



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
Ryan Anderson, P.E., Commissioner

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July 15, 2026

The Honorable Suzanne LaFrance
Mayor
Municipality of Anchorage
P.O. Box 196650
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6650

Subject: Safer Seward Highway Project Public Design Meeting

Dear Mayor LaFrance:

I'm responding to your request that the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) hold a public meeting focused on the proposed design of the Safer Seward Highway Project, Milepost 98.5–118. The Department agrees that an additional design-focused meeting would be useful and proposes holding the meeting during the week of August 10, 2026. DOT&PF will coordinate with the Municipality of Anchorage, AMATS, the Federal Highway Administration, and other project partners to establish the specific date, time, location, and meeting format.

This meeting will build upon the extensive public, stakeholder, agency, Tribal, and regulatory engagement conducted since the project began. That engagement has included formal public scoping and concept-evaluation meetings, online open houses, listening posts, transportation fairs, twelve Stakeholder Working Group meet-ings, more than forty additional stakeholder and community meetings, community council and AMATS com-mittee briefings, agency and Tribal consultation, and public review of the Draft Environmental Assessment. Public comments received through these activities have informed the alternatives evaluation, environmental analysis, and development of the current design.

At the same time, the continued public discussion demonstrates the value of presenting the proposed physical design in a clear and accessible format. Public discussion to date has addressed transportation safety, environmental review, historic preservation, scenic character, recreation, funding, and regional planning. The recent comments from the Anchorage Historic Preservation Commission further demonstrate the importance of clearly showing how the proposed improvements could affect the corridor and its historic, cultural, scenic, recreational, and railroad resources.

This additional meeting would not repeat the broader environmental review or serve as an extension of the NEPA public-comment period. Instead, it would be organized around what the project would physically construct and would provide the public with a focused opportunity to understand and comment on the current design.

"Keep Alaska Moving."

The project team will present the current design by corridor segment using plan-view drawings, typical sections, maps, and visual simulations where available. The presentation will address:

- highway lane, shoulder, and median configurations;
- intersections, turn lanes, access management, and local connections;
- pullouts, waysides, parking, trailheads, and recreational access;
- pedestrian facilities and the alignment, separation, crossings, and connections of the proposed multi-use pathway;
- railroad relocation, crossings, maintenance access, fencing, and other railroad safety measures; and
- rock cuts, fill areas, retaining structures, drainage, barriers, snow-storage areas, and other features affecting the appearance and use of the corridor.

The materials will distinguish among what is currently proposed, the safety and operational criteria influencing the design, and the elements that remain subject to further evaluation or refinement. Particular attention will be given to locations that have generated significant public interest, including Potter Marsh, Beluga Point, McHugh Creek, Rainbow, Indian, Bird, recreational access points, and areas involving railroad reconstruction or realignment.

The public will have an opportunity to ask questions and provide oral and written comments on the design elements presented. This meeting is intended as a focused design-engagement effort and is separate from the formal public review and comment procedures associated with the National Environmental Policy Act.

Following the meeting, DOT&PF will prepare a summary of the comments received, identify the principal design issues raised, and report back to the Municipality of Anchorage and AMATS. The summary will also identify which matters may be considered during continued design development, coordination with partner agencies and land managers, or future project phases. This process will provide a transparent record of the meeting without reopening or duplicating the formal NEPA comment process.

As stated in the Department's July 7 letter to the AMATS Policy Committee, continued planning for the full project corridor does not predetermine the final design, construction phasing, environmental outcome, or future funding decisions. This meeting will provide the public with a clearer understanding of the proposed physical design and a meaningful opportunity to help inform the work that remains.

The project team will coordinate promptly with your administration and AMATS staff to select a meeting date during the week of August 10, 2026, and finalize the location, public notice, presentation materials, comment process, and format for reporting the results back to the Municipality and AMATS. We appreciate the Municipality's continued partnership in advancing a safe, reliable, and context-sensitive transportation solution for this important corridor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ryan Anderson".

Ryan Anderson, P.E.
Commissioner

cc: Robert A. Doehl, Director, Community and Economic Development, Municipality of Anchorage
Nora Morse, Communications Director, Office of the Mayor, Municipality of Anchorage
Susanne Fleek-Green, Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor, Municipality of Anchorage
Katherine Keith, Deputy Commissioner, Alaska DOT&PF