

► **Northern Access
to U-Med District**



Reconnaissance Study

Project Overview

The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has initiated a Reconnaissance Study to evaluate northern access to the U-Med District.





Purpose and Need

PURPOSE

- Evaluate access alternatives that would improve traffic circulation in the U-Med District and reduce congestion on nearby roads

NEED

- The U-Med District is one of the highest density employment areas in the MOA
- Major institutions in the area continue to expand and increase employment
- Access is limited to three points that are poorly located to accommodate demand from the north or east
- The existing access points are over capacity, resulting in traffic congestion and increased accident rates

What is a Reconnaissance Study?

A reconnaissance study:

- Identifies project purpose & need and potential alternatives
 - Collects data on these alternatives and estimates costs
- Recommends which alternatives (including multi-modal solutions e.g. bus, bike, and pedestrian) should be carried forward into future environmental documentation and preliminary engineering
 - Defines the project scope
 - Does not recommend a preferred alternative





How Did DOT&PF Get Here?

Transportation Planning Process

North Access to
University-Medical
District

Providence Dr.

Northern Lights
Blvd.

Add new facility—north access to University-Medical District; **Purpose:** Circulation, capacity, and safety; **Facility class:** To be determined; **Length of project:** 0.5 mile; **Length of new sidewalk:** 0.5 mile; **Length of new pathway:** 0.5 mile; **Estimated cost:**^a \$25; **Funding source:** TIP; **Linked project(s):** None.

- The Northern Access project was included in the LRTP update



Recent History

- 1971 Recommended Transportation Plan suggested a connection from Pine Street to Tudor Road as freeway connection
- LRTP - 2001 suggested the East Anchorage Transportation Study
- East Anchorage Study of Transportation (EAST-2003)
- U-Med District Plan - 2005
- LRTP - 2005
- This Reconnaissance Study



