



MEETING PRESENTATION NOTES

SUBJECT: Bogard Road Extension Public Scoping Meeting
DATE: October 23, 2006
LOCATION: Colony Middle School
ATTENDANCE: Approximately 170 people
MATERIALS: PowerPoint Presentation and Project Graphics

AGENDA:

- 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. - Open House
- 6:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m., and 8:00 p.m. - Presentations

OPEN HOUSE AND PRESENTATION:

Project staff discussed the project with members of the public from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. Stewart Osgood gave a PowerPoint Presentation at 6:00 p.m., and offered the same presentation again at 7:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. The three presentation times provided flexibility for the public to choose which one to attend.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Questions and comments received from the public during the presentation are summarized as follows. Answers to each question from the project team are in italics.

- **How is this project being funded?**

Initially, the State legislature has allocated \$13 million to the project. Later on when the project team has a better idea of the road alignment and design, there will likely be a need to get more funds from the Legislature.

- **Regarding the PowerPoint presentation, what does “collecting environmental data” mean?**

Collection of environmental data includes but is not limited to: conducting the wetlands delineation, moose studies, and collecting any historic environmental information available, etc.

- **Do you know the destination of the traffic that will be using the extension (the direction of travel)? Is the traffic heading east going to downtown Palmer or north on the Glenn Highway (which would suggest a more northerly alignment would be better)?**

The Preliminary Engineering Report will include an Origin/Destination Study, and will have some general information regarding direction of travel. The project staff will do some

analysis to see how well each alignment will do at alleviating traffic on the Palmer-Wasilla Highway.

- **What is the goal of the project - to reduce traffic by a certain percentage off the Palmer/Wasilla Highway?**

There is no set goal in terms of a percentage reduction. There is recognition that with the continuing growth along the Palmer/Wasilla Highway and without an alternate route, there will be an unacceptable traffic situation on the Palmer/Wasilla Highway in the future.

- **What are the plans for the Palmer-Wasilla Highway? Specifically, are there plans to make it a four-lane highway?**

There are a few projects going on that affect the Palmer/Wasilla Highway. One interim improvement is to add traffic signals in order to break up some of the traffic. This will help people trying to make left-hand turns onto the highway. There is a state-funded project to look at the environmental and design issues for a highway improvement project. They are trying to figure out how much general fund money they can get to start this expansion. It would likely cost about \$100 to 150 million dollars to improve the Palmer-Wasilla Highway. The Knik Arm Bridge, if it is built, may have some effect on the specific type of improvements and the amount of funding available..

- **Concerned about the section of Trunk Road leading to the Mat-Su Medical Clinic. There is no sign telling how to get to the hospital.**

Brad Sworts with the MSB will follow up with DOT&PF on that issue. DOT&PF's Regional Traffic Engineer has been working directly with the new hospital's administration and support staff to review existing signage and determine if any changes need to be made.

- **Some proposals involve a T-intersection. If it ends of up being a T-intersection where Bogard Road comes into the Glenn Highway what would be the plan to handle the volume of traffic at that intersection?**

There is a high probability that there will be a traffic signal at the intersection. At this point a roundabout has not been considered. The project team has had meetings with DOT&PF to make sure this project is coordinated with their planned projects for the Glenn Highway.

- **What does "Coastal Zone compliance" mean?**

Within Alaska, areas that are identified as being within the coastal zone have to be consistent with the coastal zone management plan. Any permitting we do must be coordinated through the state DNR Office of Project Management and Permitting (ACMP) because there are some environmental resources that could be affected.

- **Will the parcels along the extension have access to Bogard Road?**

The project will strive to have as few driveways coming out onto the Bogard Road extension as possible. The ideal design would be to have an arterial roadway (Bogard Road) and to have collector roads intersection with Bogard at half-mile or quarter-mile spacings. However, this may not be possible at every location.

- **If you are heading eastbound on Arctic Avenue and you want to turn northbound on the Glenn, it is very difficult to make this turn. If this is the connecting point for the Bogard Road extension, would this intersection be rebuilt to make it safer?**

If Arctic is the connecting point, the intersection would almost certainly be rebuilt to accommodate the increased volumes of traffic. The project team does not have a favored concept at this point.

- **Why is a 40 mph posted speed limit being planned rather than the federal standard of 50 mph?**

The plan is to make Bogard Road an arterial roadway. The goal is to move traffic, but also to provide access to side streets. A 40 to 50 mph posted speed limit will allow access to side streets.

- **Concept A would go through wetlands. Would you bridge these wetlands or fill them in?**

If they are high value (Class A) wetlands, it would be virtually impossible to fill them. The wetlands would need to be spanned.

