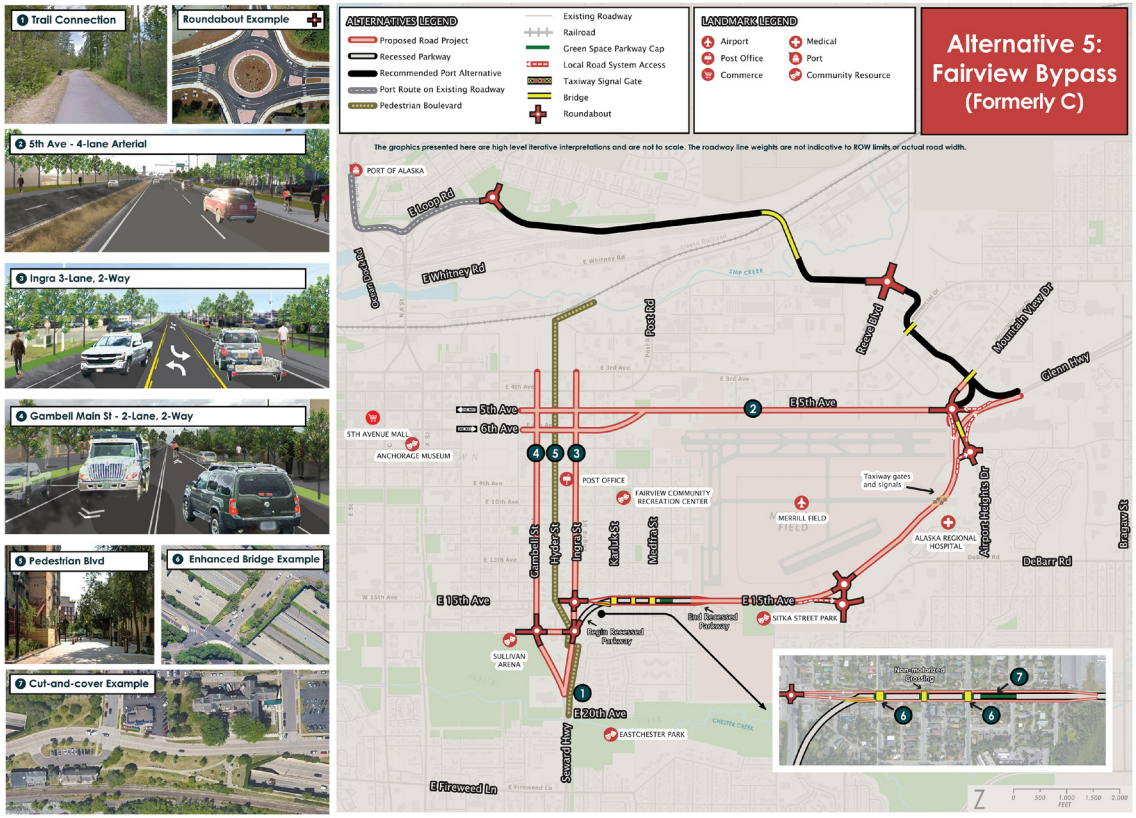
The results from Alternative 3: Transit Focus suggest that a bus new but route that connects downtown, Fairview, U-Med, and Midtown would garner considerable ridership. Such a route would help unify three disparate employment centers, and with a connection on Gambell and Ingra Streets, it would connect Fairview, a highly transit dependent neighborhood to jobs, shopping, and other services. This route is recommended for further study 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 13**.

The PEL recommends an integrated, multimodal, subarea plan that establishes a vision for the NHS and associated improvements for the year 2050. The improvements are consistent with adopted plans for the subarea. They work together to create a multimodal network that satisfies the purpose and needs for the project area.

Figure 13: PEL recommendations



FAIRVIEW BYPASS PARKWAY

The Fairview Bypass, when complete, will be a four-lane arterial parkway connecting the Seward and Glenn Highways. Starting from the south, a series of roundabouts are proposed along an extension of 16th Avenue. These connections will slow speeds coming off the Seward Highway, creating a transition between the Seward Highway and Gambell and Ingra Streets. These changes would also improve connectivity to the Sullivan Arena and Mulcahy Sports Complex, and A and C Streets farther west. The 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.

From there the route would traverse northward following an alignment on Ingra Street before turning eastward along 15th Avenue in a depressed section of roadway cut along 15th Avenue. Over the top of the depressed section, bridges (multimodal and non-motorized) and parks would be built to maintain neighborhood connectivity between the northern and southern sides of the depressed section.

Figure 15: 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.

Figure 14 shows an example of a park built over a section of four-lane roadway in Duluth, Minnesota.

