

From: [Emily Weiser](#)
To: [Brantner, Maren H \(DOT\)](#)
Cc: [Post, David E \(DOT\)](#); [Vanhove, Todd E \(DOT\)](#); [dot.stip](#)
Subject: Re: Question on Public Notice for STIP Amendment 1
Date: Monday, October 5, 2020 5:20:22 PM

Hi Maren,

Thanks so much for your response - I appreciate the clarification. I'll look forward to hearing back from the Central Region Field Office team about the proposed changes to the project.

Best regards,

Emily

Emily Weiser (she/her)
Emily.L.Weiser@gmail.com

On Mon, Oct 5, 2020 at 4:37 PM Brantner, Maren H (DOT) <maren.brantner@alaska.gov> wrote:

Hello Emily,

I've added a quick link to the amendment page to make it easier to find the public comment instructions. Comments should be sent to dot.stip@alaska.gov, as it allows the whole team to see your comments. <http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/cip/stip/howtocomment.shtml>

To answer your first question, I've forwarded your comment to the Central Region Field Office contacts CC'd above.

There really aren't strict guidelines on how and what you can comment on. You're more than welcome to comment on proposed changes, aspect of the projects, additional needs or concerns, projects that aren't in the STIP (if necessary). The only thing we ask is that you're clear (and polite) in your comments so we can easily determine which projects you're reference and find the best contact to answer your questions.

Thank you,

Maren Brantner

STIP Manager, DOT&PF

(907) 465-2744

From: Emily Weiser <emily.l.weiser@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 4, 2020 8:09 PM
To: dot.stip <dot.stip@alaska.gov>
Subject: Question on Public Notice for STIP Amendment 1

Hello,

I saw the [public notice](#) for Amendment 1 to the STIP and looked through the accompanying materials. The project I'm most interested in is the Dowling & Seward Interchange in Anchorage, and it appears that the only changes/updates noted in Amendment 1 involve an increase in expected costs. I can't find any further details on this via either the links on the public notice website or on the [project website](#). Can you clarify the following for me?:

1. Are there changes to the proposed project that will incur the additional costs, or is this an updated estimate of costs for the project as previously proposed?
2. What is the scope for comments on the Amendment? Can we comment on any aspect of the project or only on the proposed changes?
3. Should comments be sent to this email address? The public notice lists this as the STIP contact, but it isn't clear how comments should be submitted.

Thank you,

Emily

Emily Weiser (she/her)

Emily.L.Weiser@gmail.com



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Transportation and
Public Facilities

DIVISION of PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT and STATEWIDE PLANNING
Headquarters

3132 Channel, Suite 200
P.O. Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-2500
Main: (907) 465-4070
dot.alaska.gov

November 17, 2020

Rabbit Creek Community Council
1057 West Fireweed Lane, Suite 100
Anchorage, AK 99503

Dear Ms. Rappoport and Mr. Holland,

Thank you for taking the opportunity to provide comments to the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), Alaska's federally required four-year program for transportation system preservation and improvement. Alaska's surface transportation program is primarily driven by federal funds and therefore project funding must be amended periodically to meet project development schedules and federal requirements. This process ensures that Alaska will receive the maximum amount of federal funding available to maintain and improve its surface transportation program.

Regarding your comment on Need ID 29731, Seward Highway O'Malley Road to Dimond Boulevard Reconstruction, the additional connection on the Seward Highway is to improve safety and access between the Dimond Center retail district (and future connections continuing westward) and the residential area to the east and has been in Anchorage planning documents for some time. In addition, the Abbott Loop Community Council ranked the Academy Drive/Vanguard Drive project (formerly an Municipality of Anchorage [MOA] project, now working its way through the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions [AMATS] funding process) as its number one priority Capital Improvement Project for several years in a row.

This STIP amendment only includes minor revisions to the funding for the Seward Highway project, and the scope of the project as it exists within the STIP has not been proposed for changes. It is anticipated that more than 90% of this project will be federally funded.

DOT&PF is moving forward with the construction of the Scooter Avenue/Academy Drive underpass because of the documented safety and operational benefits of this new east-west connection. When completed, this project will provide a vital link between Abbott Road and the Old Seward Highway for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles.

