



Municipality of Anchorage
-Office of Community and Economic Development-

July 10, 2026

The Honorable Ryan Anderson, P.E.
Commissioner

Katherine Keith, PMP, PMI-ACP
Deputy Commissioner

Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities

Dear Commissioner Anderson and Deputy Commissioner Keith:

Thank you for your recent correspondence of 6/17/2026 and 7/7/2026 regarding the Safer Seward Highway project and, more importantly, for the continued partnership between the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities and the Municipality of Anchorage.

Strong partnership is essential for addressing Alaska's transportation challenges. We share the same fundamental objectives: improving public safety, investing transportation dollars wisely, and delivering projects that serve Alaskans well for generations. It is in that collaborative spirit that we offer the following observations.

First and foremost, the Municipality fully supports improving safety along the Seward Highway corridor. The documented history of fatal and serious injury crashes demonstrates that meaningful action is warranted, and we commend the Department for its commitment to addressing those risks.

We appreciate the Department's assurances that restoring the Safer Seward Highway project to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan is a planning action and does not constitute approval of the final project design or predetermine an outcome. We understand and respect that distinction.

That said, in the Metropolitan Transportation Planning process we have a responsibility to represent the broader transportation interests of the Anchorage region and to ensure that major transportation investments are supported by a transparent planning process that operates within fiscal constraints, inspires public confidence, and provides decision-makers with the fullest understanding of available options.

Responsible stewardship of public resources requires continued evaluation of whether a project's safety objectives can be achieved through more cost-effective approaches. We must deliver substantial safety improvements while also making the most effective use of limited transportation funding. We need more information from you about the full cost of the project, as well as data on the alternatives designs that were considered.

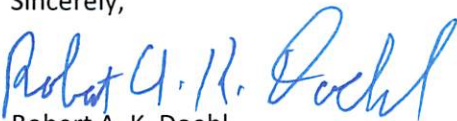
The Municipality also believes there is value in continuing public engagement as the project progresses. We have heard from a number of stakeholder organizations and interested members of the public that additional opportunities for dialogue would be beneficial. There is substantial public concern that the design was predetermined and that public input has not been incorporated into the project. Given the project's regional significance, estimated cost, and long-term implications, additional outreach would strengthen public understanding of the available alternatives, reinforce confidence in the decision-making process, and ultimately contribute to a stronger project regardless of the alternative selected.

As you know, the Municipality also has a responsibility to advocate for the transportation needs of the Anchorage region as a whole. While we understand that National Highway Performance Program funding is managed by the State, those resources remain finite. Accordingly, it is appropriate for regional leaders to understand how a project of this magnitude relates to other documented transportation safety needs. The Administration remains committed to improving safety on the Seward Highway while also ensuring that limited transportation resources continue to support other critical regional priorities, including roadway safety, freight mobility, and the infrastructure needed to support Anchorage's long-term economic vitality.

As the project advances, the Municipality respectfully encourages the Department to revisit how the project's safety objectives can be achieved in the most effective manner possible through engineering, environmental review, fiscal analysis, and public engagement. We believe projects of this magnitude benefit from continued refinement throughout their development, ensuring that the final investment reflects not only the highest practical level of public safety, but also responsible stewardship of limited transportation resources and thoughtful consideration of the broader transportation needs of the Anchorage region.

Thank you again for your leadership and your partnership. We look forward to continuing our work together in the collaborative spirit that has characterized our relationship.

Sincerely,



Robert A. K. Doehl

Director

Office of Community and Economic Development