Figure 15 shows an example of a Seattle bridge design crossing over a depressed section of road with an extra-wide cross section.

Figure 14: Example cut and cover park in Duluth, Minnesota.

This type of design is proposed for Karluk and Medfra Streets. The extra wide bridge will allow for a generous separated pathway, landscaping, and shielding from the traffic below.

To maintain connectivity of 15th Avenue, one westbound and one eastbound lane of 15th Avenue would be relocated to be north and south of the depressed roadway section, respectively. Those lanes would connect to the Fairview Bypass route via ramps east of Orca Street. Only one lane in each direction is proposed for the relocated 15th Avenue (in keeping with a lane reduction for 15th Avenue called for in the 2050 MTP).

Starting east of Orca Street, the PEL recommends a reconstructed four-lane parkway traversing south and east of Merrill Field to the Glenn Highway (**Figure 16**). The parkway would connect to Lake Otis Parkway, Penland Parkway, and 5th Avenue using roundabouts.

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 below).

Figure 16: Potential parkway south and east of Merrill Field. This graphic shows one potential cross-section of the Fairview Bypass which is proposed as a parkway. Various non-motorized improvements and/or landscaping configurations are possible while still staying within the proposed 125-foot right-of-way south and east of Merrill Field.

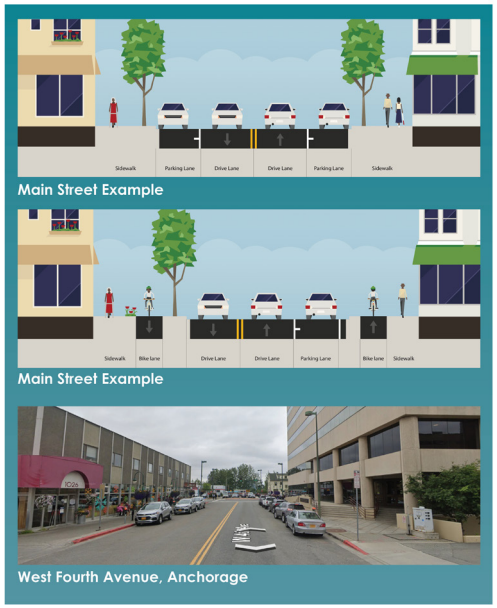
GAMBELL AND INGRA STREETS

Gambell and Ingra Streets would be reconstructed with two travel lanes removed on each street. Gambell Street would become a two-way 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; a center, two-way, left-turn lane, also at 30 mph. In both cases, the space from the removed lanes would be repurposed for sidewalks, parking, biking, turning vehicles, buffers or landscaping. Various configuration of non-motorized improvements and landscaping would be possible within the existing 60-foot right-of-way on both streets. **Figures 17** and **18** depict this alternative's potential streetscape changes to Gambell and Ingra Streets.

Figure 17:
Mainstreet concept on Gambell Street

Main Street (Gambell)

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 being hard to access when the road is congested.



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

Figure 18:
Three-lane concept on Ingra Street

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 times, as well as providing space for emergency vehicles and snow storage.

This graphic shows one potential cross-section of Ingra Street looking north. The AMATS Non-motorized Plan calls for a priority pedestrian corridor and bikeway on both Gambell and Ingra Streets.

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. The Fairview Greenway Trail from 2050 MTP 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 connecting through west Anchorage; see **Figure 20.**

Figure 19: Depicts the trail connection linking the Ship Creek Trail to the Chester Creek Trail creating a regional loop that would benefit Fairview and much of west Anchorage.

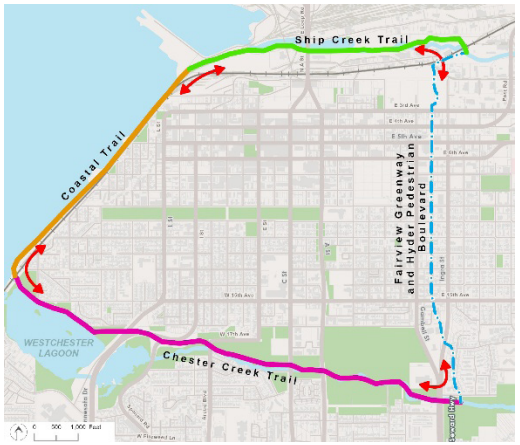


Figure 20: Woonerf Examples

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 purely vehicle spaces. The four vital elements of a woonerf are (1) well-defined entrances, (2) a shared and well-marked space, (3) physical barriers to slow traffic, and (4) landscaping.