Study Area Background

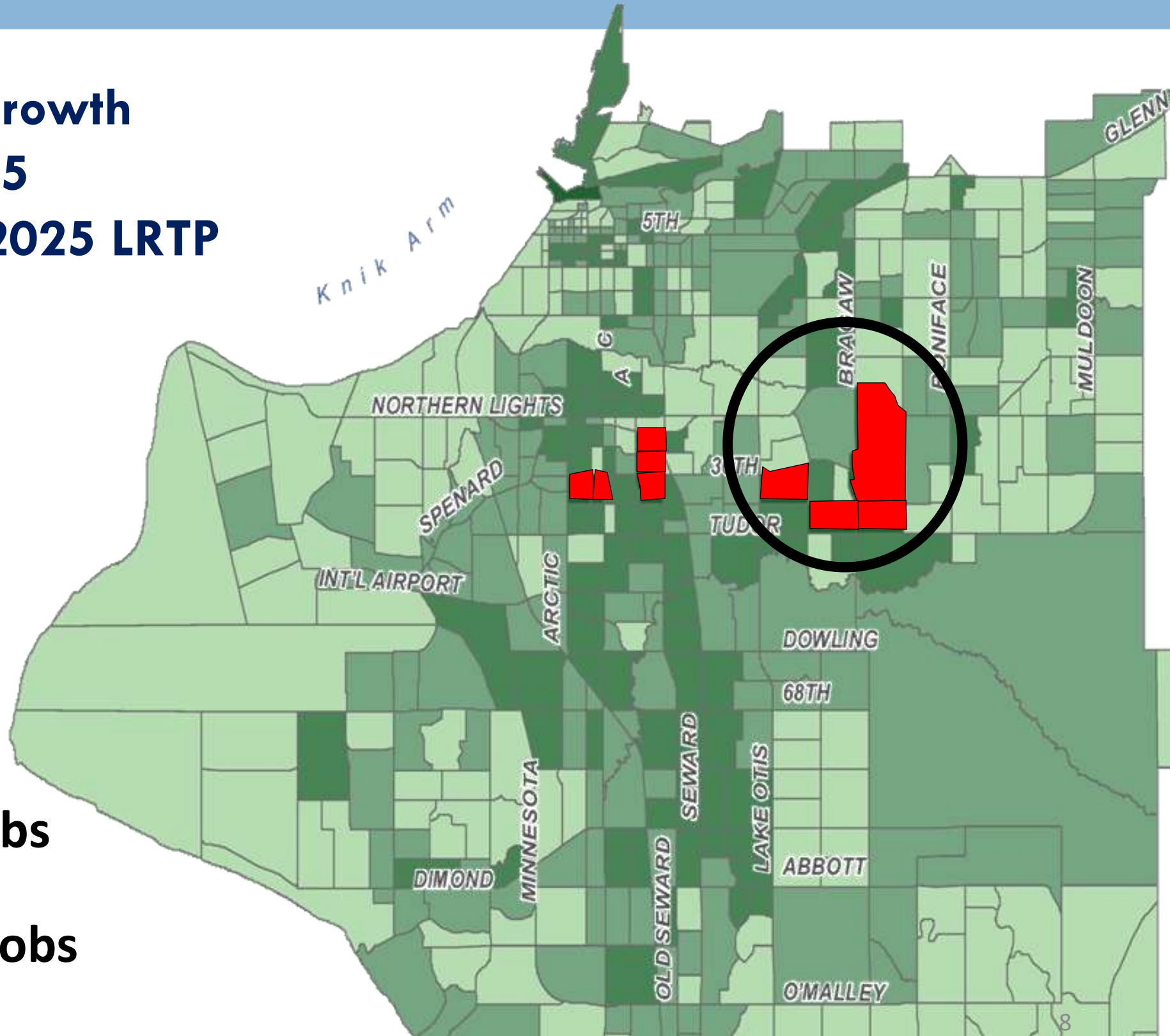
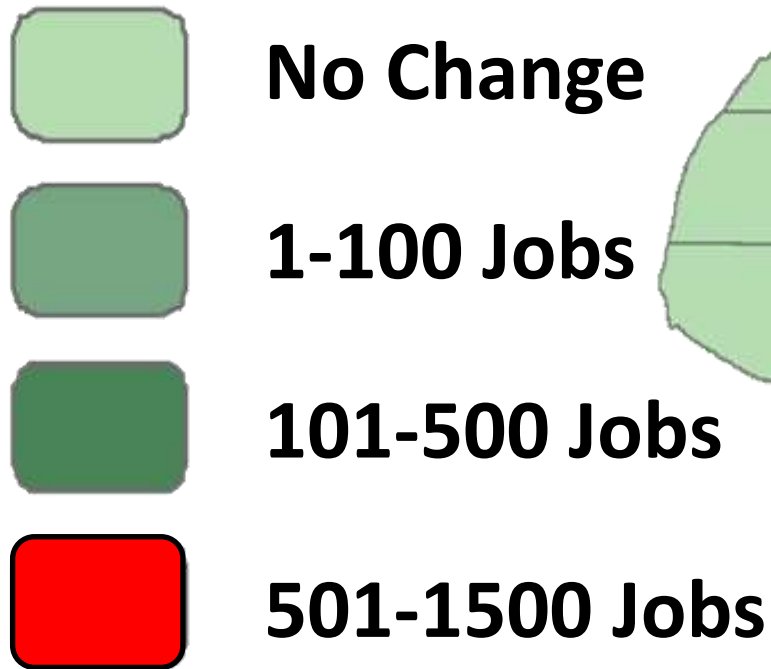
- The U-Med District is one of Anchorage's largest and fastest growing employment areas
- District employs about 16,000 people or 11% of the Anchorage workforce

The Municipality Of Anchorage's Comprehensive Plan:

- Identifies the U-Med District as a major employment center
- Designates the U-Med District for increasing employment density

Study Area Background

Employment growth 2002-2025 Anchorage Bowl 2025 LRTP





Existing Traffic Conditions

- East Anchorage Study of Transportation (EAST-2003) indicated the district is one of the busiest destinations in Anchorage
- Traffic delays and significant congestion at existing U-Med access corridors
- No direct routes from north and east Anchorage into the U-Med District
- Traffic congestion and out-of-direction travel complicate access to the largest medical complex in Alaska and its emergency facilities
- Elevated crash rate at UAA Drive/Northern Lights Boulevard



