

A STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING CONTEXT SENSITIVE TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

AMATS/Planning & Zoning/Assembly Review Draft

Prepared For

Municipality of Anchorage
Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions



Prepared by
Brooks and Associates

February 2008

A Strategy For Developing Context Sensitive Transportation Projects

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**Municipality of Anchorage
Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS)**

4700 Elmore Road
P.O. Box 196650
Anchorage, AK 99519-6650
(907) 343-2996

Prepared by

Brooks and Associates
301 W. Northern Lights Boulevard, Suite 440
Anchorage, Alaska 99503
(907) 272-1877

February 2008

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- Attachment 1: Sample Project Description Form
- Attachment 2: Sample Concept Report Development Action Form
- Attachment 3: Roadway Design Considerations and Sample Report Outlines (Concept Report/Design Study Report)
- Attachment 4: Project Evaluation / Completion Survey

MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE

A STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING CONTEXT SENSITIVE TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

INTRODUCTION

The following is the first-only strategy for the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) related to a project development process known as Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) [also called Context Sensitive Design (CSD)]. Projects developed using a context sensitive solution process are arrived at through cooperation of stakeholders and decision makers. The process is grounded in the community values expressed in planning documents, such as the Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan. The process is further guided by the policies, strategies and implementation documents outlined in Anchorage 2020. For example, the Long Range Transportation Plan, Neighborhood and District Plans, and others provide a foundation for the community's vision of the future.

The projects for which this process will be a guide are prioritized and programmed for funding in a separate process. This CSS strategy applies to the projects once they are handed to MOA Project Management & Engineering for study, design, construction and maintenance.

COMMUNITY BUILDING: THE CITY'S MISSION

The mission of the Municipality of Anchorage is building and sustaining a community for current and future generations of Alaskans. Transportation projects play a big role in shaping the community and are best accomplished with thoughtful input from a community's residents. The Municipality of Anchorage and the joint Municipality/State transportation policy body, Anchorage Area

Metropolitan Transportation Solutions (AMATS) body, prepared this strategy in order to implement a citywide approach to transportation project design based on the principals of Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) or Context Sensitive Design (CSD). CSS/CSD principles strive to achieve community building with all the voices at the table and all the stakeholders in the room.

STRATEGY

Effective <enter date> the Municipality of Anchorage will apply the principles of Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) to all transportation projects.

The main idea is based on common sense – if a project will affect the lives, goals and objectives or mission of a group, they should be involved in the decisions that frame the project. The strategy is adapted from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidance. More specifically, the FHWA guidance definition:

Context Sensitive Solutions is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach to project development, involving all stakeholders at the earliest phase, to ensure that transportation projects are in harmony with communities and preserve environmental, scenic, aesthetic, and historic resources while maintaining safety and mobility. It involves taking into consideration the land use and environment adjacent to the roadway when planning and designing a project so as to make the improvement blend in with the surrounding community.

APPLICABILITY

This strategy is applicable to all employees and others (consultants, agencies, etc.) involved in the planning, development, construction, maintenance, and operation of transportation projects within the Municipality of Anchorage.

Recommended for approval by the Municipality of Anchorage Planning and Zoning Commission on February 11, 2008, confirmed by Planning and Zoning Commission Resolution No. 2008-015 on March 10, 2008.

Recommended by Mayor, Municipality of Anchorage

Date: _____

Mayor of Anchorage

Approved by Anchorage Assembly

Date: _____

Chair, Anchorage Assembly

BENEFITS AND INTENDED RESULTS

BENEFITS

The Federal Highway Administration web site at www.contextsensitivesolutions.org describes the benefits of CSS as follows:

“As an approach to transportation, CSS has spread rapidly since 1998. In large part this is because CSS practitioners and advocates understand and embrace its many important benefits:

- **CSS solves the right problem** by broadening the definition of "the problem" that a project should solve, and by reaching consensus with all stakeholders before the design process begins.
- **CSS conserves environmental and community resources.** CSS facilitates and streamlines the process of National Environmental Policy act (NEPA) compliance.
- **CSS saves time.** It shortens the project development process by gaining consensus early, and thereby minimizing litigation and redesign, and expediting permit approvals.
- **CSS saves money.** By shortening the project development process and eliminating obstacles, money as well as time is saved.
- **CSS builds support** from the public and from the regulators. By partnering and planning a project with the transportation agency, these parties bring full cooperation, and often additional resources as well.
- **CSS helps prioritize and allocate scarce transportation funds** in a cost-effective way, at a time when needs far exceed resources.
- **Group decisions are generally better than individual decisions.** Research supports the conclusion that decisions are more accepted and mutually satisfactory when made by all who must live with them.
- **CSS is the right thing to do.** It serves the public interest, helps build communities and leaves a better place behind.”

INTENDED RESULTS

The Municipality of Anchorage desires that their transportation corridors be an economic, social, and cultural asset as well as provide for the safe and efficient movement of goods, services and people. They want transportation projects to provide opportunities for enhanced non-motorized travel and improved visual quality. For example, in natural areas of the Municipality, such as a park entrance, projects can fit aesthetically into the surroundings. This strategy is intended to guide transportation project development to ensure that transportation solutions meet more than just the transportation objectives. This strategy should guide transportation project development to

ensure the solutions are in harmony with community goals and natural environments.

Context Sensitive Solutions IS:

- A result of collaborative processes, broad-based consultation, and compromise between community needs and individual interests.
- The way to achieve a safe facility that is in harmony with the community and its scenic, historic, and environmental values.
- An efficient use of time, budget, and community resources.
- The creation of a public facility that adds lasting value to the community.
- A way for the community's affected interests as a whole, including immediate residents, to contribute to definition of a project's scope.
- A balance of competing desires – e.g., lower traffic speeds versus shoulder snow storage.

EVALUATION, REVIEW AND REVISION OF THIS STRATEGY

The Municipality of Anchorage recognizes that this strategy will need to be thoughtfully implemented, periodically evaluated and updated as necessary.

Evaluation will occur in the post construction evaluation step in the process (see Exhibit 2). This step involves evaluating both the final product (the road, path, etc.) and the process. Stakeholders involved in the project will be asked to evaluate the project teams and staff involved in the project and make constructive recommendations for process improvement. Stakeholders and users of the completed facility will evaluate the finished product.

Review will occur annually by compiling the post-construction evaluations related to the project development process, suggestions arising from the evaluations and providing these to the Context Sensitive Solutions Guidance Team to recommend changes to this strategy. The Municipality will report back to the Planning and Zoning Commission annually after adoption of the strategy to provide overview of implementation processes and

describe what worked, what did not work and what should be changed.

Updates to this strategy will be recommended to AMATS committees and the Municipal Assembly for approval.

DEFINITIONS

WHO IS "THE PUBLIC"?

This strategy will talk about "the public" or "the stakeholder" or "the community" throughout. Who is this? For this strategy we will consider the "public" or "stakeholder" or "the community" to be any groups and individuals affected by or interested in the project. Groups, businesses, associations, neighborhood residents, government agencies, single individuals, interest groups, and people and groups within responsible public agencies might be included. The level of interest and involvement of the different stakeholders may occur at different times.