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

FIFTH AND SIXTH AVENUES

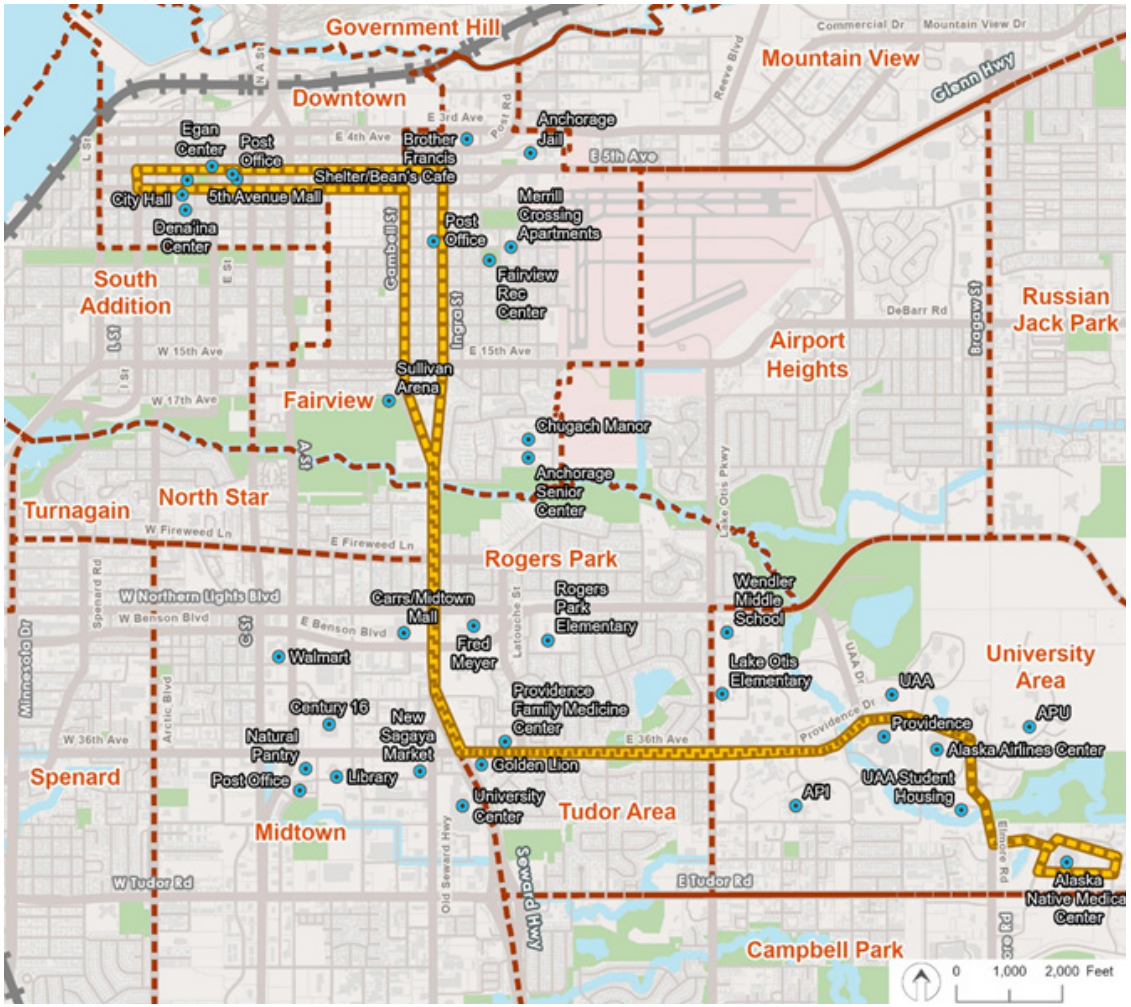
This PEL Study recommends implementing the lane reductions/complete street improvements on 5th and 6th Avenues called for in the 2050 MTP. The area where the two lanes would be removed would be repurposed for turning vehicles, sidewalks, parking, or landscaping (**Figure 21**). Various non-motorized improvements, parking, and/or landscaping configurations are possible while still staying within the 100-foot right-of-way. This PEL includes the portion starting at Gambell Street but would extend it to Airport Heights Drive instead of ending it at Reeve Boulevard (as in the 2050 MTP).

Figure 21: This graphic shows one possible cross section along 5th Avenue that fits within the 100-foot right-of-way.

TRANSIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The PEL Study tested a robust expansion of the People Mover transit system in Alternative 3 and forecast potential ridership with the project's traffic model. One potential new route stood out: the Downtown-Midtown-UMed route. This would be new bus route connecting Downtown, Midtown, and the UMED District via Gambell and Ingra Streets and 36th Avenue (**Figure 22**). 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 22: This figure shows the proposed route of the recommended rapid transit route and some of the destination that would be accessible.