Regarding Need ID 30689, Statewide Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), thank you for acknowledging the role that non-motorized facilities have in access to the outdoors, and your interest in this program. While it may appear that the program's funding has been reduced, the funding has not changed, but has been broken out into individual TAP projects. When this amendment is finalized, you will be able to search the online STIP tool to find the individual TAP projects here

<http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/cip/stip/tabsearch/index.cfm>. Select Program “TAP” from the filters’ options to produce a report of all active TAP projects.

Thank you for your interest in the 2020-2023 STIP and for taking the time to provide comments. If you have any additional questions please regarding projects in Central Region, please contact David Post, the Anchorage Field Office Planning Manager, at david.post@alaska.gov or (907) 269-0512, and you may direct TAP questions to Julius Adolfsson, the Statewide Bike and Pedestrian Coordinator, at julius.adolfsson@alaska.gov or (907) 465-6978.

Sincerely,

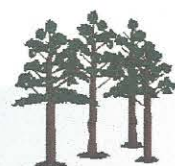
Maren Brantner

Maren Brantner
STIP Manager

Cc: Julius Adolfsson, Statewide Bike and Pedestrian Coordinator, DOT&PF
David Post, Anchorage Field Office Planning Manager, DOT&PF
Todd VanHove, Anchorage Field Office Planning Chief, DOT&PF



Correspondence



RABBIT CREEK COMMUNITY COUNCIL (RCCC) A Forum for Respectful Communication & Community Relations

1057 West Fireweed Lane, Suite 100 / Anchorage, AK 99503

Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development - ATTN: STIP
PO BOX 112500
Juneau, AK 99811-2500

October 13, 2020

Subject: Amendment 1, 2020-2023 State Transportation Improvement Program

The Rabbit Creek Community Council (RCCC) has previously submitted detailed comments on both State and Municipality (Muni) transportation plans. The 2020-2023 Amendment 1 on the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) includes changes to two projects of concern to RCCC and about which we have previously commented, as follows.

Need ID: 29731 for design - While not in our area, the Seward Highway, Dimond to O'Malley, reconstruction involves a major road used daily by a vast majority of our residents. The project feature which is of concern is the proposal to construct an underpass to connect 92nd Ave (Scooter Avenue) from west of the Seward Highway to east of the Seward Highway. RCCC has repeatedly recommended that this project feature be deleted. This project feature was proposed in the early 2000s to relieve congestion at the Dimond Blvd on/off ramps of the Seward Highway. Deleting the 92nd Ave underpass is justified for a number of reasons, including: (1) diminished traffic use and magnitude in the area; (2) it would significantly disrupt neighbors and neighborhood quality to the east of the Seward Highway; (3) it would eliminate existing low-income housing in the area; and 4) this feature's excessive cost when the state is in an extended and serious budget deficit. The Assembly has opposed this project. The Muni is already burdened by the need to repair and upgrade existing roads at a time of diminished budgets. The project would result in an excessive taking of land and has a poor cost/benefit ratio. If there is to be a project here, a pedestrian underpass would be an alternative that could provide safe transit for neighbors at a much reduced cost in dollars and land. Note, the amendment does not specify whether FY 21 design funds recommended for this project are for the larger Seward Highway work or include this underpass.

Need ID: 30689 - We were disappointed to see that Amendment 1 reduces funding by over 70% (from \$5.2 to \$1.5 million in FY 21) for statewide projects and activities such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, recreational trails, safe routes to school, and a variety of eligible community improvements. At a time when citizens need more non-motorized access to the outdoors (e.g., due to the need for social distancing during a pandemic) and we need to mitigate the impacts from CO₂-induced climate change, funding for these types of projects should be augmented, not significantly reduced. Compared to most, this project started with only a very minor cost.

We appreciate your attention to these concerns and request that you respond as to how our concerns can be incorporated in the final Amendment.