WHO IS THE DECISION MAKER?

In project development and public involvement processes it is important to define the decision maker. There are times when government agencies choose to retain decision-making authority. There are times when the agency may share decision making, for example, to gain a higher level of public acceptance for a project. This strategy is about sharing the decision-making. However, it is important to consider the reasons that agencies retain decision-making that are clearly spelled out in *The Public Participation Handbook* by James L. Creighton. He states:

"...there are compelling reasons that agencies retain ultimate decision-making power even if they find it in their enlightened self-interest to share some portion of that power:

- *Agencies are constrained by mandates and authorities that limit what they can do. As frustrating as these mandates and authorities can be, there must be an orderly process for addressing them, or soon agencies would do whatever they wanted, and without any accountability to the*

public. Although the line of accountability back to elected officials is often long and tenuous, it must always be there. Otherwise, any claim by the bureaucracy to democratic legitimacy is false.

- *In many cases, agencies are implementing laws. If the public brings sufficient pressure to bear on elected officials, these laws can be changed. But otherwise, the agency must operate within the constraints imposed by the law.*
- *Agencies often have contractual obligations they must meet. If they abrogate contracts and other legal obligations whenever public sentiment wants them to, they will soon be unable to enter into any binding contract, and all existing actions will be stalled by litigation.*
- *The public that achieves consensus may do so because it isn't paying the costs. A public participation program that gets a consensus that everybody else should pay for the special benefit of a few has to be balanced by some intervening authority that can require attention to the needs of everybody who is paying for the project.*
- *Controversies over the actions of government agencies are most frequently the result of genuine disagreements within the public about what should be done.*
- *In the final analysis, those who choose to participate in a public participation program are self-selecting. Their only job is to represent their self-interest, not discern the public interest. Because they do not, and cannot claim to be "the public" in the same way that an election speaks for "the public," their contribution can be influential but cannot dictate the final decision."*

This quotation is included in this strategy to illustrate why decision-making often defers to the Municipality. It in no way implies that all public stakeholders represent only their own self-interest and not broader community interests when participating in public process.

In most projects to which this strategy will apply, the agencies referred to would be

departments of the Municipality of Anchorage such as Project Management & Engineering (PM&E).

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS WITH CSS

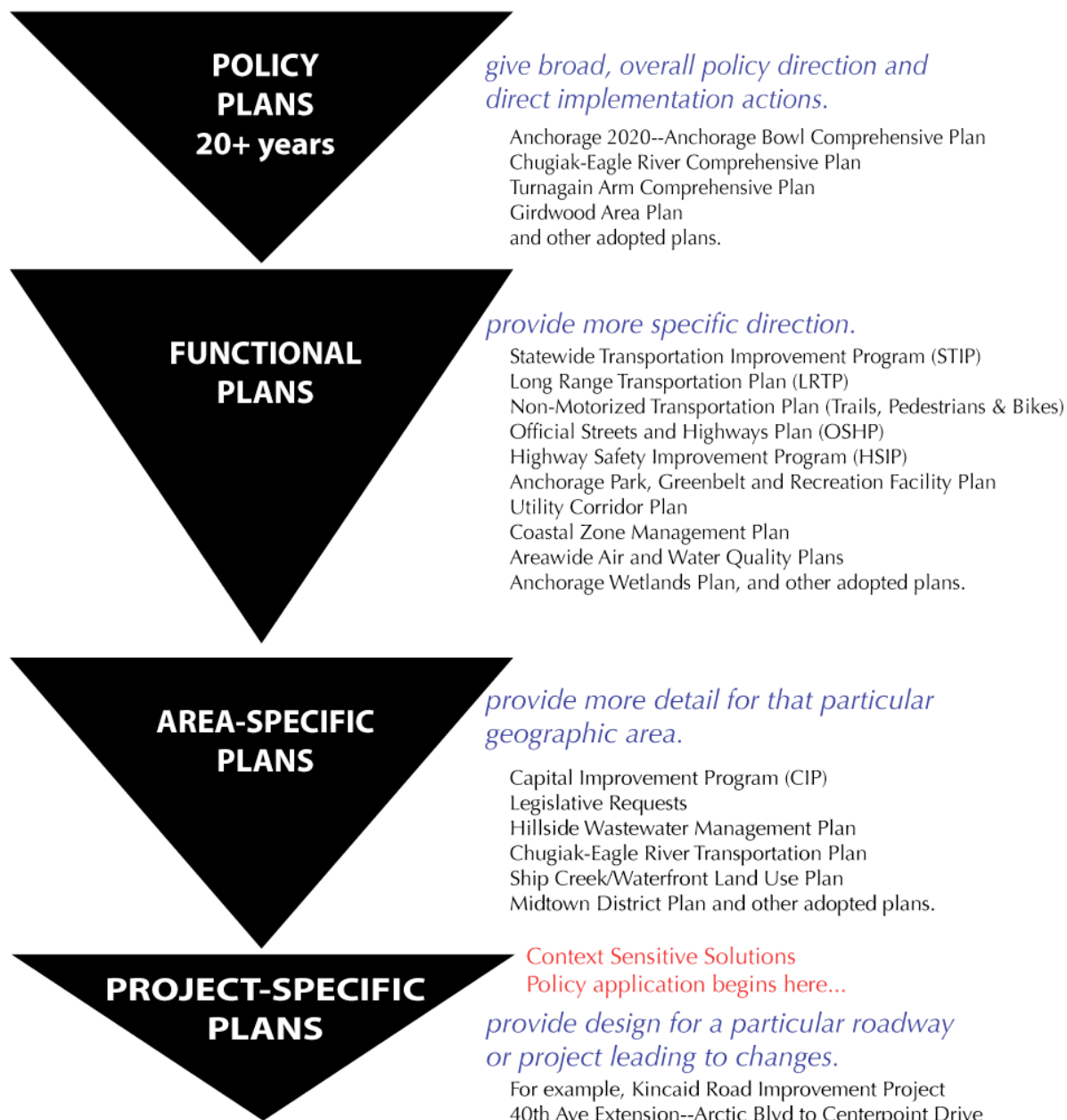
The Municipality of Anchorage project development process will be changed to accommodate the principles of CSS beginning with project specific plans. Some elements will remain the same. New emphasis will be placed on the public process and the need to reach the broad range of stakeholders for any given project. New emphasis will also be placed on balancing the community members' desires and the broader community's need for the project.

Planning begins with comprehensive planning – the big, 20-year plus picture. More specific direction is provided in functional plans such as the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and area-specific plans such as the Midtown Plan or the Downtown Framework Plan. When the project is initiated and handed to PM&E, the principles of CSS as identified in this plan will begin. The overall planning process and relationship of planning documents are shown in Exhibit 1.

The project development steps are shown on Exhibit 2 and mark the beginning of a Context Sensitive process. At this point, some funding is assumed to be in place for the project problem definition to begin.