- **Will a bike trail and pedestrian pathway accompany this road extension?**

Yes, the goal is to make it a parkway facility as much as possible.

- **What kind of lights would be used?**

Intersections might have spotlighting. Also meetings with the State Department of Fish and Game will affect how much lighting/fencing/clearing will be needed.

- **How close can homes be to the 200-foot right-of-way?**

There is not a set distance, but consideration from the property owner regarding how close they want to be from the right-of-way is taken into account. The building setback is 25 feet from the right-of-way line and the MSB has the authority to reduce the setback to 10 feet when right-of-way is acquired for a road project. The road itself will likely be at least 30 to 50 feet away from the edge of the right-of-way. The MSB is the ultimate decision maker.

- **Is the 200-foot number needed for right-of-way set in stone, or is there a chance it can change? It seems like a big number.**

The 200 feet includes travel lanes, space for the median, sidewalk and multi-purpose trail, utilities, and space that is reserved for future upgrades/expansions. Two hundred feet is not the exact and final number needed for the right-of-way, but it is a reasonable number. A Technical Advisory Committee has been formed that consists of members from the resource agencies, local governments, as well as members from the project team. The purpose is largely to discuss utility, ROW and agricultural issues. The meeting minutes will be posted to the project website.

- **Buy enough right-of-way to put in frontage roads.**

- **Who would maintain the road extension?**

The agreement is the State will provide the construction funds, but the MSB will build and maintain the road.

- **Consider an overpass (grade-separated crossing) of the Bogard Road extension over the Glenn Highway.**

- **What criteria alignment did the MSB use to secure their \$13 million grant from the State? Do you feel like \$13 million is adequate to complete this project?**

The Long-Range-Transportation-Plan showed the connection being from Colony Middle Schools Drive and 49th State Street Avenue intersection to Arctic Avenue. Now the project staff is trying to determine if this is the best alignment, or if there is a better alignment. It is likely that \$13 million will not be enough when you take into account everything that goes into the project (ROW acquisition, utility acquisitions, environmental mitigation, etc.). Once the project engineers have the preliminary engineering report and estimates, the MSB will be able to give the Legislature a better cost estimate and seek more funds.

The project engineers' base preliminary work is being done with LIDAR (a system that mounts on aircraft and maps the ground's surface to about a 2-foot contour data). Once the alignments are narrowed down, we will do ground-based survey and geotechnical work.

- **Will speed be monitored and enforced along the road extension?**

The MSB will provide road maintenance, but it is not clear at this time if they will be responsible for enforcing the speed limit, or if the State Troopers will. At this time the MSB does not have police powers. If the City of Palmer moves forward with annexation plans it is possible that city police may carry out enforcement on the portion of this project that falls within their boundaries.

At the next public meeting in spring 2007, the project team will have narrowed down some potential alignments and can present actual cost for the alignments, including ROW costs.

- **One community representative commented that the road should be extended straight down the road alignment.**

The resource agencies like Alternative A the least because of the amount of wetlands in the area and the presence of an anadromous stream, though Alternative A has the least impact on people.

Stewart stated that Marsh Road and the intersection grade comes into the Glenn Highway at 2 percent or less, which is highly desirable. Arctic Avenue has a bit of a grade. Eagle Avenue and Scott Road are the most difficult to figure out how to tie into the Glenn Highway.

- **Consider a possible alignment behind Caribou Circle.**

Stewart stated that Arctic Avenue is a better alignment in terms of tying into the Glenn Highway and moving circulating traffic on the road towards the City of Palmer. However, some have said most of the traffic that would be using the roadway is headed to the north. If that is the case, Arctic Avenue may not be the best alignment.

Ultimately, the MSB Assembly makes the ultimate decision on the final alignment. The project team will present the preliminary engineering report to the Assembly. They will hold

a public hearing and comment on it. A decisional document will outline how the project will move forward, and the Assembly will either approve or modify it.

- **Naïve to think that upgrades to the Palmer-Wasilla Highway and this improvement will fix traffic problems.**

- **Any plans to upgrade Palmer-Fishhook Road?**

There are plans to upgrade the road in 2009.

- **The Palmer-Wasilla Highway serves a huge void between Palmer and the Glenn-Parks Interchange, and something needs to be done to take some of this pressure of the Palmer-Wasilla Highway.**

- **Both scenarios for the Trunk Road extension involve 4-lanes (2 in each direction). Could a roundabout be used in these scenarios?**

Yes. For example Dowling Road has a roundabout and there are two roads going each direction.

- **Think about children's safety as well. Do not just focus on the safety and mitigation for animals (moose and fish).**

- **If there is a T-intersection at the Glenn Highway, how will it be controlled?**

It will most likely be controlled by using a signal.