

**PROJECT MEMORANDUM**

Fireweed Lane, Seward Highway to Spenard Road  
Project Number(s): 58488/HES-0001(50), RFP#: 36892057

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TO: File  
FROM: Anne Brooks, Brooks and Associates  
SUBJECT: Public Meeting/Spenard Community Council Meeting, November 7, 2001  
DATE: November 11, 2001

Format: Public meeting/open house began at 6:0 p.m. The council meeting began at 7 p.m. Materials were available to the public in the back of the Spenard Community Council (SCC) meeting room during the meeting for quiet observation and conversation with the project team. The project team made a presentation during the council meeting at approximately 8 p.m. followed by a question and answer session lasting approximately 30 minutes.

The meeting was attended by approximately 35-40 people, 22 of which stayed throughout the Spenard Road presentation. Project team members present included, from Lounsbury & Associates—Jim Sawhill, David Krehmeier, Tom Garrett; from ADOT&PF—Ken Morton, from Brooks & Associates—Anne Brooks and from Tryck, Nyman & Hayes—Don Vogan and Ed Leonetti.

Anne Brooks, Public Involvement Coordinator introduced the project team. Jim Sawhill, Lounsbury & Associates provided a presentation of the project's purpose (to improve roadway safety); and the project efforts to date (completion of the Traffic and Safety and Preliminary Engineering). Jim discussed the need for the public to provide input at this meeting regarding the preferred alternative and how to best spend the limited monies available for amenities. He mentioned that the Project Advisory Committee preferred alternative 2. He then introduced Don Vogan, Landscape Architect, to allow Don to explain the opportunities available for enhancing Spenard Road.

The following narrative captures the essence of the questions raised by the public and the team's response (in italics).

In the alternatives where the road shifts from one side to the other. Will this be to the east or west side? *The roadway could be shifted to either side and the improvements mirrored.*

I have several comments. 1) Make the decorative lighting effective—use other lighting if it is adequate. 2) Some of the new projects around town have shrubs in front of the traffic signals, making it difficult to see the signal—Bragaw is an example.

How many unimproved bus stops along Spenard Road in the project area? *8 or 9*

Who would maintain the strips of grass? It would be a wider area to put the snow. Who would maintain it? *The MOA Parks and Recreation generally maintains the landscaping under an agreement with ADOT&PF.*

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The decorative lighting on the west side was not installed the way the council preferred. There are way too many lights, put in the wrong place. They were placed 8 to 10 feet from the street lights. They should be pulled out and placed on the other side of the street.

Where are the resources [money] coming from? *The funds are 90% FHWA and 10% state money.*

When we did south Spenard to International Airport Road we had in mind a wider street because of the prostitute houses. Could we use the funding rules, do this project in several parts and widen it out have a bigger/broader right of way? We want to see it [Spenard] improved and made to look better. *The project we are discussing tonight is a safety project and was not scoped in the same way as the south Spenard Road project which allocated a significant amount for right-of-way acquisition. The Spenard Road Safety Project will work, to the extent possible, within the existing road right-of-way.*

The Advisory Committee suggested we look at bus stops first and spend our amenities budget there. We could also go to AMATS to seek additional funding and talk to Bob Kniefel, MOA Public Transportation, about his bus stop improvement program. They may be able to pay for part of the bus stop improvements and we could use our money for other amenities along the roadway.

Do the median strips provide for any plantings? *We can explore getting some plantings in the median during design for a softer look; another option is paving textures—brick or colored concrete.*

When we had Michelle working with the Beautification Committee she did a wonderful job. Why don't we consider leveraging and adding monies to take advantage of this opportunity to improve Spenard? Do we agree the community council supports leveraging and increasing efforts to approach different avenues for funding? The response was affirmative.

When we worked on south Spenard, we took away the businesses and the residents behind the businesses got involved in the improvements.

Make sure that the street lamps have shades to eliminate spillover light pollution. The lights at the new Benny Benson park were purchased with shades long before the park was constructed and somehow the shades were misplaced.

If you put landscaping in the bus areas, make sure you don't block the view of buses that are coming.

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Is a separation from the street better for safety? *Yes, a separation provides some distance from the vehicles for the pedestrian. If you watch people walking down the street, they will be as far from the traveling vehicle as they can get. We can accomplish this in two ways—with a shoulder (3.5-foot wide) or a vegetated strip (3.5-foot wide).*

Lance Wilber, MOA Traffic Engineering Director, offered the comment that Spenard Road was identified in the Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan as a "transit corridor" meaning that development in the area should be multi-modal, higher density within 1/4 mile, and support pedestrians and bus ridership. Widening transit corridors would be considered a last resort.

It looks like Alternatives 1 and 2 would have no curb work. *All the alternatives will require the same level of effort for removal and replacement of existing curb. For Alternative 1 the curb and gutter would be removed and returned to the same location. For Alternative 2 the curb and gutter would be removed and reconstructed 3.5-feet from their current location—narrowing the street by 7-feet. Alternative 3 would be the same as Alternative 2. Alternatives 4 and 5 move the curb location on the west side of the street 7-feet.*

Would some of the driveways be closed? *During design all the driveways will be evaluated because they will be upgraded to meet the requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act. This usually effects the cross slope and ramps and some driveways may be narrowed, some may be removed. In either case, we will work closely with the property owners and businesses to make these decisions.*

What is the construction date? *This is in flux since this project may be combined with the Fireweed Lane project.*

The community has time to work with AMATS to secure additional funding.

The project team thanked the public for their input, promised to return in January with the final document and identify the preferred alternative that would go forward into design.