Out-of-Direction Travel





Existing Traffic Conditions

UAA Drive at Northern Lights Boulevard

Crash statistics for period from 01/01/2002 to 12/31/2006

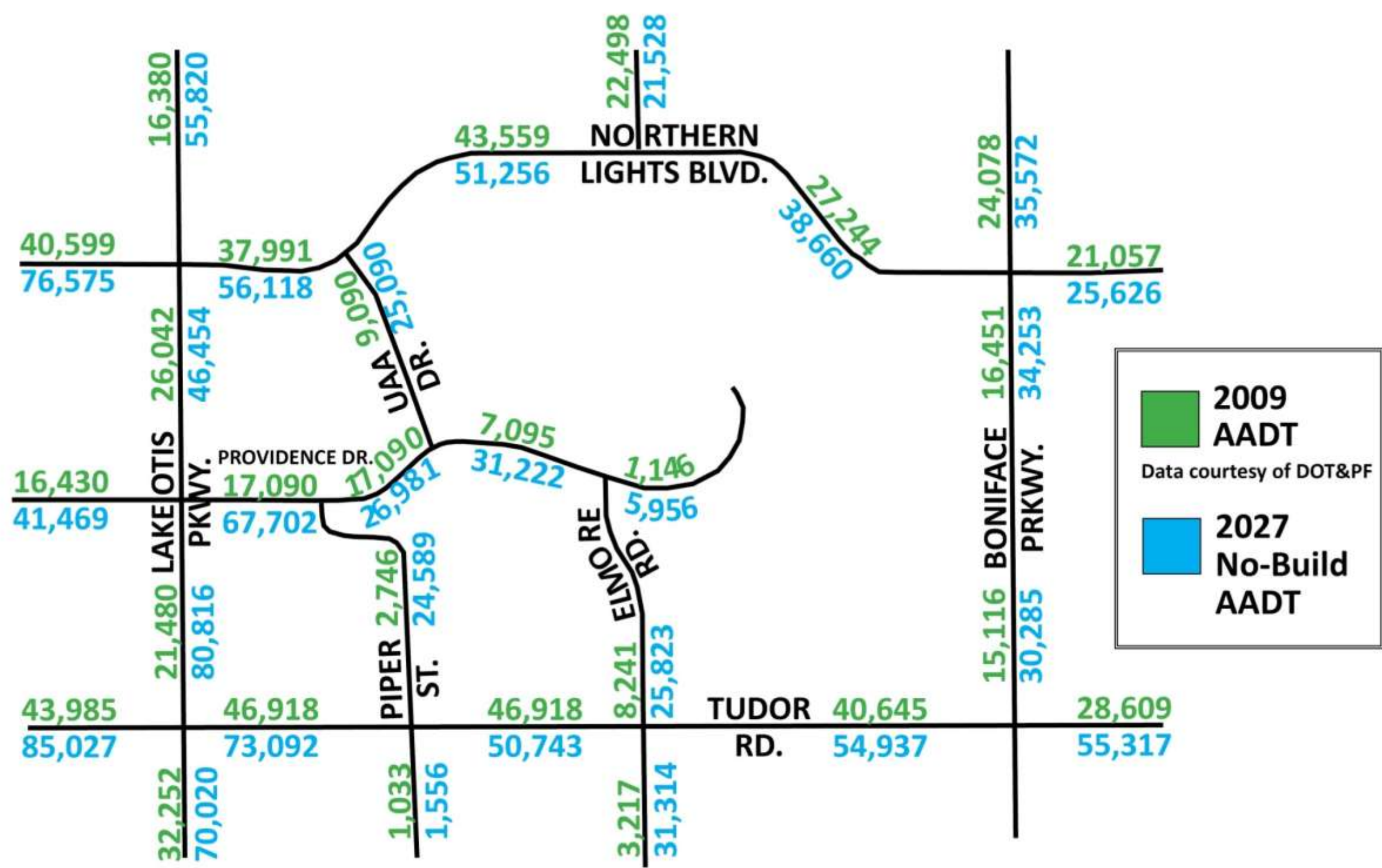
Crash Severity	# of Crashes in Period	Avg Annual Crash Rate*	Statewide Avg Crash Rate**
Fatal	1	0.01	
Major Injury	3	0.04	
Minor Injury	34	0.40	
Property Damage	112	1.29	
Total Crashes	150	1.85	1.38