PORT CONNECTION

The proposed connection to the POA begins at a new interchange with the Glenn Highway near Airport Heights Drive. From there, the route traverses northwestward in a depressed section beneath Mountain View Drive and Commercial Drive, allowing trucks to bypass traffic signals and maintain uninterrupted flow. This grade-separated design also creates a long, gentle incline out of the Ship Creek Valley, easing the climb for heavy freight vehicles.

The corridor then reaches a roundabout at Reeve Boulevard and Viking Drive, continuing westward along Viking Drive before turning northward to cross Ship Creek, Post Road, and the Alaska Railroad on a bridge. It then follows the northern edge of the rail yard, ultimately arriving at a roundabout with East Loop Road, which connects directly to existing port access ramps.

This new alignment not only improves freight mobility but also enhances pedestrian connectivity. Sidewalks on both sides of the route will provide access to the Ship Creek Trail from both the Government Hill and Mountain View neighborhoods, strengthening multimodal links between residential areas, Ship Creek, and the Ship Creek Trail.

Industrial Streets

- Industrial streets provide access to and from the Port of Anchorage 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 be accommodated as well.

PHASING PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The PEL Study identified two critical transportation corridors important to maintaining NHS mobility and economic vitality that also reduces NHS impacts on Fairview and Downtown. The first is a regional, NHS parkway connection that extends from the Glenn Highway to the Seward Highway. The second is the improved port connection corridor that links the Glenn Highway to the POA. Together, these corridors form the backbone of a future transportation network that supports regional freight movement, improves neighborhood safety, and maintains regional connectivity.

A key aspect of this vision is that these corridors offer the flexibility to be implemented incrementally over time. Rather than requiring a single, large-scale investment (e.g., a long tunnel), these connections 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 **Figure 23** and summarized in Table 3, proposes a sequencing of 10 projects such that each project contributes to the overall system without causing disruptions or imbalances in traffic flow and accruing benefits that stand on their own. The plan also integrates projects already included in the 2050 MTP, aligning near-term improvements with long-term system functionality.

Figure 23: This figure shows how the PEL Study's recommended network can be implemented over time, aligned with funding availability, community priorities, and system performance goals.

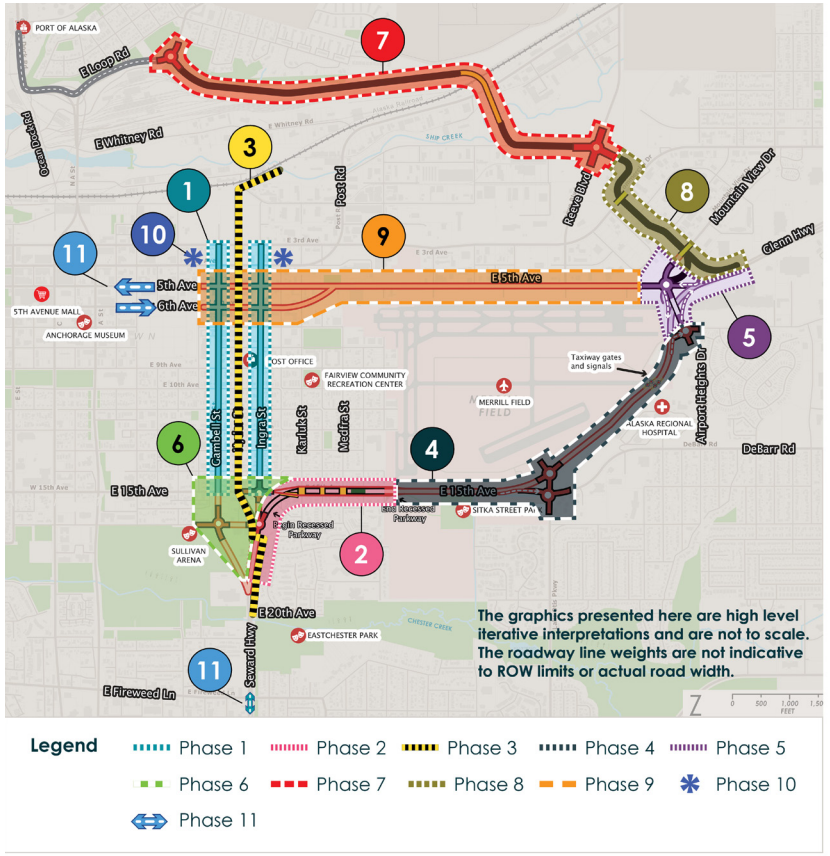


Table 3: Phasing plan summary.