Sincerely,

Ann Rappoport, Co-chair
Rabbit Creek Community Council

Ky Holland, Co-chair
Rabbit Creek Community Council

cc: Anchorage Assembly, Mayor Berkowitz, PM&E Director, Energy & Sustain Dir., Rep. Johnston, Sen. Giessel,

From: [Wendel, Courtney E \(DOT\)](#)
To: [Clay Walker](#)
Cc: [Chapman, Judy \(DOT\)](#); [dot.stip](#)
Subject: RE: 2020-2023 STIP Amendment 1
Date: Friday, October 2, 2020 12:32:00 PM

Good afternoon Mr. Walker,

Thank you for taking the opportunity to provide comments to the 2020-2023 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), Alaska's federally required four-year program for transportation system preservation and improvement. Alaska's surface transportation program is primarily driven by federal funds and therefore project funding must be amended periodically to meet project development schedules and federal requirements. This process ensures that Alaska will receive the maximum amount of federal funding available to maintain and improve its surface transportation program.

Thank you for taking the time to comment on Amendment 1 and let us know of the strong local support for Parks Highway Mile Post 195-196 (Milepost 231) Enhancement (Need ID 26157), and CTP project Healy Area Pedestrian Path (Need ID 32519). The Department sincerely values your support.

Sincerely,

Courtney Wendel

STIP Planner III

From: Clay Walker <cwalker@denaliborough.com>
Sent: Friday, October 2, 2020 10:20 AM
To: [dot.stip](mailto:dot.stip@alaska.gov) <dot.stip@alaska.gov>
Cc: Chapman, Judy (DOT) <judy.chapman@alaska.gov>
Subject: 2020-2023 STIP Amendment 1

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the First Amendment of the 2020-2023 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

There are two amended projects within the Denali Borough, both of which have strong local support:

1. Need ID 26157, the MP 231 Safety Enhancements Project, is a vital safety and transportation upgrade for a dangerous junction of river, highway motorists, visitors, and recreationalists. The borough supports increasing the Phase 4 funding in FY22 as proposed in the amendment.
2. Need ID 32519, the Healy Sur Road Rehabilitation Project, addresses important road rehabilitation while also adding a requested feature – wide shoulders on both sides of the Spur Road. This road is the primary access for the Tri-Valley Subdivision and as such needs wide shoulders for safe travel. The borough has partnered on this CTP project and is providing the 9.03% match.

Sincerely,

Clay Walker

Denali Borough Mayor

office: 907.683.1330

cell: 907.888.4631

email: cwalker@denaliborough.com

Brantner, Maren H (DOT)

From: Brantner, Maren H (DOT)
Sent: Wednesday, November 4, 2020 3:31 PM
To: Kyle Kornelis
Cc: Stephanie Queen; dot.stip
Subject: RE: 2020-2023 STIP Amendment 1 comments

Good afternoon Mr. Kornelis,

Thank you for taking the time to comment on Amendment 1 to the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), specifically the Community Transportation Program and the Transportation Alternative Program.

The department values your input and support regarding the Soldotna Community Connections and ADA Improvements and Redoubt Avenue and Smith Way Rehabilitation projects. Engagement and participation are important components to the success of the DOT &PF mission. We e are excited to see these projects through to completion.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact David Post, the Central Field Office Surface Transportation Planning Manager, at david.post@alaska.gov, or (907) 269-0512.

Sincerely,

Maren Brantner

STIP Manager

DOT&PF, Division of Program Development
3132 Channel Drive | P.O. Box 112500 | Juneau, AK 99811

T (907) 465-2744 | F (907) 465-6984

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From: Kyle Kornelis <kkornelis@soldotna.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2020 5:13 PM
To: dot.stip <dot.stip@alaska.gov>
Cc: Stephanie Queen <squeen@soldotna.org>
Subject: 2020-2023 STIP Amendment 1 comments

Please see the attached 2020-2023 STIP Amendment 1 comments from the City of Soldotna.

