



Sunday, April 7, 2024

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities & HDR, Inc.
582 E 36th Avenue, Suite 500
Anchorage, AK 99503
Via email: info@sewardglennmobility.com

Re: Seward to Glenn Highway Connection PEL Study Comment Period on Preliminary Alternatives

Dear Galen Jones and the PEL team,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the AMATS: Seward Highway to Glenn Highway Connection Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. Below are comments on behalf of NeighborWorks Alaska (NWAK) on the preliminary alternatives and Pedestrian and Bicycle Study.

First, we would like to thank the project team for coordinating efforts over the past year with NWAK and the Fairview Community Council as a response to the Reconnecting Fairview effort. In 2023, the U.S. Department of Transportation selected our partnership to receive a Reconnecting Community Pilot Program grant focused on revitalizing the Gambell/Ingra corridor. For the past year, the project team has regularly met with our planning team, coordinated timelines, and elevated priorities as seen in these preliminary alternatives.

Second, we are including a number of attachments to reflect community input during this comment period. In February, we hosted Anchorage Design Week in partnership with the Anchorage Museum. A goal of hosting Anchorage Design Week was to host workshops, conversations, and create visuals and interventions for the future of Fairview, while also engaging and informing participants about the PEL alternatives and how to weigh in with their own comments. There are a number of summary documents that provide color, context, and vision for the corridor that may factor into the alternatives development. Our Reconnecting Fairview planning effort will build on these documents and input in the coming years as well.

Preliminary Alternatives

NWAK is committed to supporting the Fairview Community Council residents and businesses to revitalize the neighborhood after decades of disinvestment and major safety concerns. This is also reflected in the PEL Study's Purpose to focus on: "accessibility, safety, and livability;" to meet "the local

travel needs of residents who live, play, and work in the area;” and to “improve neighborhood connections and quality of life.” This is also highlighted in the Need statements on improving safety and promoting social equity and economic development.

At this phase of the PEL study, every preliminary alternative includes major priorities for Fairview, including restoring Gambell Street to a main street, providing a “regional trail” connection or Greenway from the Chester Creek to the Ship Creek, as well as removing freight traffic from Downtown. This aligns with our Reconnecting Fairview effort, and also demonstrates true engagement and integration of public feedback throughout the process.

However, most of the alternatives assume the need for a high-speed, controlled access freeway through the heart of Anchorage. The major impacts of these alternatives are not currently provided to the public but are needed to better understand the options, including the impacts on property “relocations,” losses in property tax revenue, and costs of construction and maintenance. Residential relocations would perpetuate the displacement caused by the highway connection in the first place and is inconsistent with promoting social equity or economic development within the Gambell-Ingra corridor. We understand this will happen in the next screening phase but find it difficult to reality-check these current alternatives that might lead to decades of more uncertainty and disinvestment along the alternatives’ routes.

With the current information provided, the “interim” or MTP2050 (no highway connection) alternative best meets the overall purpose and need of the project, while addressing safety and restoring certainty to the corridor. This alternative should be analyzed for the long-term, not just the interim, as well as additional “no highway” connection alternatives that integrate Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO), Transportation Demand Management (TDM), increased transit options, and improving active transportation facilities. This alternative also aligns with land use goals for the corridor including the Fairview Greenway along Hyder Street; Complete Streets on Gamble Street, Ingra Street, 5th Avenue, 6th Avenue, and 15th Avenue; and a main street feel along Gamble Street. Integrating the future of the highway corridors with the land use goals will create a more vibrant urban mixed-use corridor while revitalizing the Fairview neighborhood and serving residents and visitors along our highway system. We include Attachment “Fairview Symposium Summary” for more public input on this.

Going forward, the alternatives design and analysis should seriously consider the MTP2050 alternative with TSMO and TDM for the long-term. The MTP2050 includes fifteen projects within the study area, including route improvements for freight, but the project team may identify additional project needs in order to improve upon this alternative for the long-term. We know there will need to be discussions on how to address the impacts the number of vehicles would continue to have through the Fairview neighborhood with this approach, but we believe it can still achieve the purpose and need of the study and move neighborhood priorities forward.