This strategy identifies a new step and a new document—the Concept Report. Staff or consultants will create the document as an effort to fully understand and document the problem to be solved. Keep in mind that some problem definition was developed to include the project in funding plans. However, at this Concept Report phase, the problem definition will be explored with a public process. The decision to proceed to the Design Study Report

Exhibit 1
Anchorage Planning Documents Flow Chart¹



¹ Source: Municipality of Anchorage, *Anchorage 2020: Anchorage Bowl Comprehensive Plan*

phase will depend on the 1) stakeholder agreement on the scope and nature of the problem; 2) the community acceptance of the need to solve the problem(s); and 3) documented overwhelming stakeholder need to solve the problem.

The steps to complete a project are described in more detail below.

Authorization to Begin Project – Authority to begin a project will occur when design funding is provided via the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, the AMATS Transportation Improvement Program, the Municipal Capital Improvement Program or a legislative appropriation.

Prepare Concept Report – CSS Problem Definition Phase. Develop and document an understanding of the problem -- defining the nature, scope, and severity of the transportation problem to be solved. The problem definition should include: What are the underlying issues? What is the whole problem? What is the severity of the problem? The public outreach at this phase may include identifying the full range of stakeholders, flagging the project area, walking the corridor with stakeholders, project newsletters, public meetings, and a Citizens' Advisory Committee. The public will be informed about project elements set by design guideline or community values including the community values adopted in Comprehensive Plans, neighborhood plans, and other land use plans which represent long-range intentions and goals. The public will be informed of the full range of solutions available to solve the problem. The outcome is a report documenting the problems to be solved, the issues identified by the public, a concept or concepts to advance to the next phase (if there is one) and a recommendation to proceed, if support exists to do so. Attachments 1 and 2 provide a draft outlines for two documents developed at this phase – the Project Description Form and the Concept Report Development. Attachment 3 provides an outline of the Concept Report.

Prepare Design Study Report (DSR) – The DSR will be developed by a consultant or internal project team with public participation. The DSR provides full documentation of the project

corridor and incorporates a detailed evaluation of the full range of alternatives. An outline of the table of contents of a typical design study report is provided as Attachment 3.

DSR development includes the following three CSS Phases:

Project Development & Evaluation Framework – This step in the process develops the criteria by which the effectiveness of the alternatives will be weighed. Data needs are defined and the study effort is focused on compiling the information needed for the evaluation. The process and methods of evaluating the alternatives is also defined.

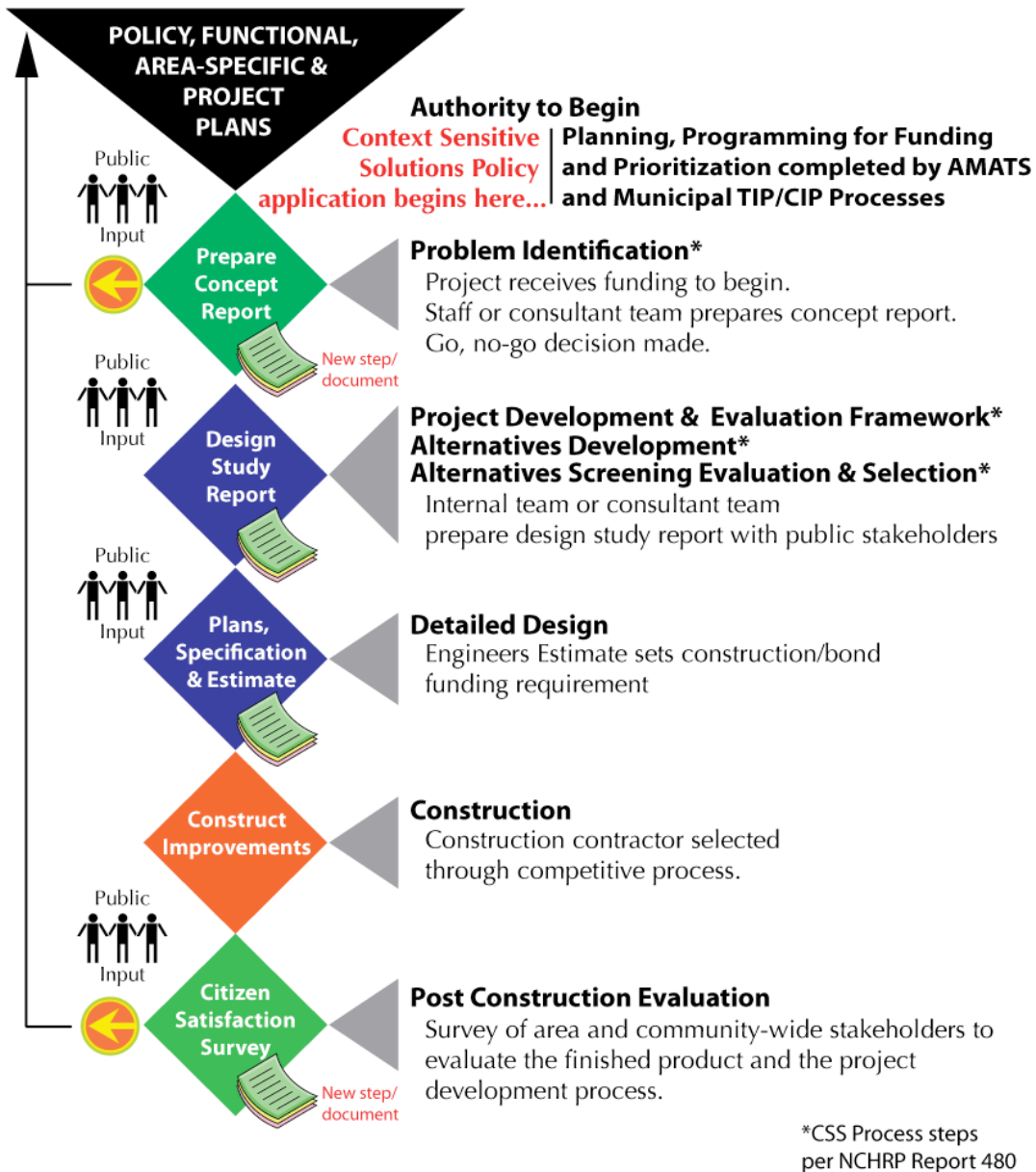
Alternatives Development – NCHRP Report 480 states that during this step teams develop and document a full range of alternative solutions; ensure education of all parties on innovative solutions; and portray alternatives in an understandable format. Emphasis is placed on “full range of alternative solutions” and “understandable format.” There may be ways of solving a roadway capacity problem that does not include a roadway solution. Understandable formats for engineers and technical people are very different for the lay public. Alternatives must be expressed in ways comprehensible to everyone.

Alternatives Screening Evaluation & Selection – for this step, the guidance suggests an “apples to apples” comparison of alternatives, application of the evaluation criteria and framework established in the first step.

At the completion of the design study report, the project design begins.

Prepare Plans, Specifications & Estimate – At this step, the design team will complete the engineering drawings necessary for a contract to construct the improvements. The engineers' estimate is developed to allow the Municipality of Anchorage to program the cost of the project.

**Exhibit 2
Project Development Flow Chart**



into construction funding documents – such as bonding documents.

Construction – All construction projects within the Municipality are awarded to the lowest qualified bidder through a competitive process. Once the contractor is selected, construction commences and is completed.