Kyle Kornelis, P.E.
Public Works Director
City of Soldotna
907-262-9107
kkornelis@soldotna.org



Public Works Department

177 N. Birch St.
Soldotna, AK 99669
Phone: 907.262.9107
Fax: 907.262.1245
www.soldotna.org

October 22, 2020

Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Division of Program Development
ATTN: STIP
PO BOX 112500
Juneau, AK 99811-2500

SUBJECT: 2020-2023 STIP Amendment 1
CTP and TAP 2020 award cycle projects

The City of Soldotna fully supports the addition of the following projects to the 2020-2023 STIP through Amendment 1:

Need ID: 33040

Soldotna Community Connections and ADA Improvements

Need ID: 32723

Redoubt Avenue and Smith Way Rehabilitation

We look forward to working closely with ADOT&PF to execute the necessary agreements and complete these important projects.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kyle Kornelis', is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Kyle Kornelis, P.E.
Public Works Director

From: [Wendel, Courtney E \(DOT\)](#)
To: ["robbrose@gci.net"](mailto:robbrose@gci.net)
Cc: [Brantner, Maren H \(DOT\)](#)
Subject: RE: Public Comments, STIP Amendment 1
Date: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 3:35:00 PM
Attachments: [TAP_projects.xlsx](#)

Good afternoon Rob,

Thank you for sending us this email! It makes us very happy to see members of the public taking an interest in the STIP process.

You are correct that the HSIP projects didn't change, so therefore they aren't included in the project list for this amendment.

In regards to your question about a bike path being repaired in project 26112, your best point of contact would be the Southcoast planner Joanne Schmidt, as she would have more information about project specifics. We mostly work with general project descriptions and funding amounts.

When we updated project 30689, you will see the creation of several new TAP projects as standalone projects instead of being nested under the main parent project. I pulled all the TAP projects that are either in the Original STIP, and the new TAP projects that are proposed for Amendment 1. This makes it a little easier to see the entire TAP program. I hope this helps see how this change is reflected in the entire amendment.

Again, thank you so much for taking the time to look through our STIP Amendment 1, and feel free to contact us again if you have any more questions!

Thank you,

Courtney Wendel

STIP Planner III

From: robbrose@gci.net <robbrose@gci.net>
Sent: Thursday, September 24, 2020 10:25 PM
To: dot.stip <dot.stip@alaska.gov>
Cc: Rob/Rose Welton <robbrose@gci.net>
Subject: Public Comments, STIP Amendment 1

Hello,

I took a look at amendment #1 of the STIP, primarily focusing on Juneau, and have a few comments.

Outside of Juneau, I'm glad to see a replacement for the Tustumena is in the works. She's a great ship, but is very old;

I'm glad to see work continues on the Haines Highway projects;

I don't see any HSIP project in the amendment. Perhaps that is because the scope and timing of HSIP funding is not changing from the original STIP allocation. Do I have that right?

On Juneau projects I have a few comments, and a question:

26112, Juneau Glacier Hwy Improvements (Lemon Creek)- This is great news. We've needed to add sidewalks to the water side of Glacier Highway through Lemon Creek for some time. I do hope, however, that we do not lose bike lanes in the process of finding right of way for sidewalks. Also, I'm wondering if the project would repair a bike path at the intersection of Vanderbilt Hill Road and Glacier Highway? Overall this is great news;

33042, Brotherhood Bridge Trail Improvements. This is another piece of good news. River bank erosion has forced realignments near Egan Drive. With new housing going in nearby, the demand can only go up for use on this trail. The Montana Creek Bridge seems structurally okay, but perhaps is getting old. Pavement about 1/3 down the trail is very water damaged, and needs repair. Again, excellent news.

30689- TAP program. Am I reading this correctly, that TAP funds are going from roughly \$5 million annually to \$500K annually, except for \$1.5 million in FY21? (FY 20-23) This seems like an extreme cut if I'm reading the amendment correctly. Am I right about this? If so I think it's a mistake to cut maintenance funds to the active transportation network; Especially given the need demonstrated by 33042, the Brotherhood Bridge project, above;

33101, bus purchase. This is also good news, purchasing an electric bus for CBJ, with charging infrastructure.

There are probably other areas that I missed, but these are the items in the STIP that stood out to me.