Note: *Crash rate calculated per million entering vehicles (MEV) over a 1 year period

**Statewide average crash rate for signalized intersection with 3 approaches for FFY 2006.

Source: DOT&PF, 2009

2009 and 2027 Annual Average Daily Traffic Volumes (AADT)



Development Considerations

- Anchorage Bowl 2020 Comprehensive Plan
- U-Med District Plan
- UAA, APU and PAMC Master Plans
- Emergency response
- ASD school bus routes
- Planned U-Med District development
- Public transit service



Planning and Environmental Considerations

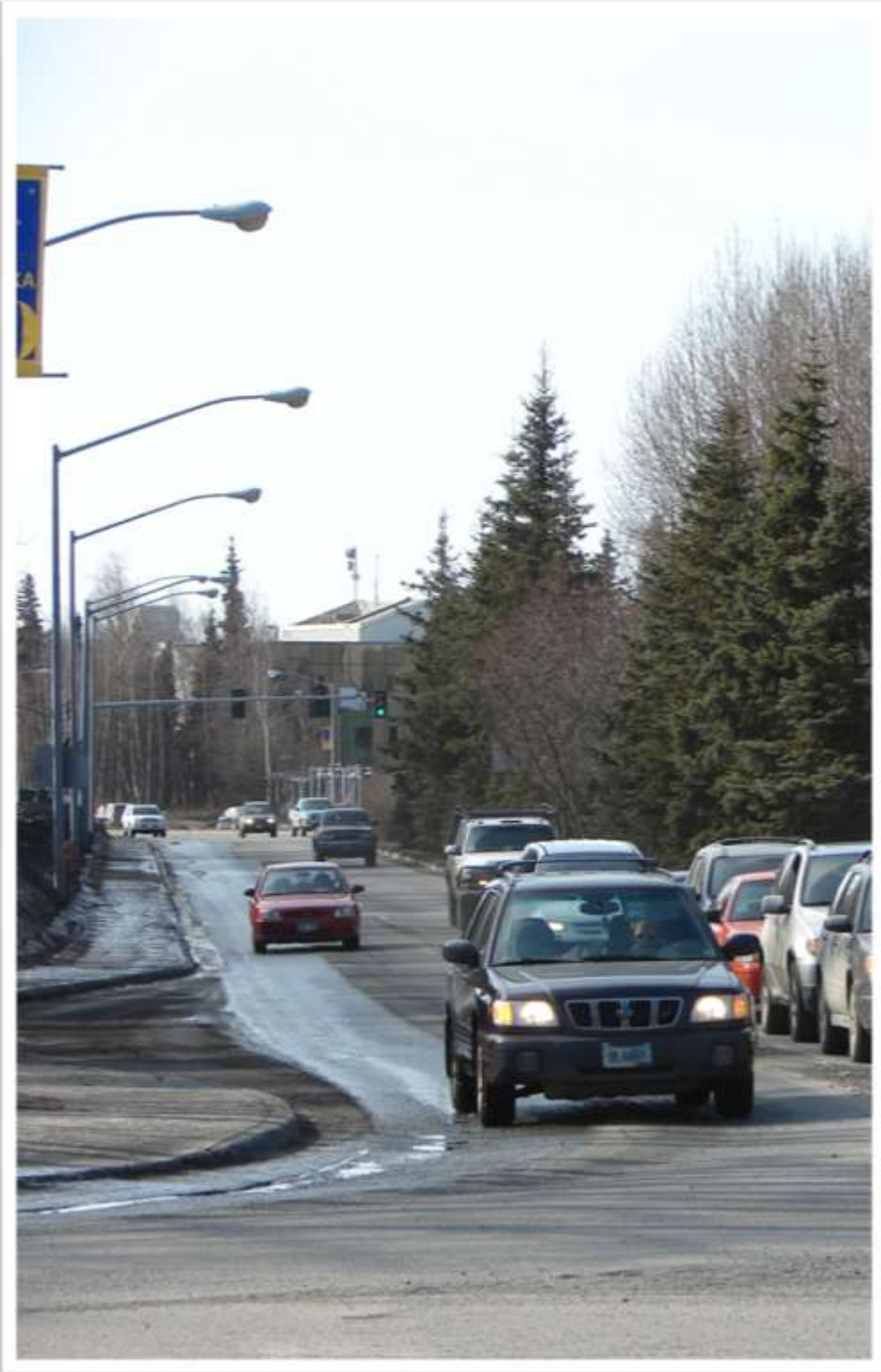
- Ecological Resources –
Wetlands, habitat, wildlife, water and air quality
- Social Resources –
Recreational trails and open space on university property, historic buildings, noise