Post Construction Evaluation – This is a new step in the project development process. Site

specific and area wide citizens are polled to determine their acceptance of the project. Input received is used to inform future projects and processes. Questions proposed for the post-construction evaluation are provided in Attachment 4. The statistically valid survey would be conducted by a third party and funded with project funds

CSS PROCESS PARTICIPANT RESPONSIBILITIES

Implementing CSS within the Municipality in accordance with this strategy requires commitment from many project stakeholders. Each stakeholder has important responsibilities in order to achieve project objectives of addressing a transportation need, being an asset to the community and being compatible with the natural and built environment. Guidelines for key project stakeholders within the Municipality are noted below. These responsibilities should guide stakeholder actions throughout project development.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Mayor of Anchorage

- Creates an environment supporting context sensitive solutions.
- Recognizes and highlights individuals, teams and projects that advance the goals of this strategy .
- Encourages staff to expand their knowledge of context sensitive solutions.
- Encourages and supports collaborative context sensitive solution processes.
- Supports the context sensitive solutions process outcome.

Anchorage Municipal Assembly

- Recognizes and highlights individuals, teams and projects that advance the goals of this policy.
- Encourages and supports collaborative context sensitive solution processes.
- Supports the context sensitive solutions process outcome.

MUNICIPAL STAFF

Municipal Engineer

- Supports context sensitive solutions in the planning, design, construction and evaluation of transportation facilities.
- Provides training for staff to expand their knowledge of context sensitive solutions and its implementation.

- Works to identify and develop procedures and guidance for application of context sensitive solutions.
- Provides timely direction to project teams when design waivers are under consideration.
- Supports the context sensitive solutions process outcome.

Traffic Director

- Develops and maintains community transportation plans.
- Provides training for staff to expand their knowledge of context sensitive solutions and its implementation.
- Works with local and regional planning entities to support and incorporate collaborative context sensitive solutions in planning, programming, and developing transportation facilities and services.
- Works to identify and develop procedures and guidance for application of context sensitive solutions.
- Supports the context sensitive solutions process outcome.

Municipal Traffic Engineer

- Supports context sensitive solutions in the planning, design, construction and evaluation of transportation facilities.
- Provides training for staff to expand their knowledge of context sensitive solutions and its implementation.
- Encourages and supports collaborative context sensitive solution processes.
- Provides timely support and direction to project teams when design waivers are under consideration.
- Works with local and regional planning entities to support and incorporate collaborative context sensitive solutions in planning, programming, and developing transportation facilities and services.
- Works to identify and develop procedures and guidance for application of context sensitive solutions.
- Supports the context sensitive solutions process outcome.

Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator

- Supports context sensitive solutions in the planning, design, construction and evaluation of transportation facilities.
- Develops and maintains community planning guidance as it relates to non-motorized transportation.
- Provides training for staff to expand their knowledge of context sensitive solutions and its implementation.
- Provides timely information and support to project teams during project development.
- Works with local and regional planning entities to support and incorporate collaborative context sensitive solutions in planning, programming, and developing transportation facilities and services.
- Supports the context sensitive solutions process outcome.

Director, Street Maintenance

- Supports context sensitive solutions in the planning, design, construction and evaluation of transportation facilities.
- Provides training for staff to expand their knowledge of context sensitive solutions and its implementation.
- Provides timely information and support to project teams during project development.
- Works with local and regional planning entities to support and incorporate collaborative context sensitive solutions in planning, programming, and developing transportation facilities and services.
- Supports the context sensitive solutions process outcome.

Director, Public Transportation

- Supports context sensitive solutions in the planning, design, construction and evaluation of transportation facilities.
- Develops and maintains community planning guidance as it relates to public transportation.
- Provides training for staff to expand their knowledge of context sensitive solutions and its implementation.
- Provides timely information and support to project teams during project development.
- Works with local and regional planning entities to support and incorporate collaborative context sensitive solutions in

planning, programming, and developing transportation facilities and services.

- Supports the context sensitive solutions process outcome.

Director, Office of Economic & Community Development

- Supports context sensitive solutions in the planning, design, construction and evaluation of transportation facilities.
- Develops and maintains community planning guidance as it relates to economic and community development.
- Provides training for staff to expand their knowledge of context sensitive solutions and its implementation.
- Provides timely information and support to project teams during project development.
- Works with local and regional planning entities to support and incorporate collaborative context sensitive solutions in planning, programming, and developing transportation facilities and services.
- Supports the context sensitive solutions process outcome.

Director, Planning

- Supports context sensitive solutions in the planning, design, construction and evaluation of transportation facilities.
- Develops and maintains community planning guidance as it relates to land use planning.
- Trains staff, Urban Design Commission (UDC) and Planning & Zoning Commission (P&Z) members on the implementation of context sensitive solutions.
- Provides timely information and support to project teams during project development.
- Provides training for staff to expand their knowledge of context sensitive solutions and its implementation.
- Works with local and regional planning entities to support and incorporate collaborative context sensitive solutions in planning, programming, and developing transportation facilities and services.
- Supports the context sensitive solutions process outcome.

Director, Parks and Recreation

- Supports context sensitive solutions in the planning, design, construction and evaluation of transportation facilities.
- Develops and maintains community planning guidance as it relates to parks and recreation.
- Provides training for staff to expand their knowledge of context sensitive solutions and its implementation.
- Works with local and regional planning entities to support and incorporate collaborative context sensitive solutions in planning, programming, and developing transportation facilities and services.
- Provides timely information and support to project teams during project development.
- Supports the context sensitive solutions process outcome.

- Supports the context sensitive solutions process outcome.

Municipal Watershed Task Force

- Seeks information and gains understanding of implementation of context sensitive solutions in community building.
- Reviews public projects and makes recommendations to decision makers regarding the projects' fish passage, habitat, restoration, and watershed management features.
- Provides advice during project scoping and design regarding the projects' environmental permits and mitigation features.
- Supports the context sensitive solutions process outcome.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Planning and Zoning Commission

- Seeks information and gain understanding of implementation of context sensitive solutions in community building.
- Reviews public projects and makes recommendations to decision makers regarding the projects' role in sustaining the economic, social and land use needs of the community especially as expressed in the Municipality's comprehensive and functional plans.
- Supports the context sensitive solutions process outcome.
- Serves as the dispute resolution panel should the Municipality and stakeholders reach an impasse. For example, if there is a difference of opinion between the functional design and what the community wants the Commission would resolve the dispute.

Urban Design Commission

- Seeks information and gains understanding of implementation of context sensitive solutions in community building.
- Reviews public projects and advises the Mayor, Assembly and Planning and Zoning Commission regarding the projects' urban, northern setting, and winter cities design features.

PUBLIC SERVICES

Anchorage School District

- Works with local and regional planning entities to support and incorporate context sensitive solutions in planning, programming, and developing transportation facilities and services for local schools.
- Provides timely information and support to project teams during project development.
- Supports the context sensitive solutions process outcome.

Anchorage Police Department

- Provides timely information and support to project teams during project development.
- Supports the context sensitive solutions process outcome.

Anchorage Fire Department

- Provides timely information and support to project teams during project development.
- Supports the context sensitive solutions process outcome.