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MICHAEL J. DUNLEAVY

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

DESIGN & ENGINEERING SERVICES
Highway Design

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Anchorage, AK 99519-6900
Phone Number: 907 269 0641
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Web Site: dot.state.ak.us

November 2, 2020

Devora Barrera Gonzalez, Director, Bike Anchorage
P.O. Box 240062
Anchorage, Alaska 99524

Dear Devora:

Thank you for commenting on the Dowling Road/Seward Highway Interchange Reconstruction Project (CFHWY00359). We appreciate feedback from the community and stakeholders like Bike Anchorage.

The design documents on the project website are from the 65% "Plans-in-Hand" (PIH) or first level of review. The design has progressed from those plans and the draft Design Study Report (May 2019). I'm working with my design team to update the project website to include the more advanced 95% "Pre-PS&E" or second round design documents.

We understand there are safety concerns for non-motorized users at multilane roundabouts, including at Dowling Road interchange. Improving safety for pedestrians and bicyclists is one of the important objectives of the project.

While meeting all safety standards, the existing roundabouts have smaller diameters than desirable. This is because we lacked sufficient right-of-way to make them larger at the time they were constructed. While a significant improvement over the previous intersections, the current roundabout geometry allows traffic to exceed the recommended speed. When this happens, it causes safety and operational problems which have been identified.

Our Design must be consistent with community planning and standards. We cannot add dedicated facilities in Design beyond project goals and budgets already established. However, where planning and standards allow changes to facilities already in design, such as signing, striping, and curbs, we can agree to address some of your recommendations. We've considered your recommendations as follows:

First, consistent with the 2007 Anchorage Bicycle Plan, the project team performed an engineering study/analysis to make the roundabouts more bicycle friendly. In fact, this project is making significant safety improvements for all users by reconstructing the roundabouts.

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The size and design of a roundabout has profound effects on the operations of the facility. The most important effect is the speed at which motorists can comfortably travel through the roundabout. The proposed roundabouts will be larger than the existing ones which will result in slower traffic speeds. The east leg will be reconstructed with a chicane to slow traffic as well. The new bridge with larger diameter roundabouts will improve sight distance and slow vehicle speeds with deflection. This will increase the time non-motorized users have to observe and accept gaps in traffic.

Second, consistent with the 2010 Anchorage Pedestrian Plan, (and in addition to the crossing improvements discussed above) enhanced markings, signage and rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB's) will be installed consistent with more detailed pedestrian studies we performed, as well as the Alaska Traffic Manual (ATM).

Consistent with current standards and best practices, bike lanes will not be included within the roundabouts. Both the *National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Report 672, Roundabouts: An Informational Guide Second Edition* and *FHWA Roundabouts Technical Summary SA-10-0006* say bicycle lanes are not recommended within the circulatory roadway of roundabouts. Where bicycle lanes or shoulders are used on approach roadways, they should be terminated in advance of roundabouts. Bicyclists may choose to merge with traffic and travel like other vehicles, or they may choose to exit the roadway onto the sidewalk (or shared use path) and travel as pedestrians. We've observed cyclists choosing both options.

Shared use is also consistent with the Draft Anchorage Non-motorized Plan intended to update the previous plans in place.

The design team performed a pedestrian accommodations and crossing analysis. The analysis was based on the guidance and methodology provided in the ATM and *NCHRP Report 834, Guidebook for the Application of Crossing Solutions at Roundabouts and Channelized Turn Lanes for Pedestrians with Vision Disabilities*. This analysis did use pedestrian counts conducted in March 2018 which showed less than 5 crossings per hour during peak vehicle hours. While low, any counts ranging from 5-20 users per hour are consistent with usage levels counted along most arterials. Our Design analysis shows we can expect up to 60 gaps per hour to cross single lane approaches, requiring no additional features. Where we show less than adequate crossings per hour, we are mitigating with RRFB's to alert motorists and extend gaps, primarily across multilane approaches.

When we add RRFB's and refuge islands to make crossings more attractive, we choose features to be consistent with other arterial crossings. At one end of the scale, we do not anticipate 'greenbelt' level traffic volumes to the extent we would warrant grade separations. At the other end of the scale, consistent with other arterial intersections, our design analysis examined gaps available in traffic, and has mitigated those multilane crossings which have lower gaps using RRFB's. Those approaches with single lane crossings and adequate gaps do not require additional treatment, consistent with design options normally selected elsewhere on the road network. Single lane crossings are safer where all movements are visible, speeds are lower and the travel distance is less.