As in our previous comments on the System Performance Memo, we continue to question the future growth scenario for projected traffic volumes. The system performance memo shows stagnation or declines in traffic volumes over the last decade, but still projects 10-26% increases in the “medium”



growth scenario. This future growth is unrealistic and does not justify a new highway, and the forecast should be compared to the projected growth described in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2050.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Study

NWAK and our Reconnecting Fairview team is pleased the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) conducted the Pedestrian and Bicycle Study. This is a direct response to the high amount of public input throughout the process to focus on pedestrian safety along the corridor, and that we “count what matters.” We appreciate the team adding additional counts along Hyder Street and that the PEL team may share data with the Reconnecting Fairview effort going forward.

It is significant to note that Gambell had the most pedestrian usage, potentially due to business destinations along the corridor, and that midblock crossings are consistent throughout the corridor. The report should also include the exposure index map overlaid with the fatal and major injury crash data shown in the PEL’s “Basic Description of the Environmental Setting Report” to better inform key findings from the full body of work from the PEL study. The “hotspot” intersections from crash data have some overlap with the exposure index map but also include Ingra & 6th Avenue, and locations outside of the camera study area include: Karluk & 3rd Avenue, 5th Avenue & Sitka Street, and 5th Avenue & Airport Heights Drive.

It is our understanding this study informed the alternatives design, and this should be described within the Draft Detailed Alternatives Report. We also met with the PEL team and shared questions and context to this study, such as describing the conditions of the sidewalks along the roadways. We include Attachments “Fairview Winter Walk Audit (Feb 2024)” and “Anchorage Pilot Walk Audit (Aug 2022)” for context that can be integrated into this study report. These audits were led by AARP Alaska with partner organizations to review the conditions and experience walking along the corridor in the fall and winter.

NeighborWorks Alaska is committed to creating safer, connected, and vibrant Fairview and Downtown neighborhoods. Please let us know if you have further questions or clarifications about these comments.

Sincerely,



Jim MacKenzie
Executive Director
NeighborWorks Alaska
2515 A Street
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Stable Housing

Thriving Families

Strong Communities



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Anchorage Design Week: Fairview Symposium

Summary

What is Design Week?

Organized by the Anchorage Museum with community partners, Anchorage Design Week is an annual gathering of creative minds to promote and inspire place-based design and imagine the future of our city and the life-ways of Northern regions.

Anchorage Design Week partners included NeighborWorks Alaska and Fairview Community Council, taking place February 21-25, 2024.

The community events for Design Week are organized by the Anchorage Museum with community partners Alaska Design Forum and AIGA Alaska. Anchorage Design Week is a member of World Design Weeks.

Fostering Inclusivity

Design Week welcomes community members and creatives to consider the role of design in advancing positive futures through visuals, interventions, workshops, and conversations. This year, we consider how sustainable materials and practices foster inclusivity, safety and community within Anchorage's Fairview neighborhood. Fairview recently was awarded a Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program Grant funding efforts to reconnect communities impacted by challenging transportation infrastructure.

Vibrant Neighborhoods

Through the lens of design, we'll consider how creative solutions implemented in vibrant and vital neighborhoods like Fairview can shape Anchorage's future. We'll also share how artists are cultivating wellness and care inspired by Northern-appropriate materials in the Anchorage Museum exhibition *[How to Survive](#)*.

Reconnecting Fairview Symposium hosted by ANC Design Week

Friday, February 23, 2024 · 12 - 4pm AKST

Location: Seed Lab at Anchorage Museum, 109 West 6th Ave First Floor Anchorage, AK 99501

Agenda

- 11:30 AM - 12:00 PM: Sign In + Welcome, Anchorage Museum Seed Lab Team
- 12:10 PM - 12:25 PM: Seward to Glenn Connection Alternatives Overview (includes Lunch), Edith McKee, HDR
- 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM: The Reconnecting Fairview Project, Lindsey Hajduk (NeighborWorks) & Jonny Hayes (Anchorage Museum)

- 1:00 PM - 1:15 PM: Networking + Bio Break
- 1:15 PM - 2:30 PM: Main Street Research + Design with Lego, Peter Briggs (Corvus Design)
- 2:30 PM - 2:45 PM: Reconnect + Bio Break
- 2:45 PM - 3:30 PM: Fairview Greenway Research + Design Illustration Session, Lee Post (Post Marks)
- 3:30 PM - 4:00 PM: Group Discussion | Next Steps

About this event

Anchorage Design Week and its community partners are excited to invite neighborhood residents and small business owners, planners and designers, active transportation advocates, and economic development partners to **cogenerate positive visions during a series of creative workshops highlighting the potential of Fairview**. Initial presentations by NeighborWorks Alaska and the Anchorage Museum



will set participants up for **creative exercises led by local design experts Peter Briggs (Corvus Design) and Lee Post (Postmarks Graphics)**, who will guide folks to sharing and articulating ideas for how open space and the built environment can support the residents of Fairview and greater Anchorage.