	Project Name	Predecessor Projects	Design	Description	Key Benefits	Purpose & Need Alignment	Speed Limit	Capital Cost
1	**Gambell & Ingra Couplet Conversion**	None	6-lane one-way couplet pair	• Reduce 8-lane couplet to 6 lanes • Reallocate space for bike/ped improvements • Interim solution until regional connections are built	• Early safety and livability improvements • Supports multimodal access • Sets stage for future transformations	• Improves safety and accessibility • Reduces conflicting travel functions • Promotes community livability	35 mph	**$75,000,000**
2	**Fairview Bypass Phase 1**	None	4-lane parkway/ complete street	• Depressed arterial road under 15th Ave • Bridges and Park Lid with landscaping • Maintains surface connectivity of 15th Ave • Sidewalks and multiuse paths along 15th Ave	• Diverts regional traffic from Fairview • Improves safety with grade separations • Supports community cohesion	• Improves mobility and safety • Reduces conflicting travel functions • Enhances neighborhood connections	35 mph	**$105,500,000**
3	**Fairview Greenway and Hyder Pedestrian Boulevard**	2	2-lane woonerf & regional trail	• Separated path and tunnels under Ingra St and 15th Ave • Hyder converted to woonerf • Trail extension to Ship Creek Trail	• Improves nonmotorized connectivity • Supports loop trail system • Enhances neighborhood livability	• Improves accessibility and safety • Promotes livability and economic development • Supports community cohesion	20 mph or less	**$12,380,000**
4	**Fairview Bypass Phase 2**	2	4-lane parkway	• Complete street design with bike/ped facilities • Parkway alignment through public land • Roundabouts at Lake Otis Pkwy/Debarr Rd Penland Pkwy	• Improves multimodal access • Enhances safety with roundabout design • Minimizes property impacts	• Improves mobility and safety • Reduces travel conflicts • Supports livability and access to institutions	35 mph	**$46,000,000**
5	**Glenn Highway Interchange with Fairview Bypass**	4	Interchange with roundabouts	• Realign Glenn Hwy to regional parkway • Dogbone roundabout interchange • Elevated over Airport Heights Dr	• Completes regional parkway connection • Improves freight and commuter access • Reduces congestion on local sts	• Improves regional mobility • Reduces conflicting travel functions • Supports community cohesion	35 to 45 mph	**$47,756,000**
6	**16th Ave Extension and Roundabout Network**	2	3-lane with center turn lane	• New east-west 16th Ave connection with roundabouts • Improves access to Sullivan Arena • Traffic calming transition into Fairview	• Improves event traffic flow • Provides alternate Downtown access • Enhances safety and neighborhood character	• Improves mobility and safety • Reduces travel conflicts • Promotes livability and access	30 mph	**$14,250,000**
7	**Port Access Route Phase 1**	None	2-lane industrial	• Limited-access freight route • Crosses Ship Creek and ARRC mainline • Connects to Viking Dr and Reeve Blvd	• Diverts trucks from Downtown and Fairview • Improves freight efficiency • Supports industrial area access	• Improves freight mobility • Reduces travel conflicts • Promotes livability in urban neighborhoods	35 mph	**$51,750,000**
8	**Port Access Route Phase 2**	7	2-lane industrial	• Depressed roadway under Commercial and Mountain View Dr • Gentle grade for trucks • Direct connection to regional parkway	• Eliminates truck stops and steep grades • Improves freight access to Glenn Hwy • Enhances port connectivity	• Improves freight mobility and safety • Reduces travel conflicts • Supports economic development	35 mph	**$7,500,000**
9	**5th and 6th Ave Complete Sts**	5	4-lane complete street	• Lane reduction and multimodal upgrades • Protected bike lanes and landscaping • Implemented after regional/port routes complete	• Improves bike/ped safety • Supports Downtown walkability • Reduces regional traffic impacts	• Improves safety and accessibility • Reduces travel conflicts • Promotes livability and economic growth	35 mph	**$63,000,000**
10	**Final Reconstruction of Gambell and Ingra Sts**	2, 4, 5*	2-lane Gambell main st/Ingra 3-lane with center turn lane/complete streets	• Convert to 2-way, 30-mph sts • Reclaim space for sidewalks, bike lanes, landscaping • Supports land use transformation	• Improves safety and livability • Supports economic revitalization • Restores neighborhood-serving street function	• Improves safety and accessibility • Reduces travel conflicts • Promotes livability and community cohesion	30 mph	**$57,000,000**
11	**Downtown-Midtown-UMED Rapid Transit**	None	Improved bus route with elements	• Add a new route connecting Fairview to key destinations • Connect three employment centers • Provide frequent service with bus rapid transit style elements as part of projects 9 and 10	• Improves connectivity for transit dependent residents, providing access to jobs, healthcare, and shopping • Supports economic revitalization • Reduces regional traffic impacts	• Improves accessibility • Reduces travel conflicts by reducing single occupant vehicle reliance • Promotes livability and community cohesion	N/A	**$9,560,000**