We've considered increasing bicycle storage. Trailered and recumbent lengths are not the AMATS design standard for shared use pathways. The widths of pedestrian refuge islands are being increased, and will meet ADA refuge as a minimum.

We will maximize visibility.

Concrete curbs between driving lanes have been considered. We won't maximize the island sizes, but instead, will balance their size to avoid narrowing too much to hinder plowing and pose a hazard to plow drivers and motorists alike.

The RRFB's being installed will be pushbutton activated and will be installed at the proper approach angles between the ramps and buttons to meet ADA compliance. The DOT&PF and AMATS signal budget and staffing levels does not provide for additional signal devices specifically for bicycle use. We do provide devices to meet ADA requirements for pedestrians using pathways and sidewalks. Pushbuttons to accommodate cyclists without dismounting would require additional posts and electrical systems, and would greatly complicate winter maintenance

We will modify crosswalks as you were wondering. Crosswalks will be significantly different from the 24 inch white stripes shown in the 2019 draft DSR. The current standards is to use the "ladder" style for unsignalized advance crossings. The markings will be split to have a 4 foot gap in the middle to allow non-motorized users to cross on pavement instead of the striping material (Methyl Methacrylate). We agree the additional markings will improve driver's expectation of the crossings to the same level of having crossings at traffic signals

We have given consideration to more pedestrian crossing warning signs. The advance signs are an optional treatment per the ATM under these conditions. Consistent with the roundabouts we've built around Anchorage, additional signs are not included for two reasons. The signs are bold and adequately legible ahead of the crosswalk and this will help to limit sign clutter. We find advance signs compete with so many messages needed on approach such that there is too much information presented to road users at a frequency that is less effective. We want drivers to focus on the crosswalks and not too many additional messages as they get nearer to the crosswalks.

Consistent with your suggestion, the latest design does include ramp options for cyclists to get off and on the bike lanes on Brayton Drive and Homer Drive.

Thank you for your advocacy for public safety and input towards features we can finalize in this Design.

When it comes to dedicated bicycle facilities and widening work, the best way to consistently plan ahead for upgrades is to continue providing input on the non-motorized plans and comment on the scopes, schedules and budgets in the STIP and TIP well ahead of adoption and the Design process. Adding large features such as widening and setting new standards for traffic control devices beyond current standards must be done well ahead of when a project is in the design phase.

We appreciate Bike Anchorages efforts in the planning phase, education and outreach, and recent advocacy for pedestrians too. Our ability to build infrastructure can only function well with parallel efforts in these areas.

Sincerely,

Kevin L. Jackson

Kevin Jackson, P.E.
Project Manager

Attachments: None

cc: **Via email:**

Julius Adolffson, Rural Transit Planner and Statewide Bicycle-Ped. Transp. Coordinator, DOT&PF
James Amundsen, P.E., Chief, Highway Design, DOT&PF
Maren Branter, STIP Manager, DOT&PF
Shawn Gardner, Anchorage Planner, DOT&PF
David Post, Surface Transportation Program Manager, DOT&PF
James Starzec, AMATS Planner, DOT&PF
Scott Thomas, P.E. Central Region Traffic Engineer, DOT&PF
Todd Vanhove, Central Region Planning Chief, DOT&PF)



Oct 16th, 2020

Dear DOTP&F STIP team,

We're writing to comment on the Dowling/Seward Interchange project, which has been updated under Amendment 1 of the 2020-2023 STIP. The Amendment isn't clear on what has changed for the project, so we're commenting on the plans as described in the 2020-2023 STIP. Specifically, we are commenting on the Dowling roundabouts, not the Seward Highway bridge. We have several requests for modifications to design elements to ensure that the roundabouts will be safe and usable for bicyclists.