- Alternate Modes of Transportation –
High use of buses, bikes and pedestrian facilities
- Project Context –
Major institutional campuses
Major employment center

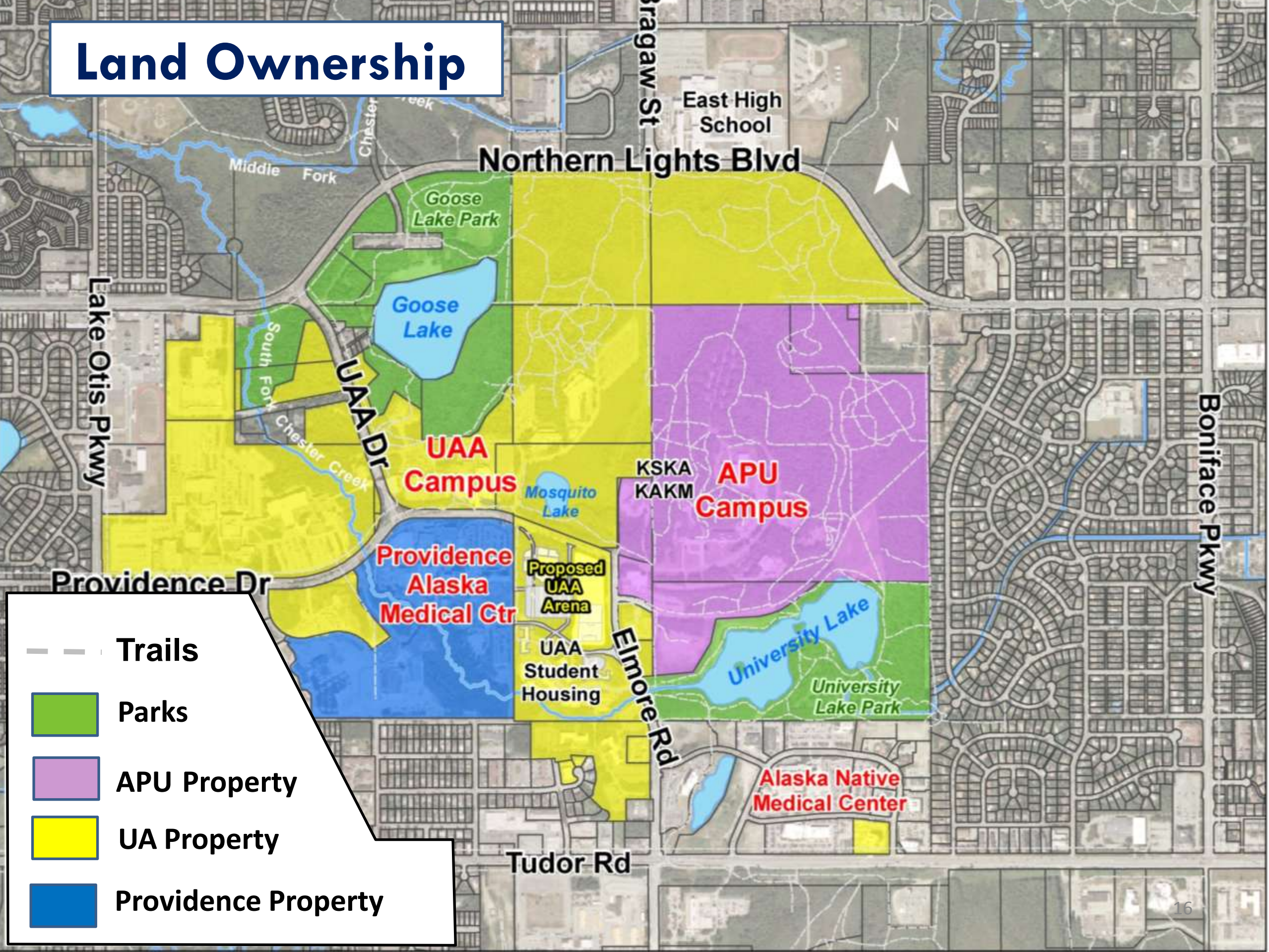


Engineering Considerations



- Hydrology
- Geotechnical conditions
- Traffic demand
- Utilities
- ROW ownership and acquisition
- Geometric elements (i.e. speed, number of lanes, rural vs. urban)