Project 1: Gambell and Ingra Couplet Conversion

This initial phase focuses on converting the existing Gambell and Ingra Street couplet from an eight- to a six-lane configuration. 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, the PEL Study does not recommend jumping directly to a full Main Street design on Gambell Street or implementing a 2-lane road diet on Ingra Street. Without first constructing the regional connections, 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. 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.

Project 2: Seward Highway to 15th Avenue Connection

This project creates a critical connection between the Seward Highway and 15th Avenue via a depressed roadway section that passes beneath 15th Avenue. Surface-level connectivity is preserved by reconstructing 15th Avenue along both its northern and southern sides. The design ensures lane continuity by linking four northbound lanes of the Seward Highway directly to the four lanes of 15th Avenue into a 4-lane, two-way facility, helping to divert regional traffic away from Gambell and Ingra Streets, and reducing traffic volumes in the Fairview neighborhood.

Project 2 is 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 traffic.

As an early-phase project, it also demonstrates DOT&PF's commitment to community cohesion and thoughtful design. By including wide bridges at Karluk and Medfra Streets—with generous landscaping and a multimodal north-south connection—this project ensures that neighborhood connectivity is preserved and enhanced. The use of cut-and-cover techniques and grade separation improves safety while minimizing community disruption. Delivering this project early and doing it right would help build public trust and alleviate concerns that DOT&PF might cut corners on design or omit key community amenities.

Project 2 directly supports the purpose by improving mobility and accessibility for both regional and local users, while enhancing safety through grade separation and reducing traffic burdens on neighborhood streets. It addresses all three identified needs: it reduces conflicting travel functions by separating regional and local traffic, improves safety through design, and promotes livability by preserving and enhancing neighborhood connections.

Project 3: Fairview Greenway and Hyder Pedestrian Boulevard

Project 3 advances two pedestrian-focused projects identified in the 2050 MTP: the 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.

The Fairview Greenway Phase I includes a separated pathway along the eastern side of Ingra Street from 20th Avenue 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 an improved Hyder Street. Hyder Street is proposed to be transformed into a pedestrian boulevard or woonerf.

Although this project can be constructed at any point after Project 2, it is essential that the tunnel crossing under the Seward Highway—located within the Project 2 footprint—be coordinated and constructed concurrently with Project 2. This avoids costly rework and ensures seamless integration of the pedestrian network with the regional connection.

The PEL Study recommends extending the Hyder Pedestrian Boulevard northward to create a continuous non-motorized corridor connecting the Chester Creek Trail to the Ship Creek Trail. This extension would complete a loop trail through West Anchorage, linking 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 trail to connect with the Ship Creek trail.

Project 3 supports the 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 4: 15th Avenue Parkway Connection to Penland Parkway

Building on the momentum of Project 2, Project 4 extends the regional parkway connection by transforming 15th Avenue into a true urban parkway. Beginning at the ramp termini where the Seward Highway connection merges with 15th Avenue, this project reconstructs the corridor with a complete street design that includes a multiuse path, protected bike lanes, a landscaped center median, and landscaped setbacks. The result is a safer, more attractive, and multimodal-friendly corridor that supports both regional mobility and neighborhood quality of life.

The parkway continues eastward on public property between Alaska Regional Hospital and Merrill Field, ultimately connecting to Penland Parkway. This alignment minimizes impacts on private property while enhancing access to key community institutions.

Two major roundabout intersections are proposed to support this new configuration. 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 and Merrill Field Drive to the parkway, providing efficient access and reinforcing the corridor's role as a regional connector with local sensitivity.

Project 4 supports the purpose by improving mobility and accessibility for all users, including pedestrians and bicyclists, while enhancing safety and livability through complete street design. It addresses the need to reduce conflicting travel functions by clearly defining regional and local circulation patterns, improves safety through modern intersection design, and promotes community livability and economic development by enhancing access to key institutions and creating a more attractive public realm.

Project 5: Glenn Highway Interchange with Regional Parkway and Mountain View Drive

Project 5 completes the regional parkway connection by constructing a major interchange between the Glenn Highway, 5th Avenue, Mountain View Drive, and the new regional parkway. The Glenn Highway would be realigned southwestward to connect directly to the regional parkway, with the mainline elevated over Airport Heights Drive to maintain uninterrupted regional traffic flow. 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.