In addition to learning about the potential development implications of the Seward to Glenn Connection project, this workshop will help participants learn how to share their perspectives and imaginations using visual storytelling methods with accessible tools like Lego and simple illustration techniques.



The results of this creative symposium are intended to represent an assemblage of ideas describing greenway connections and economic development targets that help to advance the ambitions of residents and entrepreneurs in East Downtown and the Fairview neighborhood while **focusing on a core area of the proposed highway connection project - Gambell Main Street and Fairview Greenway** (Hyder and Ingra streets).

As the Fairview neighborhood responds to the potential impacts and opportunities presented by the most recent proposals for the [Seward Highway Connection by Alaska Department of Transportation \(AKDOT\)](#) this workshop seeks to consider historical contexts and support small businesses and residents alike with creative solutions to a community challenge.

This event is made possible with support by NeighborWorks Alaska in collaboration with the Anchorage Museum, the Fairview Community Council, and the Alaska Chapter ASLA. This event is hosted by the Anchorage Museum at Seed Lab.

Participant Registration Cost: FREE. Registration includes 3.0 hours of content applicable for use as Professional Development Hours (PDH) for State of Alaska AELS License Professionals. Certificate of attendance can be issued by request following the event.

Please join this research and design-oriented Symposium to learn about the *Reconnecting Fairview* project and neighborhood history while sharing your personal experiences and creative ideas during engagement exercises. Help Anchorage Design Week connect local neighborhood advocacy with creative expertise and collaborative explorations.

Symposium work products and ideations will be considered for responses as part of the ***Seward to Glenn Connection Planning Environmental Linkages (PEL) project currently in-process***. The PEL is the official AK DOT process that helps to build a public vision and revise proposed alternatives to best reconnect the neighborhood while serving as functional infrastructure.

Summary: Main Street Research + Design with Lego

This activity, facilitated by Peter Briggs, led participants through a process to reimagine Gambell Street as a main street, as described in the activity description. First, participants broke into small groups to discuss the current cross-section of Gambell Street, and then to create new ideas to improve the roadway based on goals to Reconnect Fairview.

A *summary of themes* is included below based on the activities of the group captured from a birds-eye view. To watch the 20 second summary video, visit Fairness for Fairview's Anchorage Design Week website here: fairviewak.org/anchorage-design-week

You can watch the 2:47 video here, with the timestamps referenced below. Generally, there were three-lane and two-lane cross sections the groups explored, with emphasis on separated active transportation infrastructure, activating the sidewalks, and including storefronts for adjacent land use.

- Teams explored ways to reduce the driving lanes from four lanes to three or two, including potentially including a parking lane.
- Teams were excited to explore dedicating a bus lane, which could also include freight in the lane, to include more transportation options along Gambell.
- Teams added buildings and storefronts to the edge of the right-of-way to help create a “main street” feel (1:25).
- Teams discussed activating the greenspaces, including with landscaping and gardening (1:39). These greenspaces act as buffers between vehicle and active transportation, as well as a location for snow storage in the winter.
- Teams included ways to separate active transportation from driving lanes, including through curbs, bollards, greenspaces, or parking. They also included strategies at crosswalks to draw vehicle drivers' attention, including raised and colorful crosswalks.

Three Driving Lane Options for Gambell Street

- Remove one driving lane and replace it with a curb, then green buffer and wide multi-use pathway on one side of the roadway. (Reference minute, 0:04)
- Remove one driving lane and replace it with a curb, then wide multi-use pathway (0:06).

- Three-lane option with a bus lane, possibly shared with freight (1:42). Include curb and bollards and sidewalks on both sides, including one side with a wide greenspace for landscaping and gardening.
- Active transportation bridge added to consider additional levels for safe crossing (2:01).