Land Ownership



--- Trails

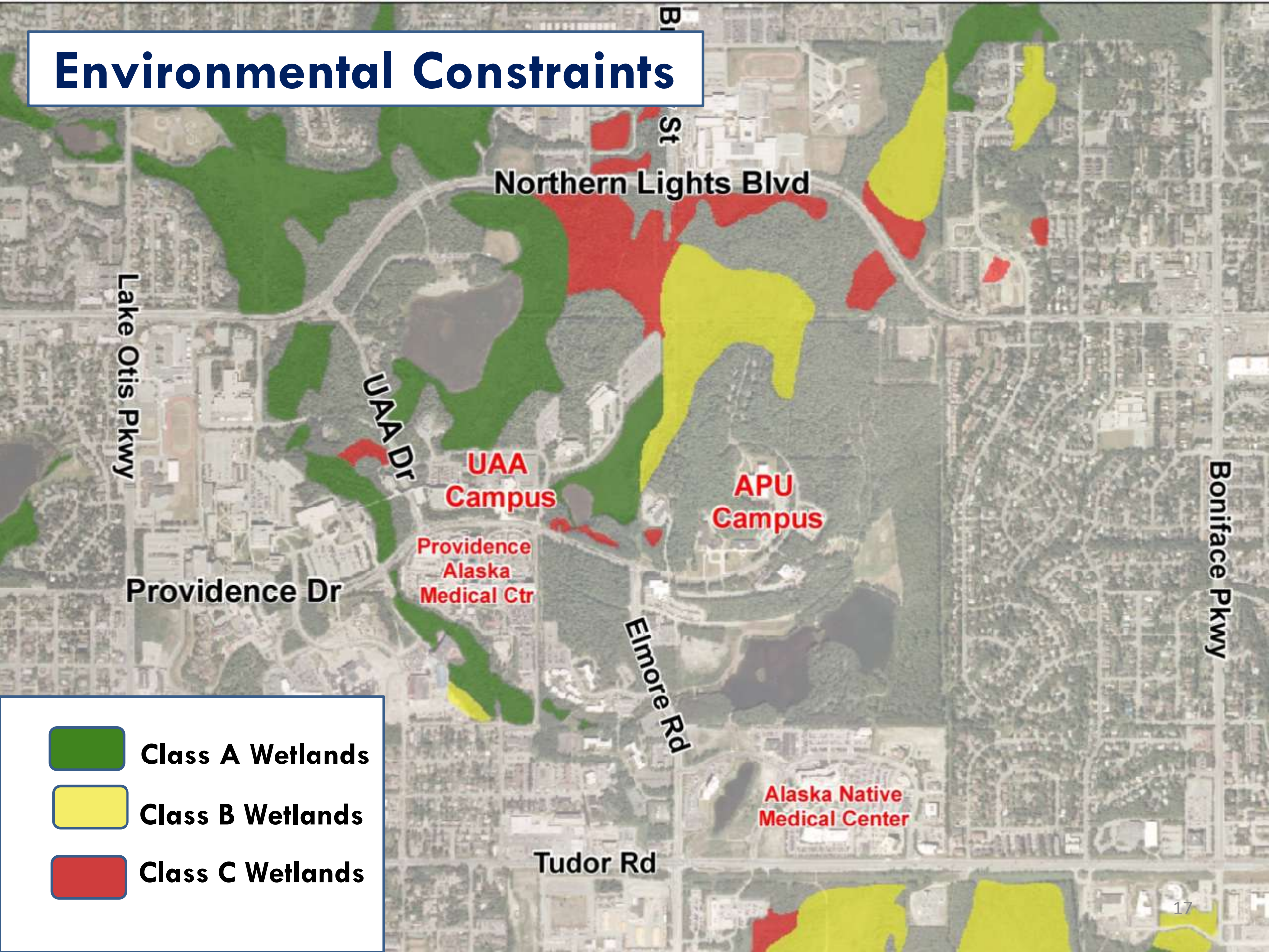
■ Parks


■ APU Property

■ UA Property

■ Providence Property

Environmental Constraints



-  Class A Wetlands
-  Class B Wetlands
-  Class C Wetlands

Work In Progress/Completed

- Wetland fieldwork
- SHPO research
- Phase 1 ESA assessment
- Traffic modeling
- Stakeholder meetings
- Collected zip code data for major institution employees, students and patients





Meetings so far

University of Alaska Anchorage

Alaska Pacific University

Providence Alaska Medical Center

Anchorage Fire Department/Emergency Medical Services

Alaska Public Telecommunications, Inc. (KSKA/KAKM)

MOA People Mover

Anchorage School District Transportation Division

Alaska Regional Hospital

Southcentral Foundation

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

East High School

Community Council Presentations

Airport Heights

Russian Jack

Rogers Park

University Area

Campbell Park



What We Have Heard So Far

Common Themes:

- What is the purpose of the project?
- What is the need for the project?
- Concerns about maintaining recreation use of undeveloped university lands
- Concerns about pedestrian safety (on & off campus)
- Traffic benefits and impacts to roads outside U-Med
- Concerns about splitting UAA lands
- Interest in alternative transportation measures



Ideas From Previous Studies/Discussions

- Tudor Center Drive extension
- Build 36th Avenue from east of U-Med
- Pine Street connection
- Bragaw Street extension
- Upgrade UAA Drive
- Transit/travel demand solutions
- Non-motorized upgrades
- Remote parking/shuttles



Potential Options to Address Access Needs

Three primary options for improving the movement of people and goods into the U-Med district are being considered. A combination of the three options or taking no action (no-build) is also a possibility.

- Decrease Traffic Demand
- Improve Existing Roadways
- Construct New Access (vehicular, transit, or pedestrian and bicycle)