Public Utilities and Public Services (Solid Waste Services, Water and Wastewater Utility, Municipal Light & Power, etc.)

- Provides timely information and support to project teams during project development.

CSS IMPLEMENTATION TEAMS

Context Sensitive Solutions Guidance Team

(Suggested members: Municipal Engineer, Municipal Traffic Engineer, Planning Director)

- Works with project teams to provide guidance and resources to support their CSS processes
- Provides training to Municipality of Anchorage personnel implementing CSS
- Reviews CSS processes and process evaluations and provides direction and guidance for future processes.
- Recommends changes to this strategy.
- Maintains CSS resource library for use by MOA and consultant teams implementing CSS processes.

Project Managers and Consultant Project Teams

The Project Manager and Consultant Project Team's role in Context Sensitive project development includes:

- Commitment to understanding and explaining the problems to be solved, i.e., lack of pedestrian facilities, poor roadway capacity or road surface condition, prior to advancing engineering solutions.
- Commitment to design a facility that is safe, fulfills its purpose and need, and is in harmony with the community and its scenic, historic, and environmental values.
- Listening to all stakeholder points of view with an open mind.
- Using professional training and experience to help stakeholders evaluate potential solutions to issues.
- Using professional training and experience to help stakeholders craft creative compromise solutions to issues.
- Using professional training and experience to prepare for the Municipality of Anchorage plans, specifications and estimates meeting the appropriate design and professional standards.
- Use methods like visualizations to illustrate engineering solutions for laypersons.
- A commitment to provide follow-up data and responses (in lay terms) to public

questions arising during project development process.

Consultants will receive direction for project implementation from the Concept Report. Before any public involvement activities can begin for a project, PM&E, in consultation with the public and consultant team, will determine the questions to be resolved by public participation. The team will ensure the most controversial design elements will be considered in a public process. Working with the public participation practitioners and using a continuum of participation such as those shown in Exhibit 3, the consultants work with stakeholders and decision makers to determine the appropriate level of involvement. Exhibit 4 provides a sample worksheet to be used during project development to define where on the public involvement continuum the public would be engaged to discuss different elements of the design.

To effectively achieve context sensitive solutions, design teams will collaborate with many professionals. Other specialists will provide guidance and resources to support the CSS process. These technical professionals may include: Landscape Architects, Architects, Archaeologists, Environmental Engineers, Hydrologists, Park Planners, and Watershed Managers, to name a few. Project teams will research and seek out these professionals to expand their teams as needed.

Public Participation Practitioners

Project teams will identify a public involvement or public participation coordinator or planner to assist in project outreach. This Public Participation Practitioner's role in Context Sensitive Solution project development includes:

- Commitment to a fair and productive public involvement process without bias to a particular outcome.
- Diligent research and outreach to bring as wide a range of stakeholders to the process as possible.
- Planning and design of a range of public involvement opportunities that allow stakeholders to communicate in the ways that best suit them: written word, spoken

word, small groups, large groups, graphics and visualization, models, multiple languages, etc.

- Assisting the project team in communicating important technical project information to lay people in a way that they can understand.
- Facilitating productive dialogue and creative compromise among stakeholders on the issues that are important to them.

Public and other Stakeholders

The public's role in transportation project development includes:

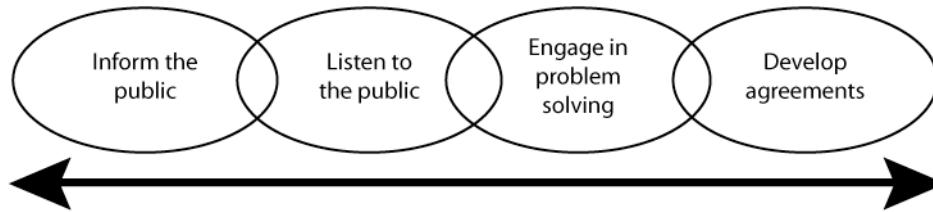
- Sharing local knowledge of history, environment, customary usage, values, and aspirations.
- Learning about issues brought forward by other stakeholders and the project's professional team.
- Engaging in productive dialogue with other stakeholders and the project team about issues that shape the project.

- Engaging in productive dialogue with other stakeholders and the project team about issues that build a community for many generations.
- Getting involved as early as possible in long-term planning efforts and the specific project in order to have maximum effect on the outcome (see Exhibit 5. Public Involvement and Relative Influence on Transportation Planning and Implementation adapted from *Anchorage on the Move, Citizens Handbook for Developing the Anchorage Area Transportation System*)
- Learning about the project background, its purpose, and the full range of stakeholders.
- Actively listening to all points of view presented in project discussions.
- Discussing project issues with respect for all stakeholders.
- Helping resolve issues from within the project processes, not by going outside them for intervention.
- Remaining involved with the project for its full duration.

Exhibit 3
Continuums of Participation

Showing various levels of public participation from two different perspectives.

From the PUBLIC PARTICIPATION handbook



From the International Association for Public Participation
IAP2 Public Involvement Spectrum²

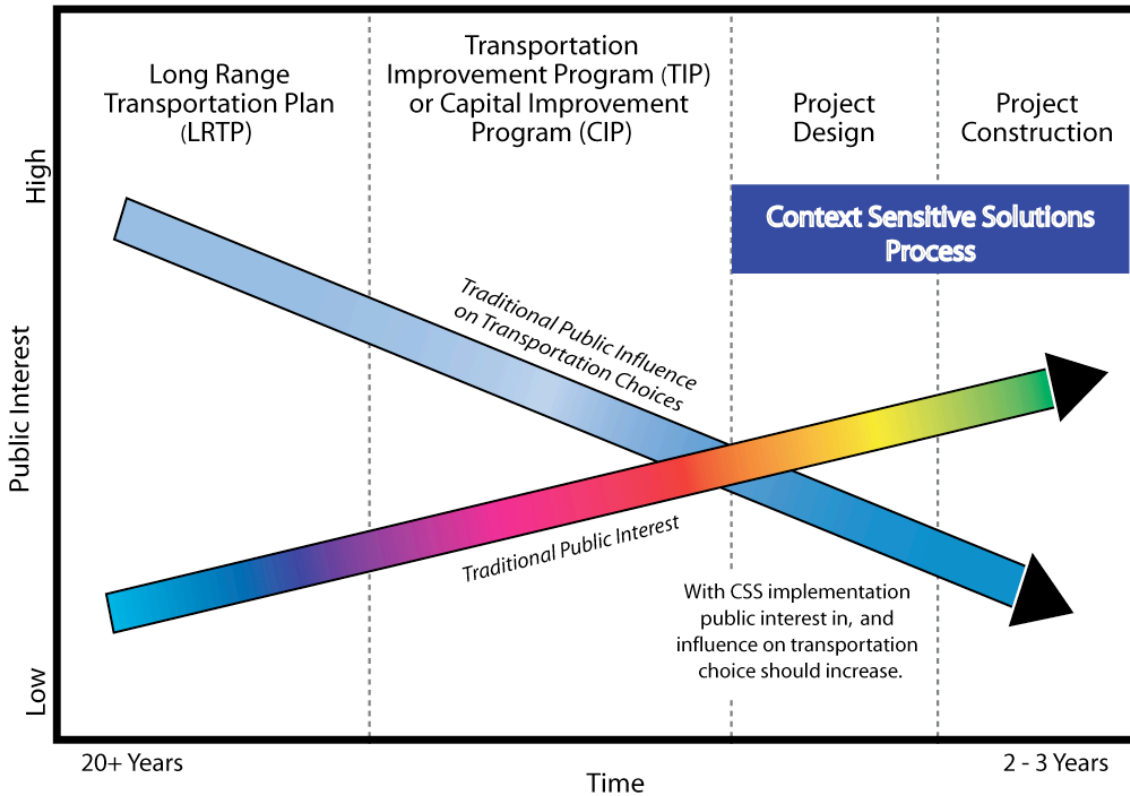
INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and /or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:
We will keep You informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Example Tools:	Example Tools:	Example Tools:	Example Tools:	Example Tools:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Fact Sheets ✓ Web Sites ✓ Open Houses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Public comment ✓ Focus groups ✓ Surveys ✓ Public Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Workshops ✓ Deliberate polling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Citizen Advisory committees ✓ Consensus-building ✓ Participatory decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Citizen juries ✓ Ballots ✓ Delegated decisions