Two Driving Lane Options for Gambell Street

- Two-lane traffic with opposite directions northbound and southbound. (0:25)
 - Design to include curb, greenspace, and multi-use pathways on both sides of roadway. (0:25)
 - On one side of roadway, replace the greenspace with a raised barrier to protect multi-use pathway (0:38).
 - The curb can also include bollards to further protect the active transportation corridors (0:48).
- Two-lane traffic with a parking lane on one side of the roadway (0:59).
 - Design to include one side of roadway could include curb and bollards, greenspace, then multi-use pathway. The other side of roadway could include curb and bollards, raised cycle track, and sidewalk (1:01).
 - Include raised crosswalks (1:22) and/or colorful crosswalks (1:29).
 - Design to include sidewalk on one side with adjacent buildings, and the other side has curb and bollards, greenspace, and wide multi-use pathway (1:25).
- Two-lane traffic with opposite directions northbound and southbound. (1:31)
 - Design to include curb and bollards, green buffer, and wide multi-use pathways on both sides of roadway (1:33)
- Two-lane same direction traffic (2:27).
 - Design to include curb and bollard, green buffer, multi-use pathway with adjacent buildings on one side; and a separate bicycle lane, green buffer, then multi-use pathway with adjacent buildings on the other side (2:29).
 - Include outdoor gathering spaces and benches, curb bulbs, colorful and raised crosswalks (2:35).

Summary: Fairview Greenway Research + Design Illustration Session, Lee Post

This activity, facilitated by Lee Post, led participants through a process to create a map or design of a Fairview Greenway between the Chester Creek and Ship Creek trails. This has been referred to in many ways, including: a Greenway, a Woonerf, a pedestrian boulevard, a regional trail connection, and more.

First, Lee shared a presentation about how maps tell stories, and then offered the group three options to engage in, which included these instructions:


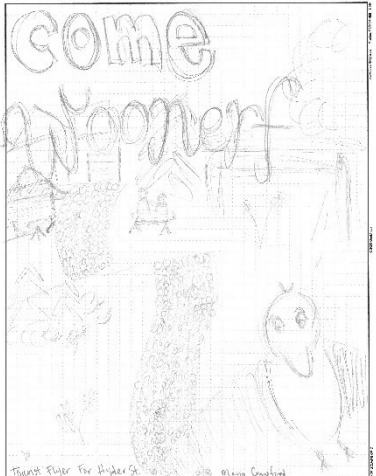
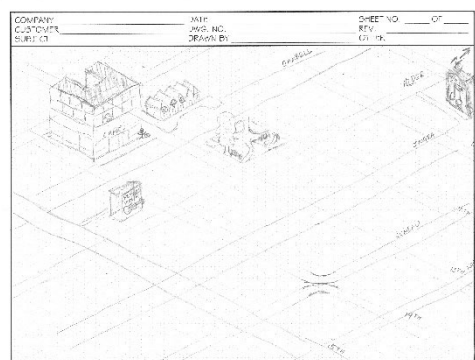
1. **Tourist Map or Poster:** Design a helpful map or snazzy travel poster for an out-of-town tourist of the many features and sights in and around the Seward/Glenn Highway connection.
2. **Isometric Map:** Use your new skills to draft a portion of the Seward-Glenn connection in isometric perspective. Make your own mini Sim City!
3. **Map Cards:** Draw a set of interlocking cards to imagine the layout and features of the Seward/Glenn connection.