This project also includes a roundabout that connects 5th Avenue with Mountain View Drive, improving local circulation and safety. In its final configuration, the interchange would take the form of a "dogbone" roundabout interchange, combining the roundabout at Penland Parkway (from Project 4) with the new

roundabout at 5th Avenue/ Mountain View Drive. This design simplifies traffic operations while maintaining high-capacity regional movement.

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.

Project 5 supports the purpose by improving mobility and accessibility for people and goods traveling between the Glenn and Seward Highways. It addresses the need to reduce conflicting travel functions by separating regional and local traffic and reducing traffic that splits Fairview on Gambell and Ingra Streets. It improves safety through grade-separated and modern roundabout design and promotes community livability by reducing traffic burdens on neighborhood streets. The project also enhances community cohesion by improving access between neighborhoods and regional destinations while completing a link in the multimodal transportation network.

Projects 2, 4, and 5 each possess independent utility, meaning they provide meaningful benefits on their own, even if the full corridor is not yet complete. Project 2 improves regional mobility and neighborhood safety by diverting traffic from Gambell and Ingra Streets through a grade-separated connection between the Seward Highway and 15th Avenue. Project 4 enhances multimodal access and safety by transforming 15th Avenue into a complete street parkway, improving connectivity between key institutions such as Alaska Regional Hospital and Merrill Field, and resolving complex intersections with modern roundabouts. Project 5 completes a critical regional interchange between the Glenn Highway and the new parkway but also functions independently by improving access to Mountain View Drive and transitioning the Glenn Highway into a more urban-friendly facility. Each project addresses specific transportation challenges, improves safety, and enhances community livability, demonstrating standalone value while also contributing to the broader purpose of connecting the Seward and Glenn Highways, and POA in a cohesive, multimodal system.

Project 6: 16th Avenue Extension and Roundabout Network

Project 6 extends 16th Avenue eastward to Ingra Street, creating a new east-west connection that improves access and circulation in the Fairview area. This project must follow the completion of Project 2 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, as well as additional roundabouts at 15th Avenue and Ingra Street and 15th Avenue and Gambell Street. These roundabouts not only improve traffic flow and safety but also serve as physical design cues that signal the transition from the regional Seward Highway connection into the Fairview

neighborhood, encouraging slower speeds and more context-sensitive driving behavior.

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 6 supports the 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.

Project 7: Port Access Route – Loop Road to Reeve Boulevard

Project 7 establishes a new freight access route to the POA, beginning at Loop Road on Government Hill and extending to a new roundabout at Reeve Boulevard. The route travels along the northern side of the Alaska Railroad yard, crossing the mainline track, Ship Creek, and Post Road on a bridge. It is designed as a limited-access corridor with no driveways or side streets, allowing trucks to travel uninterrupted until the intersection with Viking Drive, which would be reconfigured to T into the new port route.

This project provides a more direct and efficient route for trucks accessing the POA, reducing reliance on Downtown and Fairview streets. Even without Project 8, this route offers a significant improvement by connecting to Reeve Boulevard, then to 5th Avenue and the Glenn Highway. Once the regional parkway (Projects 2, 4, and 5) is complete, this route becomes a critical link between the POA and the regional highway system.

Project 7 supports the purpose by improving mobility and accessibility for freight movement, while enhancing safety by removing heavy truck traffic from pedestrian-oriented areas. It addresses the need to reduce conflicting travel functions by keeping freight traffic within the industrial Ship Creek corridor, improves safety by eliminating truck interactions with urban streets, and promotes livability by supporting walkability goals in Downtown and Fairview.

Project 8: Port Access Route – Reeve Boulevard to Regional Parkway Interchange

Project 8 builds on Project 7 by extending the port access route from the Reeve Boulevard roundabout to the new interchange constructed at the Glenn Highway in Project 5. This segment climbs uphill in a depressed roadway, passing under Commercial Drive and Mountain View Drive without requiring trucks to stop. The design provides a longer, more gradual grade than Reeve Boulevard, which is especially beneficial for heavy freight vehicles.

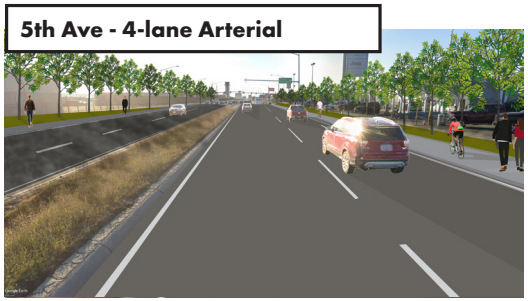
This project cannot function independently—it must follow the completion of Project 7 to provide a continuous route from the POA. However, it significantly enhances the freight connection by eliminating stops, reducing grade challenges, and providing a direct link to the Glenn and Seward Highways via the regional parkway interchange at the Glenn Highway.