² Source: International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)
<http://iap2.org/practitionertools/index.shtml>

Exhibit 4
Sample Public Involvement Worksheet
Project Specific Levels of Participation by Project Element

Project Element	Source of Project Element	IAP2 Public Involvement Spectrum Level (see Exhibit 3 for IAP2 Definitions)									
		Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower					
For example, Future Traffic Volume, Number of Lanes, pedestrian facilities, etc. (See full list of project elements in Attachment 3)	Long Range Transportation Plan, Area wide Trails Plan, Pedestrian Plan, public request, etc.	Level of public participation determined in conversations with stakeholders during completion of the Concept Report. Different levels of participation may apply to different project elements.									

Exhibit 5
Public Involvement and Relative Influence on Transportation Planning and Implementation³



³ Source: Adapted from *AMATS Public Involvement Plan, Anchorage on the Move*

GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

The following documents guide the transportation project design process:

POLICY PLANS

Municipality of Anchorage *2020 Comprehensive Plan* (2020 Comp Plan)

Municipality of Anchorage, *Chugiak-Eagle River Comprehensive Plan* (CER Comp Plan)

Municipality of Anchorage, *Turnagain Arm Comprehensive Plan*

State of Alaska, *Statewide Transportation Improvement Policy Plan*

FUNCTIONAL PLANS

AMATS *Anchorage on The Move*, public involvement program

Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) *Transportation Improvement Program* (TIP)

Municipality of Anchorage *Capital Improvement Program* (CIP)

Municipality of Anchorage *Long Range Transportation Plan* (LRTP)

Municipality of Anchorage *Official Streets and Highways Plan* (OSHP)

Municipality of Anchorage, *Area Wide Trails Plan*

Municipality of Anchorage, *Chugiak-Eagle River Long Range Transportation Plan* (CER LRTP)

Municipality of Anchorage, *Non Motorized Transportation Plan*

Municipality of Anchorage, *Street and Highway Landscape Plan*

State of Alaska, *Statewide Transportation Improvement Program* (STIP)

AREA-SPECIFIC PLANS

Midtown Plan

Hillside District Plan

PROJECT-SPECIFIC PLANS

Kincaid Road Improvement Project

40th Avenue Extension: Arctic Boulevard to Centerpoint Drive

DESIGN AND CONTEXT SENSITIVE SOLUTIONS GUIDELINES

Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities *Preconstruction Manual*

American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials, *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets*

Highway Safety Manual (underdevelopment by the Transportation Research Board, to be available in 2009)

Municipality of Anchorage *Design Criteria Manual* (DCM)

Municipality of Anchorage *Project Management Manual* (PMM),

Municipality of Anchorage *Standard Specifications* (MASS),

References specific to Context Sensitive Solutions project development are noted below: This is by no means a complete list. Additional resources can be found at the FHWA sponsored web site –

www.contextsensitivesolutions.org.

A Guide for Achieving Flexibility in Highway Design, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, May 2004.

A Guide to Best Practices for Achieving Context Sensitive Solutions, National Cooperative Highway Research Program, Report 480, published in 2002.

Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities, An ITE Proposed Recommended Practice, Institute of Transportation Engineers, Federal Highway Administration, US EPA, 2006

Guidance to Foster Collaborative, Multimodal Decision Making, Transit Cooperative Research Program, Report 106, sponsored by the Federal Transit Administration, 2005

Attachment 1: Sample Project Description Form

The following sample project description form is proposed for use. Citizens may use this form to nominate projects. Internal staff and consultants will complete this form and attach to the Concept Report. The form content will assist staff prioritization (LRTP/TIP/CIP) processes. The form is divided into three sections. The first section of the form relates to problem statements received from the nominating party; the second section applies to technical data collected by MOA staff or consultant teams; the third section applies to the project's conformance with existing plans.

Public planning documents are available on the Municipality of Anchorage web site (www.muni.org) or at MOA Project Management & Engineering (PM&E) offices. The final form will be included as an appendix in the Concept Report.

SAMPLE PROJECT DESCRIPTION FORM PROJECT NOMINATION FORM

SECTION 1: Nomination (to be completed by nominating entity)		
1	Nominated By:	Appletree Community Council
2	Contact:	Joe Jones, President, Appletree Community Council
3	Phone:	Email:
4	Street Name:	Maple Street
5	Between	83 rd Street and 95 th Avenue
6	Statement Problems to solved. <i>(What needs to be done? The problem definition should include: What are the underlying issues? What is the whole problem? What is the severity of the problem?)</i> <i>(as envisioned by nominating entity/ individual):</i>	Re-build Maple between 83 rd and 95 th
7	Known Issues <i>(What are the problems?)</i> <i>(List all known issues, reasons for project, problems to be solved)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance a ongoing problem due to poor drainage • Lacking/discontinuous bike and pedestrian facilities • Non-continuous road grid pattern • Traffic changes coming with opening of new school • Cut through traffic with above limit speeds • Sight distance issues at 87 & Maple • Emergency access to eastern side above recommended time
SECTION 2: Technical Data Collection (to be completed by staff)		

8	Classification	Class 1C Neighborhood Collector – 2 lanes, 60' ROW		
9	Lanes/Speed <i>(Note: 85th percentile speeds will be determined by project team)</i>	Street	Number of Lanes	Speed
				Posted
				85th Percentile
	Maple Street	2	30	38
10	Average Daily Traffic (ADT) <i>(Note: To be determined by project team)</i>	Street	Current Year: 2005	Design Year: 2025
		Maple Street	2,536	
11	Traffic Crash Data	<input type="checkbox"/> No Data Available <input type="checkbox"/> Data Available		
12	Community Council	Appletree		
13	Transit Service <i>(List route numbers if transit service is available)</i>	Route 65 on Maple Street from 87 th to 95 th		
14	Assembly Districts	Section 4 – Mary Smith and Honest Jim Wiley		
15	Legislative Districts	House District 30 – Bill Nussbaum Senate District 0 –Hannah Sanchez		
16	Capital Improvement Program Information <i>(To be completed by MOA Staff)</i>	PM&E Project Number: 03-001		
		Phase	Approx. Date	Est. Cost
		Design	02/07 to 8/07	\$ 998,813
		Right-of-way	06/07 to 10/07	\$ 332.937
		Utilities	06/07 to 10/07	\$ 700,000
		Bid Phase	10/07 to 11/07	
		Construction	05/08 to 08/08	\$ 4,931,767
Total Project Estimate			\$ 7,096,692	
17	MOA GRID	2134, 2135, 2234, 2235		
18	Schools	Schools	Notes	
		Elementary: Rainbow	No school walking route on Maple	
		Middle: Alexander	Pupil busing	
		High: Kipling	Pupil busing	
		Safe Routes to Schools/School Walking Route Map – is the street along a safe walking route? Should it be?		