The Dowling roundabouts have been identified as a major safety concern for Anchorage bicyclists. In a survey administered by Vision Zero in 2016, the Dowling/Seward Interchange was the second-most-commonly identified intersection where respondents were concerned about bicycle/pedestrian safety (following Northern Lights & New Seward). Both the Anchorage Bicycle Plan (2010) and the Anchorage Pedestrian Plan (2007) also identify the interchange as an area where non motorized facilities need improvement. Dowling is one of only a few places where any traffic can cross the New Seward Highway in South Anchorage, so ensuring safety and usability for all types of traffic is crucial.

Unfortunately, the Dowling/Seward Interchange Draft Design Study Report (May 2019) does not propose substantive changes to how non motorized users will travel through the roundabouts. We also note that there are no dedicated bicycle facilities planned as part of this project. Instead, bicyclists are expected to share pedestrian facilities, which decreases usability and safety both for bicyclists and pedestrians. Instead of claiming that the project includes bicycle facilities when it does not, please ensure that the language of the plans reflects the shared-use expectation accurately, both for this interchange and for future projects.

As reported in the 2019 Draft Design Study Report, the low bike/ped counts



recorded in March 2018 appear to supply justification for not providing bike facilities and for the limited pedestrian facilities. However, DOT&PF has not provided a measurable standard or comparison to determine if the cause of the exceptionally low ratio of nonmotorized to vehicle traffic is due to the levels of stress the existing facility is placing on non-motorized users. The report acknowledges the public's high east-west demand on this corridor in the form of AADT, as well as the issues with the existing roundabouts pedestrian safety and stressors, but does not acknowledge that the current low bike/ped use may be due to the current unsuitable design. The public has strongly expressed many times that this critical east-west Seward Hwy crossing is in need of safe and low-stress pedestrian treatments, but the 2019 Draft Design Study Report ignores this need. We urge DOT&PF to acknowledge that current bike/ped counts do not reflect the needed or desired use of any facility; and that as with designs for motorized traffic, designs for bike-ped facilities should aim to improve use and satisfy future needs, not simply accommodate present use of the existing, outdated facility.

Under the proposed design, given that bicyclists will be expected to share pedestrian facilities to travel through the roundabouts, and barring any major changes to the planned roundabout design, we request the following design elements to improve usability and safety for bicyclists:

1. Ensure that all crosswalk refuge islands are at least 12 ft wide to allow longer bicycles (tandems, recumbent trikes, bikes pulling trailers) to fit in the refuge area. Otherwise, those islands will be unusable or hazardous traps for a portion of the cycling traffic.
2. Consider installing concrete curbs between the motorized travel lanes rather than simply painting buffers; this will help reduce motorized traffic speeds at crosswalks, which is crucial for improving safety for non motorized users in roundabouts.
3. Install Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) at every crosswalk. The current plan to install RRFBs only at the north-south crossings neglects to assist non motorized traffic crossing east-west to travel along Dowling. Most non motorized traffic travels along Dowling, rather than along the frontage roads, and thus will be using the east-west crossings. The Draft Design Study Report acknowledges that driver yielding behavior is known to be poor at all exits of the roundabout, indicating the need for improved crossing safety in all directions.



4. Assuming the RRFBs will be manually triggered, please ensure that the angles of approach between the crosswalk ramps and the buttons allow for the wider-turning radius of longer bicycles, as well as ensuring access for riders of recumbent bicycles who cannot step up on a curb to access the button.
5. Paint the crosswalks with zebra stripes, which improve motorists' awareness of the presence of a crosswalk, rather than two parallel lines as indicated in the project graphics.
6. Install Pedestrian Crossing warning signs prior to each crosswalk (not only at the crosswalk as currently planned) to alert motorists in advance.
7. Prior to and after the roundabouts on both Dowling and the frontage roads, provide ramps for bicyclists to move between the road and the sidewalk/path. Some bicyclists may prefer to use the crosswalks in the roundabouts but would otherwise be biking on the road, especially given that there are painted bike lanes on Dowling just two blocks west of the interchange. Allowing bicyclists a safe, clear, and timely way to exit the road will be crucial for safety of all traffic.

Given the history of safety concerns for non motorized users at this interchange, we encourage you to consider the above suggestions to maximize safety for all traffic. Thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to get in touch with Bike Anchorage to discuss any of these points further.

