DCM Updates, Chapter 1 and 6, Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting #3 Summary

Date: April 9, 2026 3:00 pm – 4:30pm

Attendees: See attached list

Subject: Road Classification, Virtual Site Visits

Summary

The third Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) meeting focused on road classification and virtual site visits. Discussion centered on functional classification variations and its connection to the DCM, as well as snow storage, multimodal use and right of way realities on Anchorage's roads.

Favorite Road Discussion

Holly started the meeting with a short discussion on the pre-meeting poll, where attendees shared their favorite road in Anchorage and why. Commonalities included traffic patterns, comfortable road width, lighting, land use and people-centric design.

Road Classification Presentation

Zak Hartman (MOA Traffic) presented on functional classification and the movement-and-place framework, highlighting how current roadway classifications prioritize vehicle movement and may not fully support broader community goals. He discussed how other agencies are evolving these systems by incorporating land use, context, and multimodal considerations into roadway design. The Complete Streets approach emphasizes balancing safety, mobility, and community character, while tools like context classification guides and typologies can better align roadway design with surrounding land use and desired outcomes.

- Holly S.T. (Huddle): My question to you, Zach, is have you and or your team done any thinking on how this might apply to Anchorage in your mind?
    - Zak H. (Traffic) I would say nothing concrete, but elements already exist in the DCM and OSHMP (e.g., industrial vs. neighborhood collectors)
- Zak H. (Traffic): I think there is a planning effort at AMATS with street typologies.
    - Will W. (Kinney): We are drafting materials of a map that would identify road typologies and that will be ready for review soon.
    - Emily W. (AMATS): AMATS has categories of typologies that we've talked about cross referencing with the street classification, which would provide that binary matrix set up.
- Holly S.T. (Huddle): Beyond functional classification- what would this additional framework look like and how does it tie into the DCM update?

    - Connor E. (DOT): We should define, not just where this applies but what it is, balancing flexibility as land use evolves with enough guidance to achieve intended outcomes through the CSS process. Land use evolves, so we need to have enough flexibility to follow the CSS process within this expanded typology.
    - Anna B. (DOT): It would be helpful to have visuals or examples, even as sketches.
- Brandon T.: There are a couple of directions we could take. One option is to stay within the existing OS and HP framework, where everything is defined by vehicle functional classification, and then layer in Complete Streets elements by tying those classifications to land use. From there, we could develop typologies that match functional classifications with land use context. Another option, especially if we're considering more significant changes to the OS and HP, is to think beyond just the vehicle network. The current graphic already points to multiple layers—freight, transit, cycling and micromobility, and walking. Going this route could mean more typologies overall or keeping a standard vehicle typology and supplementing it with modal typologies. For example, a vehicle collector could have associated cycling or micromobility typology, while a street in the walking network but not the cycling network would have a walking typology tied to its functional classification.
    - Colin S. (CRW): One idea from the Roadway Cross Section Reallocation Guide is to define minimum safe widths for each mode (walking, biking, transit, medians, etc.) rather than fixed typology drawings. Then add those together and see if they fit. This could avoid having a typology for every condition that doesn't match real-world right-of-way constraints.
    - Tyler R. (CIHA): As a developer, I appreciate this concept. What comes first, the development or the road? We often respond to the road context with little confidence that designations like "transit corridor" or "town center" will actually result in those outcomes. If typologies were clear and implemented with examples, it would make the development community more likely to deliver what's intended long term.
    - Daniel MF (Planning): Development-by-development progress takes a long time. We can design the ideal system, but if implementation depends on individual development, buildout will be slow. A shift toward the municipality proactively building infrastructure would be significant.
    - Donovan C. (Traffic): Context areas combined with modal hierarchies could help guide design decisions, especially questions like which mobility types come first. This kind of guidance from the OSHP could help projects make those decisions earlier.
- Donavan C. (Traffic): Question for Zak, are there maximum ADT thresholds tied to these contexts? Are they trying to reduce volumes in place-focused areas?

- Zak H. (Traffic): Stroads still exist here. There isn't really a place designation that limits movement or caps ADT to prioritize place.

Virtual Site Visits

Brandon introduced virtual site visits with a short presentation on road design and standards. We have a lot of roads built in anchorage that were built prior to the standards. Many Anchorage roads were built before current standards. The focus is on roads built under the current DCM, starting with local streets.