SECTION 3: Plan Conformance (to be completed by staff or consultants) (Review existing plans to see if the proposed project is included in these plans.)		
	Plan	Notes/Comments
19	Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)	No designation Street typology – Residential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary Elements include sidewalks, tree lawns, on-street parking, landscaped medians, bike lanes Secondary Elements include number of lanes and lane widths Traffic Management Elements include medians, on-street parking, street trees, narrow travel lanes, traffic circles and roundabouts, shorter pedestrian crossing distances, diverters
20	Official Streets and Highways Plan (OSHP)	These roads are classified as Neighborhood Collectors Class 1C. Their function is to "collect" traffic from local residential areas and provide links to the arterial system.
21	Zoning/Comprehensive Plan	The current Zoning for the area is R-1 and R2-M. The 2020 Land Use Plan shows this area to continue to be focused on mixed residential development (low to medium density, 1 – 15 units per acre) similar to its current pattern. Attachment XX shows the land use plan for the area.
22	Non-Motorized Transportation Plan	
23	Transit Development Plan	
24	Areawide Trails Plan	Multiuse paved trail north/south on Spruce Street
25	Pedestrian Plan (proposed)	
26	Bicycle Plan (proposed)	
27	Street and Highway Landscaping Plan	Rural Classification (areas where existing native vegetation should be preserved or protected)
28	Anchorage Bowl Park, Natural Resource, and Recreation Facility Plan	Maple Park, develop facilities Oakwood Park, develop facilities Connections to park(s):
29	Wetlands Management Plan	
30	Watershed Requirements	
31	Traffic Calming (Note whether a traffic calming plan exists for project area)	East Half of Maple Street Traffic Calming Plan, September 2006 Recommendations: <u>Intersection Chokers:</u> 94 th and Maple 84 th and Maple <u>Gateway Median:</u> Lore Road east of Green Acres

SECTION 3: Plan Conformance (to be completed by staff or consultants) (Review existing plans to see if the proposed project is included in these plans.)		
	Plan	Notes/Comments
32	Electric Utility Undergrounding 5-year Plan	
33	Street Lighting	Reference: Design Criteria Manual (DCM) Chapter 5, Lighting Low nighttime pedestrian activity area Luminance Method Average Luminance (fc.) 0.4 Uniformity Ratio – avg. 4.0 Uniformity Ratio – Max. 8.0 Veiling Luminance Ratio 4.0
34	Geotechnical Hazards Plan	Not applicable
35	Drainage Plan	
36	Water and Wastewater Utility Corridor Plan 1990	Maple Street Water Main
37	Background Documents <i>(list all on file)</i> Community Council nomination/minutes CIP ranking form CIP Estimate summary and detail Public Correspondence describing need, etc. Telephone conversation records with elected officials and others	

Attachment 2: Sample Concept Report Development Action Plan

The Concept Report is prepared to develop and document the understanding of the problem to be solved with the project. The Concept Report will define the nature, scope and severity of the transportation problem. The following is a sample action plan for a transportation project. The action plan may vary by project. At this phase of project development, the Municipality is looking to understand what is to be solved, the ease in which the solution will be implemented and the extent to which the problem must be solved. From a CSS standpoint, it is imperative that a full range of stakeholders be involved in the conversations necessary to complete the concept report.

Once complete, the Concept Report findings will be discussed and a decision made by the Municipality regarding whether to advance the project. If a decision is made by the Municipal Engineer to proceed, the preferred concept from Concept Report will advance to Design Study. The Municipality Department of Project Management & Engineering (PM&E) or its consultant will prepare the Design Study Report (DSR) following the process described in the Municipality's Project Management Manual. In addition to the design information, the DSR will summarize the public involvement process.

Sample Action Plan for Maple Street

Project Setup

- Complete Project Nomination Form
- Identify public roles and responsibilities
- Develop stakeholders, agency and public mailing lists
- Develop project web site (purpose of project, schedule, staff, documents, meetings, map) and update project information in the Municipal "Project Editor" database
- Review Community Council meeting schedule, request agenda space and establish staff attendance

Project Concept

- Project newsletter #1 announcing walkabout, Public Meeting #1 and project nomination form data
- Red flag approximate ROW
- Distribute Door Hangers along project corridor
- Announce project walk about and public meeting at Community Council Meeting. Ask for Project Advisory Committee (PAC) members (5 – 7 citizens, 3-4 staff including Fire, Street maintenance, planning) nominations, pass out copies of newsletter #1
- Hold Walkabout/Door to Door, gather issues and request nominations for PAC members and pass out newsletter #1 to those homes with no contact
- Public meeting #1 (Inform, Collaborate levels of involvement)
 - Discuss public role and responsibilities
 - Review issues posted on walls ask for any additional items
 - Define project elements open to discussion and those that are not, and give reasons (safety, design standards, legal requirements, etc.)
 - Identify project objectives and evaluation criteria
 - Comment period open for 30 days
- Consult with Community Council on Project Advisory Group (PAC) members
- Recruit PAC members to ensure broad representation
- Internal and External Agency review meeting
- Comments and any appropriate responses
- Project newsletter #2 announcing issues heard to date, focus group members, etc.

- PAC meetings (Up to three maximum.) (These are expensive – staff time, staff qualifications)

PAC Tasks:

- Re-affirm public and PAC role and responsibilities
- Review, re-affirm, prioritize project objectives and evaluation criteria from public meeting
- Review Project Nomination Form
- Develop/Solicit input on alternative project designs
- Staff to present feedback on design alternative issues

Prepare a summary of the Preferred Alternative and how it meets the evaluation criteria and project objectives. Project newsletter #3 is sent out to cover the Preferred Alternative and selection process. The Concept Report will cover the selected street cross-section (# of lanes, design speed, posted speed, street width, need for/location of on-street parking, trail/sidewalk components) street lighting design standard, landscaping requirements, potential traffic calming needs, special driveway needs, wetlands issues, utility corridor issues, drainage, etc.

Attachment 3: Roadway Design Considerations and Report Outlines

Roadway Design Considerations

The following elements are considered in design of streets within the Municipality of Anchorage. Full definitions and engineering design parameters can be found in the MOA Design Criteria Manual (<http://www.muni.org/projectmgmt/publications.cfm>).

