

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

Subject: Letter to Assembly on Functional Classifications of Roadways in Spenard



Dear Anchorage Assembly,

We, the members of the Spenard Community Council (SCC), are writing to urge the reclassification of key roadways in Spenard.

The Official Streets and Highways Plan (OSHP) sets the rules for how roads are classified and what standards may be applied to them in the Design Criteria Manual (DCM). The DCM has not been updated since 2007 and the OSHP has not been updated since 2014 (AO 2014-63). Section 21.03.070 of Title 21 calls for the community to review and reassess the comprehensive plan and its elements every 10 years *“in order to make it consistent with economic and demographic trends, recent and proposed land use decisions, and adopted studies and plans.”*

The following requests also align with the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) review of Functional Classifications, which is currently ongoing (<https://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/fclass/>).

Spenard Road

The SCC has had continued difficulties getting Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities and muni Project Management & Engineering to implement the Spenard Corridor Plan as intended, based on the explanation that Spenard Road is an arterial. Spenard Road is classified as a Minor Arterial in the OSHP, but only carries at most 7,720 vehicles per day. The OSHP calls for arterials to be roads carrying 10,000 to 20,000 vehicles per day.

We request that the Assembly fulfill the code and amend the OSHP to change the designation of Spenard Road from a Minor Arterial to some sort of designated collector. This would allow the plan to be implemented as intended.

Fireweed Lane

We request the Assembly to do the same with Fireweed Lane between Spenard Road and the Seward Highway, which is also designated as a minor arterial yet should be a collector. Fireweed Lane sees even less traffic.

Minnesota Drive

The DOT&PF has recently launched “Minnesota Drive / I & L Street Corridor Plan,” which is at the request of the community and AMATS to better plan for the roadway, the land use, and how people travel along the corridor. Currently, the high speeds and incompatible “expressway” design of Minnesota Drive create a dangerous and deadly corridor through Spenard that does not serve our community and divides our

neighborhood. Reclassification will allow different strategies and outcomes in this planning effort.

We request the Assembly to reclassify Minnesota Drive north of Tudor road from a Principal Arterial (expressway) to a Minor Arterial.

Northern Lights & Benson Boulevards

The DOT&PF will be launching a corridor plan for Northern Lights and Benson Boulevards in the near future. Like Minnesota Drive, the couplet creates dangerous and deadly corridors through Spenard and Midtown.

We request the Assembly to reclassify both Northern Lights and Benson Boulevards from Principal Arterials to Minor Arterials.

Tudor Road

The DOT&PF is scheduled to conduct a corridor plan for Tudor Road. We request the Assembly to reclassify Tudor Road from Principal Arterials to Minor Arterials.

36th Avenue

We request the Assembly to reclassify 36th Avenue from Minor Arterials to a Collector in Spenard.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



President, Spenard Community Council

February 5, 2025
Date

Passed with a vote of **14** approved, **0** opposed

CC: Mayor
MOA Planning, Traffic, Project Management & Engineering
Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Midtown District Planning Group