Willow View Cr (off Whisperwood Park Dr) Typical 33-foot-wide local street within a 60-foot ROW, with curb and gutter and sidewalks on both sides, serving higher-density fourplex development.

Huffman Timbers Newer development with local streets built to current DCM standards, supporting single-family homes with fire access, snow clearing, and parking.

- Connor E. (DOT): What is the available right-of-way and how much is used?
  - Brandon T.: About 60 feet ROW, with roughly 33–38 feet paved depending on sidewalk presence.
- Emily W. (AMATS): Why is there a sidewalk on one road but not the other?
  - Brandon T: That's based on code at the time—sidewalk requirements vary depending on vehicle volume and context-sensitive solutions.
- Colin S. (CRW): Are these sidewalks being plowed with the grader?
  - Brandon T: Likely, they are not. Generally, on local streets, sidewalks are only cleared when snow is hauled.
- Connor E. (DOT): Are homeowners or the MOA responsible for the maintenance for the area behind the curb?
  - Brandon T.: The MOA does not maintain that area.
- Tyler R. (CIHA): There's a policy disconnect here. If sidewalks are used for snow storage or not maintained, why have them? We need to choose between storage or usability.
- Emily W. (AMATS): On my street (50' ROW, attached sidewalk) they plow the snow to the curb but not onto the sidewalks. Property owners shovel the sidewalks.
  - Connor E. (DOT): This is a bit outside of DCM changes, but I know in other cities and some HOAs the property owner is required to clear the sidewalk directly in front of their property.
- Holly ST. (Huddle): Emily, are sidewalks maintained in your neighborhood? Does it get shoveled?
  - Emily W. (AMATS): It varies, property by property, but our street is pretty good about it.

- Stephanie M. (HDL): Even with separated sidewalks, issues like blocked paths and inconsistent maintenance. Some neighborhoods rely on HOAs to handle snow removal.
- Donovan C. (Traffic): These streets can look like higher-speed roadways. What would they look like if we focused on local access and reduced speed? Could be narrower or less "speedable." Also this raises long-term questions about maintenance costs and what the tax base can support.
- Holly ST. (Huddle): Donovan, are you saying you just think there should be a narrower road or just reallocating space?
    - Donovan C. (Traffic): Potentially both. The bigger idea is creating a slower, less speed-oriented area. That could mean narrower lanes, or reducing features like extensive on-street parking that you see on many Anchorage roads. We know this roadway type tends to encourage speeding, and those issues could be addressed through the DCM.
- Colin S. (CRW): This highlights that there are different ways to approach this. Often, we focus on how to make everything fit, but what I hear Donovan saying is that sometimes, even when everything fits, the outcome isn't safe or aligned with our fundamental goals. The roadway reallocation guide speaks directly to those situations, whether space is limited, or there's excess space and how that space affects safety. I think that's a really helpful lens as we develop these cross-sections.
- Brandon T.: On safety on local streets, I live on a wide local street with no sidewalks and a lot of pedestrians, and our safety record is pretty good. That said, we've seen success with the traffic calming program and giving neighborhoods tools to control speeds, and I think those needs should be considered in new construction. We can't keep building roads that, five years later, need traffic calming retrofits. Those considerations should be built in from the start. At the same time, I don't think speed concerns alone justify shrinking road footprints to the point where we struggle with maintenance. We're already exceeding our snow plowing timelines, and maintenance has told us that narrower roads slow them down even more.
- Tyler R. (CILA): I'm not sure how much of this applies to local roads in a new subdivision, where homes already have significant lot coverage and limited infill potential. But in many other R-1 or low-density neighborhoods, we now allow up to three units per lot. If we want that infill to actually happen, we need to think about providing capacity for on-street parking. If that's taken away and there's no parking, it becomes much harder to realize those two- and three-unit lots.
- Alexa D. (Bike Anchorage): I want to support Donovan's point about how excessively wide streets promote speeding. He sees this firsthand through neighborhood requests. I also want to caution against assuming a street is safe just because there haven't been crashes

yet. Speeding on neighborhood streets discourages people from walking or biking or letting their kids do so. That suppression of activity shouldn't be mistaken for a good safety record. It often just means we've prioritized vehicle speeds at the expense of active, healthy, and social use of the street. We really need to consider that context, rather than taking top-line safety data at face value.

E 6th Ave between Creekside Park and Muldoon Rd Collector roadway. The dimensions for a neighborhood collector from the DCM include 10-foot vehicle lanes, 3.5-foot shoulders, and separated pedestrian facilities on both sides—an 8-foot side path on one side and a 5-foot sidewalk on the other. Some traffic calming is incorporated, including intersection narrowing.