Access (from adjacent properties, intersecting streets and alleys)	Railroad Crossings
Americans with Disabilities Act Features	Retaining Walls
Average Daily Traffic	Right of Way
Bike Accommodations	Right of Way Clearing
Buffer (e.g., between curb and gutter and pedestrian facility)	Roadway cross section (combination of elements identified with + above)
Business Impacts	Roadway functional classification, e.g., residential street, collector, arterial, etc.
Centerline of Street	Shoulders (width, paved and unpaved)
Clear zone	Sight Distance
Construction Traffic Routing	Sight triangles at access points (driveways, alleys, intersections)
Cross slope (on roads, sidewalks and trails)	Signage
Cul-de-sacs	Speed (design speed, posted speed)
Culverts	Storm Drainage
Curb and gutter	Street Context
Curb Radii	Street Maintenance
Design Speed	Subgrade
Driveways (public and private)	Survey
Fences	Traffic Calming Elements (e.g., chicanes, bulb-outs, narrow lanes, speed bumps, speed tables, etc)
Foundation Soils	Traffic Signals
Guardrails	Traffic volume (existing and projected)
Horizontal Design (horizontal curvature of roadway)	Transit Routes
Illumination or Lighting	Transit Stops (on-street, off street)
Intersections	Turn Lanes
Landscaping	Utilities (water, sewer, gas, storm drain, electrical, telephone, cable, above/underground, etc.)
Lane Width	Utility Relocation and Undergrounding
Mailboxes	U-turns
Median Width	Vertical Design (vertical curvature of roadway)
Number of Lanes	Zoning
Parking, on-street and off-street	
Pavement Markings	
Pedestrian Facilities (e.g., sidewalk, trail, multi-use trail)	
Private Property Impacts	

Concept Report Outline

Technical Memorandum Format (5 to 10 pages)

TO: Municipal Engineer
Municipal Traffic Engineer
FROM: <Insert Preparer(s) Name(s)>
SUBJECT: Concept Report
<Insert Project Name>, <Insert Project Limits>
DATE: <Insert Date>

Background

Describes origination of project, references Project Nomination Form. Funding Source.

Context

Describes the context of the area surrounding the project. Defined in many ways including “the interrelated condition in which something exists” and “everything about the people and place” or “the weaving of parts into a whole”

Guiding Documents

List the documents that provide background and guidance specific to the problem(s) to be solved. Include specific references to this project (i.e. current and projected traffic volumes, bike trails, landscaping, etc.)

Problem(s) to be solved

Develop problem definition for the project with public/stakeholder input.

The stakeholder is defined as any groups and individuals affected by or interested in the project. Groups, businesses, associations, neighborhoods residents, government agencies, single individuals, interest groups, and people and groups within responsible public agencies might be included.

Issues Identified (by the public, Municipal agencies, residents, consultants, etc.)

Provide a listing of the issues identified by all stakeholders. Include photographs/sketches to illustrate problems. Provide evaluation criteria used to analyze concepts.

Problem Solving Concepts

Concepts reviewed and dismissed by public/stakeholders

Concept(s) to advance to Design Study phase

Based on consensus of public/stakeholders

Include visualization to ensure lay public/stakeholders understanding of concepts

Stakeholder Involvement Summary

List of activities undertaken to secure public/stakeholder input. Their ideas will be reflected in the body of the report.

Appendices

Project Description and Project Nomination Form

Project public/stakeholder contact lists (to use and supplement during DSR development)

Others:

Design Study Report Outline

(See Municipality of Anchorage Design Criteria Manual for more detail)

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Appendices

- Appendix A – Preliminary Project Plan
- Appendix B – Existing Utilities
- Appendix C – Geotechnical Report
- Appendix D – Public Involvement Summary
- Appendix E – Cost Estimate

Attachment 4: Project Evaluation / Completion Survey

A key element of CSS is evaluation. Did the project solve the problem? Did the contractor mitigate concerns during construction? Did the community see the benefit of solving the problem? To evaluate projects, a new step is added to project development to evaluate the effectiveness of the improvements made. How did the process work from the public's standpoint? How did the process work from the Project Manager's standpoint? Was communication with the consultant effective?

This is a dynamic process where we learn from each project and each other. To support this evolution, MOA staff, consultants, and the public will be asked to evaluate:

1. The outcome of the project;
2. The project process; and,
3. The participants (MOA Staff, consultants, the public)

One tool that can be used in the Evaluation step is a survey. This policy offers a list of questions that could form a survey for the public. Future surveys will be developed and appended to this policy to provide evaluation processes for MOA Staff, Consultant Project teams, and the Project Development Process itself.

The Municipality will work with a third party to develop and conduct a statistically valid survey.

Sample Survey Questions for the Public

The following survey questions were developed to survey residents, businesses and users of transportation corridors after the completion of construction. The questions are provided as a sample only. These questions and many others could be incorporated into the project evaluation/completion survey. These questions have been modified from *Road Diet Handbook: Setting Trends for Livable Streets, Project Evaluation Sample Survey, J. Rosales, September 2006*)

- Where is your home or business located ? (select one)
- How long have you lived or located your business in the neighborhood? (select one)
- Are you a resident or business?
- Do you rent or own your home? Do you rent or own your office?
- What is your age group?
- Do you think that the average vehicle speed (not posted speed) on your street is: too slow, fairly slow, about right, somewhat fast, too fast?
- Do you think the traffic volume on your street is too light, light, average, somewhat heavy, too heavy?
- Do you think the width of your street is too narrow, narrow, just right, wide, too wide?
- Do you think the number of lanes on your street is not enough, just right, too many?
- As a motorist, how would you rate your street in terms of safety – very safe, safe, comfortable, uncomfortable, very unsafe?
- As a pedestrian, how long do you typically have to wait for traffic to cross the street midblock (without a traffic signal) – No wait, Few seconds, 1/2 minute, 1-2 minutes, few minutes?

- What are the top four changes you would like to see happen in your neighborhood (only choose the top four) --

Reduce traffic	Add bike lanes
Add street trees and curb side planter strips	Slow speeds
Improve street maintenance	Add stop signs
Change street character	Add traffic signals
Narrow street	Improve parking
Widen street	Prohibit trucks
Widen sidewalks	Add more police
Improve pedestrian crossings	OK as is
	Other (please specify)

- After <insert street name> was improved, do you think traffic speeds are: Slower; About the same; Faster?
- After <insert street name> was improved, do you think it is easier to cross the street? Yes; No; About the same
- After <insert street name> was improved, does the street feel: Safer; Less safe; About the same
- After <insert street name> was improved, do you think the street is: Less congested; About the same; More congested
- After <insert street name> was improved, how many home improvement projects or business improvement projects have been started or completed by residents or businesses on or near this street (e.g., painting, major landscaping, home or business renovations and additions, and/or new fences)? None; A few; Several
- Only answer this question if you are a business owner in the neighborhood. After <insert street name> was improved, do you think the frequency of customers has changed in any of the following ways? (Check all that apply or select not applicable)

More walk-ins (pedestrian or bicyclists)	Reduced number of customers
More driver pass-bys	About the same
Increased number of customers	Not applicable

- Would you recommend a roadway project similar to the <insert street name> project to other streets in the city when appropriate? Yes; No; Maybe