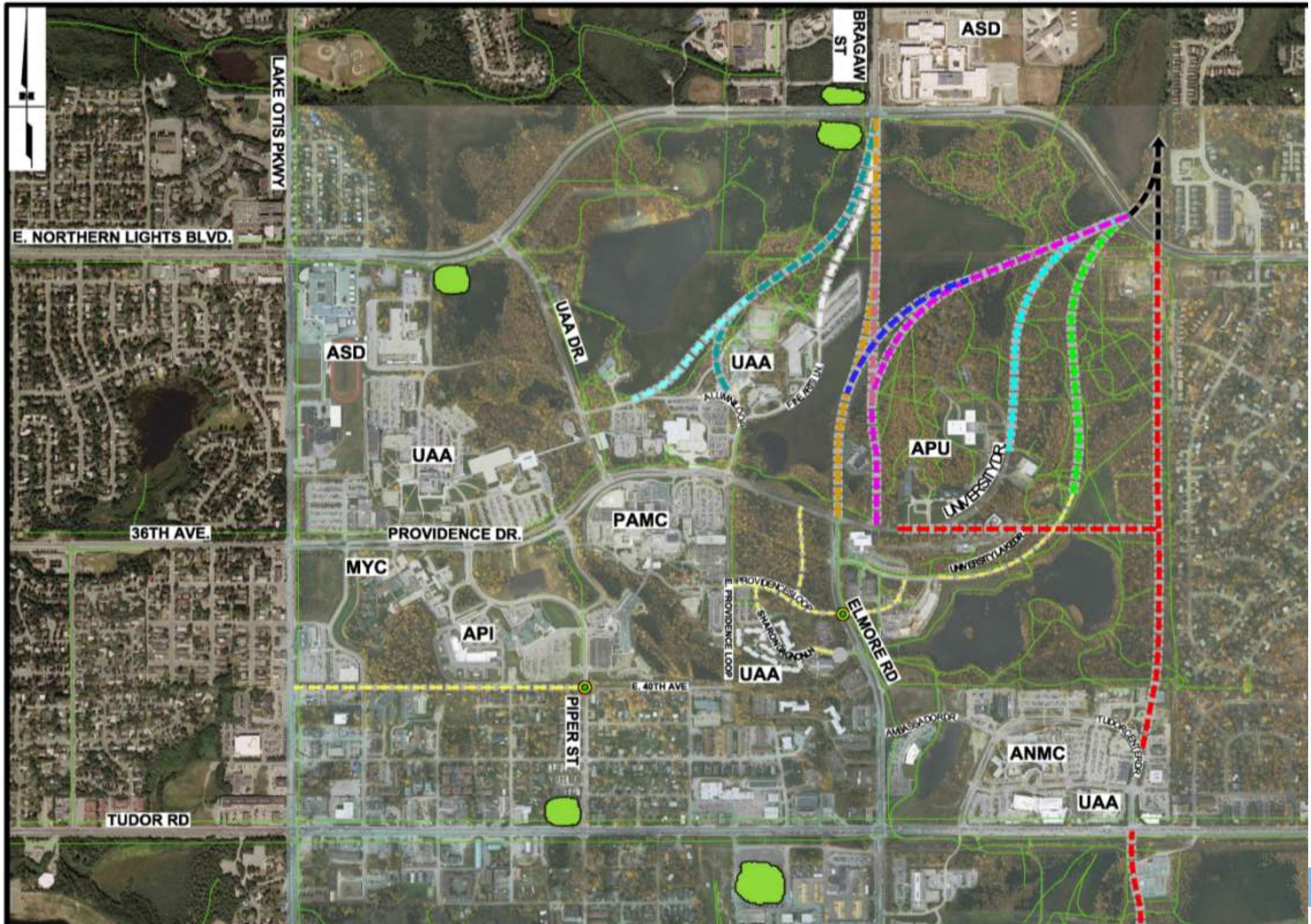
Decrease Travel Demand

- Limit future expansion in the area
- Travel Demand Management
- Park and Ride
- Employee shuttles
- Further parking restrictions on campus
- High occupancy vehicle (HOV)/transit lanes
- Improved transit facilities/more frequent schedules
- Improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities





New Access Alternatives



Improve Existing Access





Screening Criteria

DOT&PF will evaluate the various options based on the following criteria:

- Purpose & Need
- Trail Impacts
- Wetlands
- Parks
- Noise, vibration and Air Quality Impacts
- Master Plan Consistency
- Technical Feasibility
- Short vs. Long Term Solution
- Estimated Construction Cost



What's next?

Alternatives Analysis

Summer 2009 – Winter 2010

Draft Report

Winter 2010

Public Meeting No. 2

Spring 2010

Final Report

Spring 2010



Comments/More information

Please submit your comments
through the project website at
www.umednorthernaccess.com

Or to:

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