Project 8 supports the purpose by enhancing mobility and accessibility for freight, improving safety through grade separation, and reducing truck conflicts with local traffic. It addresses the need to reduce conflicting travel functions by streamlining freight movement away from urban streets and promotes livability and economic development by supporting efficient goods movement while preserving neighborhood character.

Project 9: 5th and 6th Avenue Complete Streets

Project 9 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 to two lanes, reallocating space for protected bike lanes, upgraded pedestrian infrastructure, and potential greenscaping and urban tree planting.

From Medfra Street to Airport Heights Drive, where the couplet 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. This transformation would create



a more balanced, multimodal corridor from Downtown to East Anchorage.

However, the PEL Study recommends that this project not be implemented until the regional parkway connection between the Seward and Glenn Highways (Projects 2, 4, and 5) is complete, and until truck traffic is diverted via the new port access route (Projects 7 and 8). Only once these alternate routes are in place, can 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.

Project 10: Final Reconstruction of Gambell and Ingra Streets

Project 10 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 (Projects 2, 4, and 5) and the port access improvements (Projects 7 and 8) are complete. Only once NHS and truck traffic has viable alternate routes, can the function of Gambell and Ingra Streets be safely and effectively reimagined.

The project 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 right-of-way. 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—also with a 30-mph speed limit, and similar multimodal and streetscape enhancements.

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.

Project 10 supports the 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. This project also strengthens community cohesion by reconnecting the Fairview neighborhood and aligning with local plans for a more people-centered street environment.

Project 11: Downtown-Midtown-UMED Transit Route

The Downtown-Midtown-UMED Transit Route is a proposed enhancement to the People Mover system, designed to connect Fairview—a transit-dependent neighborhood—with three major employment centers: Downtown, Midtown, and the UMED District. The route would travel along 5th/6th Avenues, Gambell and Ingra Streets, and 36th Avenue, offering frequent service and incorporating 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 the 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 10). 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.

CONCLUSION

Together, these 11 projects form a comprehensive, flexible, and forward-looking strategy to improve mobility, safety, accessibility, and livability across the PEL.s study. 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, and the POA. 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 corridor into manageable, standalone projects that can be programmed and constructed incrementally between now and 2050—the planning horizon of the PEL Study. 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.

6.0 LINKAGE TO NEPA AND NEXT STEPS

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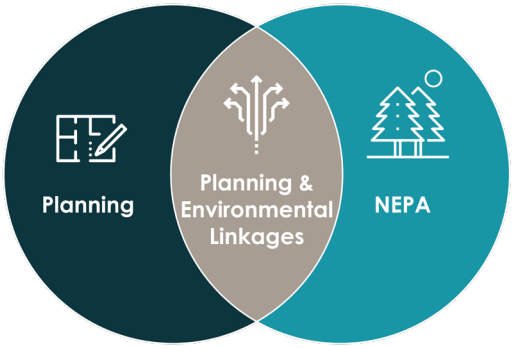
HOW PEL FINDINGS CAN INFORM THE NEPA PROCESS

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.

Figure 24: PELs: the intersection between Planning and NEPA



DECISIONS MADE AND DATA DEVELOPED DURING THE 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 Technical Memorandum
- **Appendix E**: Origin-Destination Study Report
- **Appendix F**: Travel Forecast Technical Memo
- **Appendix G**. Pedestrian and Bicycle Study
- **Appendix H**: Purpose and Need Statement Technical Memo

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 Technical 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 includes roadways, transit, and bike and pedestrian facilities. The recommended travel corridor to supplement the connection of the Seward and Glenn Highways is the Fairview bypass route and associated port 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, the MTP 2050 (as adopted with no additional improvements), the MTP + (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 outreach.

DOT&PF eliminated freeway connection alternatives and Parkway D through the Chester Creek Greenbelt in Level 1 screening. Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 were eliminated in Level 2 screening. The alternative 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

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 and 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 are 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 steps for the implementation are to adopt the recommendations into the AMATS MTP. To do this, the study recommendations need to go through the AMATS Technical and Policy Committees, which 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 the 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 can begin the NEPA process for projects using federal funding or affecting the NHS. Using the planning and environmental groundwork laid during the PEL Study should streamline NEPA documentation and decision making. During the NEPA phase, additional engineering and environmental analysis will occur. Only after NEPA approval can the project move into right-of-way acquisition, final design, and construction.

7 REFERENCES

7.0 REFERENCES

Under development.