- Anna B. (DOT): When we have curb-tight sidewalks that are pretty narrow, and trash cans are placed there, it shows the curb space is used for more than pedestrians. The width needs to be addressed because one day a week it's not ADA accessible. I've seen this on 15th.
- Brandon T.: You can see two different approaches—one homeowner puts trash in the shoulder, which seems preferable, while others leave it in the sidewalk. Depending on collector speeds, people may not feel comfortable putting it in the shoulder because it could get hit.
- Tyler R. (CIHA): Is that traffic calming where it forces bikes from a bike lane into the shared lane considered good design?
    - Brandon T.: It depends on the level of traffic stress. Higher volume roads mean higher stress, so you may need something other than narrowing to maintain bike infrastructure. On E 6th Ave, volumes are about 1,500 trips per day, which is within the ~2,000 ADT threshold for a neighborhood greenway. This suggests a shared facility can be appropriate. And this is a shared greenway?
    - Donovan C. (Traffic): Yes, this was created in 2025 and runs from Patterson Street across Muldoon. The shoulders aren't technically bike lanes, but they're used that way, with sharrows and signage allowing bicyclists to take the full lane. It's one of the higher-stress greenways, but volumes are still within tolerance. The shoulders and paths work for riders with higher stress tolerance.
    - Brandon T.: This also speaks to the effectiveness of intersection narrowing as traffic calming. Vertical traffic calming—like raised intersections—might be more effective to further reduce speeds.

Northern Lights Blvd between Wesleyan Dr and Boniface Pwky Arterials include 12-foot lanes, 7-foot minimum pedestrian separation, and medians (15 feet desirable, 4 feet minimum). This section has an 89-foot right-of-way but still includes attached pedestrian facilities on one side.

- Tyler R (CIHA): I live here, and I'm trying to figure out how to tell my kids to get to the coffee shop across the street. We've got to do better than attached sidewalks on a road with this speed and traffic. Boniface carries a lot of regional traffic—it functions more like a highway. It's a long distance between safe crossings.
- Brandon T: Adding to that, there are numerous transit stops. If you're dropped off, you may have a long distance before you can safely cross. This is a high traffic stress environment, and the facilities, especially on the north side, are small and not well separated.
- Anna B. (DOT): I'd add that this is also the splash zone and plow zone. Plowing happens at high speeds, so attached sidewalks near the curb don't provide enough separation or comfort. A larger buffer is needed, especially considering snow storage and vehicle spray.
- Donovan C. (Traffic): On arterials, we often have a sidewalk on one side and a multi-use path on the other. The path ends up functioning as a two-way facility, but intersections aren't designed that way. Also, turning radii are large to meet arterial standards, which widens crossings and increases exposure. The road is wide enough for both parking and driving, so the exposure area is large, especially next to high-speed traffic.

Attendees:

Name	Agency
Katie Severin	AARP Alaska
Anna Bosin	AK DOT & PF
Connor Eshleman	AK DOT & PF
Dalton Perry	AK DOT & PF
Aaron Jongenelen	AMATS
Emily Weiser	AMATS
Radhika Krishna	Anchorage Downtown Partnership
Daniel Volland	Assembly
Alexa Dobson	Bike Anchorage
Tyler Robinson	CIHA
Alma Abaza	CRW
Colin Singleton	CRW
Aaron Christie	DOWL
Stephanie Mormilo	HDL Engineering
Iain McPherson	Kinney Engineering
Will Webb	Kinney Engineering
David Gamez	Lounsbury & Associates
Paul LaFrance	MOA Development Services
Gaylon VanLandingham	MOA Maintenance and Operations
Anthony Winsor	MOA Maintenance and Operations
Michael Nti Ababio	MOA Planning
Daniel Mckenna-Foster	MOA Planning
Eric Armagost	MOA PM&E
Tim Hunting	MOA PM&E

Melinda Kohlhaas	MOA PM&E
Kyle Pettibone	MOA PM&E
Shawn Wilson	MOA PM&E
Chelsea Ward-Waller	MOA Public Works
Brandon Telford	MOA Public Works
Donovan Camp	MOA Traffic
Zak Hartman	MOA Traffic
Brandon Marcott	Triad Engineering
Renée Eddy Harvey	Huddle
Holly Spoth-Torres	Huddle