



## **Community Advisory Committee Resolution 2023-02**

Resolution of the Community Advisory Commission on the Seward/Glenn Mobility Project.

Whereas the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (AKDOTPF) has engaged a contractor to execute a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study for the Seward/Glenn Mobility Project, and

Whereas Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) that asked for and directed funds for the Seward/Glenn PEL, and

Whereas a PEL is intended to be a process that incorporates multiple planning perspectives in order to find a consensus in developing multi-modal transportation solutions within the Federal Highway System, and

Whereas both the Seward and Glenn Highways are Federal Interstate highways, and

Whereas the contractor for the Seward/Glenn PEL released draft documents including Existing Conditions, Evaluation Criteria, Alternative Selection Criteria, Purpose and Need, and System Performance Data, and

Whereas the contractor for the Seward/Glenn PEL collected over 500 comments on these documents from the public in June and July 2022, and

Whereas the contractor delivered these comments, along with proposed responses, to AKDOTPF in July and August of 2022, and

Whereas per 23 USC 139 (f)(4)(E), the PEL process requires consideration of public comments before eliminating alternatives, and

Whereas according to the schedule published at the start of the Seward/Glenn PEL process, the contractor should now be engaged in creating alternatives to address the issues identified in the draft documents, and

Whereas of the date of this resolution, AKDOTPF has not yet released the comments and responses from the prior planning documents, and

Whereas AKDOTPF has released a draft Travel Demand Modeling Report, and

Whereas successful outcomes for a PEL require buy-in from the public, as well as political support from community councils, the Assembly, the Mayor's office, State Legislature and Governor's office,

Therefore further resolved, the CAC submits the following comments on the draft Travel Demand Modeling Report:

- 1- Their projections assume that there will be more growth in the outskirts of town and in the valley, while not really expecting significant growth downtown. If that is what they build for, that is what they will get. It is a self-fulfilling prophesy. If they turn Fairview/East Downtown into a more liveable area, they will drive more people to want to live here, reducing the demand they are projecting on the highway.
- 2- There is not a negative growth or a no-growth option on the projections, which would more accurately reflect the last ten years of demographics. There is a no-build model, but it uses growth projections that current demographics have not borne out.
- 3- There is no accounting for increased pedestrian/bicycle/non-motorized demands on the corridor.
- 4- Generally speaking, the model is all about vehicular traffic counts. There is no modeling for how transit or liveability impact the traffic flows. Or how traffic counts will impact transit and liveability.
- 5- A focus on peak demand and delay times would prioritize the airport heights end of the glenn, and the fireweed-16th part of ingra and gambell. We want modeling and goals that prioritize gambel and Ingra in the corridor.
- 6- There is no access to the airport from the seaward highway. Modeling should include that as an option to consider, as it would impact traffic going from the glenn through downtown to the Minnesota bypass (hickel)
- 7- The report says land use data is consistent with adopted land use plans. Page 1. But this appears to refer to 2019 and not future years. Seems a bit of mid-direction as people could infer it is consistent with future land uses. I do not see evidence where the MOA Planning has produced future projections of dwelling units and employment by TAZ for future years.
- 8- This is a regional model application while the Seward to Glenn PEL is a Sub-Area Study. It does not appear to explain how it adequately models sub-area characteristics.
- 9- Given the Study Area encompasses the dense urban core where a significant number of trips are non-vehicular it is odd they state on page 4 under Vehicle Assignment that the model does not assign walk and bike trips.
- 10-They have developed a sub-model for trucks. They have the ability to develop a sub-model for non-motorized trips but do not.
- 11-They state in page 7 that the model does not represent safety improvements, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, pedestrian crossings, and non-capacity enhancements. This is like taking a sledge hammer to tap in a nail for hanging a picture.

- 12-They also state on same page that their System Performance summary statistics use vehicle metrics. This is despite the FHWA Final Rule on System Performance requiring the use of person trips as the key performance metric for the National Highway System.
- 13-The report describes the use of a regional travel model whose application is best suited for regional planning. The Seward to Glenn PEL is a sub-Area Study that warrants use of a micro-simulation modeling effort that accurately assesses the unique characteristics of the urban core. This means building out a pedestrian and bicycle sub-model and modeling a more disaggregated assignment of person trips appropriate for our downtown area.
- 14-The approach focuses on efficient regional movement of vehicles and ignores the non-motorized trips so prevalent in the urban core study area. The Ingra/Gambell corridor is as much a pedestrian corridor as it is a vehicle corridor. The failure to measure pedestrian use in previous documents precludes modeling that shows this use of the corridor.
- 15-The model splits the neighborhood of Fairview into two separate areas, and then counts cross-neighborhood traffic as cross-area traffic in the modeling.