Sincerely,

Devora Barrera Gonzalez
Director, Bike Anchorage

with support from
Bike Anchorage Advocacy Committee and Board of Directors

From: [Brantner, Maren H \(DOT\)](#)
To: [Jamie Marunde](#)
Cc: [dot.stip](#); [Chapman, Judy \(DOT\)](#); [Carpenter, Margaret \(DOT\)](#); [Keller, Jennifer C \(DOT\)](#)
Subject: RE: 2020 STIP Comment
Date: Tuesday, November 17, 2020 5:09:11 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Hello Ms. Marunde,

Thank you for taking the opportunity to provide comments to the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), Alaska's federally required four-year program for transportation system preservation and improvement. Alaska's surface transportation program is primarily driven by federal funds and therefore project funding must be amended periodically to meet project development schedules and federal requirements. This process ensures that Alaska will receive the maximum amount of federal funding available to maintain and improve its surface transportation program.

The Department sincerely values your support and appreciates your participation in the planning process.

Maren Brantner

STIP Manager, DOT&PF
(907) 465-2744

From: Jamie Marunde <marundej@doyon.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 13, 2020 8:34 AM
To: dot.stip <dot.stip@alaska.gov>
Subject: 2020 STIP Comment

Please find attached comments regarding the STIP.

Thank you,
Jamie

Jamie Marunde
Vice President of Lands



Doyon, Limited
1 Doyon Place, Ste. 300
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
Office: 907-459-2033
www.doyon.com

Leader In All We Do

From: [Brantner, Maren H \(DOT\)](#)
To: [Sis Garnie](#)
Cc: [dot.stip](#); [Keller, Jennifer C \(DOT\)](#); [Carpenter, Margaret \(DOT\)](#); [Chapman, Judy \(DOT\)](#)
Subject: RE:
Date: Tuesday, November 17, 2020 4:09:56 PM

Dear Ms. Okbaak-Garnie:

Thank you for taking the opportunity to provide comments to the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), Alaska's federally required four-year program for transportation system preservation and improvement. Alaska's surface transportation program is primarily driven by federal funds and therefore project funding must be amended periodically to meet project development schedules and federal requirements. This process ensures that Alaska will receive the maximum amount of federal funding available to maintain and improve its surface transportation program.

We appreciate you sharing your assessment of the current condition on the Nome-Teller Highway, which is an Alaska Highway System (AHS) Route. Projects on the AHS are eligible for inclusion in the STIP, but opportunity to fund these projects has been limited in recent years. The Alaska Highway System includes existing or planned surface facilities that are of statewide significance though not included in the National Highway System.

One current effort that may be of interest is the Northwest Alaska Transportation Plan Update. We invite you to participate in the online open house that will be coming up within the next couple of months. We encourage you to provide feedback on the Norton Sound Seward Peninsula Recommendations as well as the community profile for Teller. If you are not on the project mailing list please contact Jennifer Keller at Jennifer.keller@alaska.gov to ensure you receive the most up to date project information.

Thank you for taking the time to comment on the draft 2020-2023 STIP. The Department sincerely values your support. For more information about the STIP and to view future STIP amendments, please visit www.dot.alaska.gov/stip.

Sincerely,

Maren Brantner

STIP Manager, DOT&PF

(907) 465-2744

From: Sis Garnie <sisgarnie@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, October 12, 2020 11:35 AM
To: dot.stip <dot.stip@alaska.gov>
Subject:

Can I comment about the Nome-Teller highway?

The dirt highway is in horrible condition especially near Teller and the State owns Front

Avenue in Teller. I don't understand why the State dropped 2 employees from Teller on the Highway from May to October the two positions were moved to Nome a few years ago. Our community of Teller is underserved it doesn't have water and sewer with more jobs we can prove to sustain a system, the employment is needed in Teller, and the road was in much better conditions when the newer out of Teller the employees out of Nome work on other roads over the years and nothing was done on this highway some years. The state roads are also cleared of snow in winter by the city with tribal roads money, the roads and state highway to the landfill to the airport, the state highway is part of the school bus route, why can't the state help clear the state roads in the winter.

Blanche Okbaak-Garnie
(907)643-2295