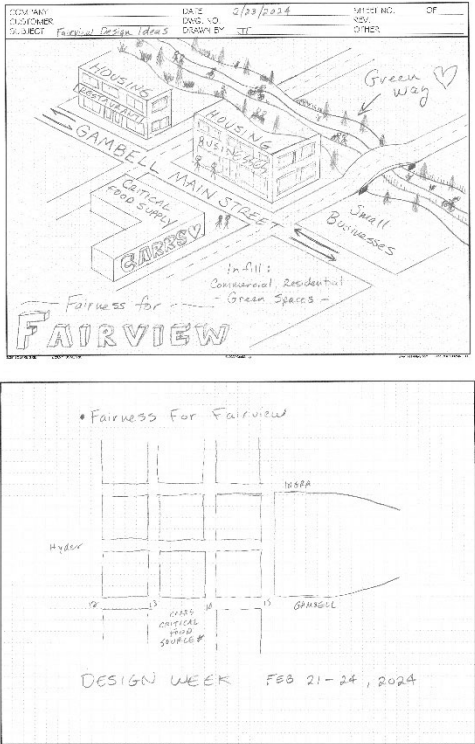
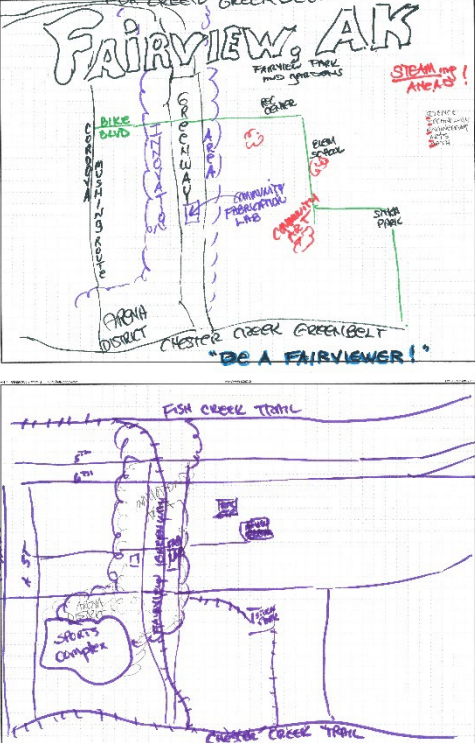
A summary of themes is included below based on the activities of the group captured in their drawings. These are detailed individually in the following table. Generally, there were shared themes around:

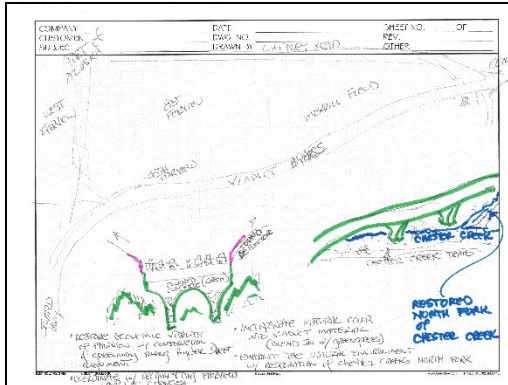
- A greenway along Hyder Street, while also demonstrating a Gambell main street with businesses and complementary uses or designs.
- A greenway that favors active transportation and transit, and opportunities to slow vehicle speeds down like reducing the driving lane numbers and width or adding chicanes.
- Woonerfs, or “living streets,” were included as well: narrow driving lane for shared use by bicyclists, pedestrians, and more.
- New infill development for residential and mixed-use multi-story properties, favoring housing and restaurants, while also protecting existing businesses like Carr’s and others. There were other creative approaches for an innovation area, including a Fairview Fun Hall.
- Activating shared public space for outdoor gatherings year round. The greenspace is often also used for snow storage and buffers with vehicle traffic.
- Small storefronts for local entrepreneurs and vendors to establish businesses.

Map Drawings and Brief Descriptions

[Click here to see larger renderings of the maps.](#)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This drawing includes an interpretation of “My Woonerf” for Fairview. • This includes a narrow roadway for vehicles (potentially just a bus) with bicyclists, and sidewalks. • The outdoor public space includes shared activities for games or tables. • The design includes landscaping and trees. • The adjacent land use includes multi-story buildings, potentially for residential or mixed-use developments.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a tourist flyer for Hyder Street. • This envisions a Woonerf. • This design includes a meandering, narrow roadway, trees and landscaping, and benches and areas to convene outdoors. • The flyer overall has a fun whimsical feel, including with a Raven, or Delgaa, theme, which is part of the Fairview Block Party outreach and theme at Fairview Park.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This map includes a few key establishments along the corridor, including Carr's on Gambell, Peter's Violin shop, and the Horn Doctor. • The design includes new development or stories added to Carr's, potentially for residential use, as well as small pop-up businesses next to it for new entrepreneurs. • This also includes a park design for the block between Gambell-Hyder, which could repeat along the corridor.

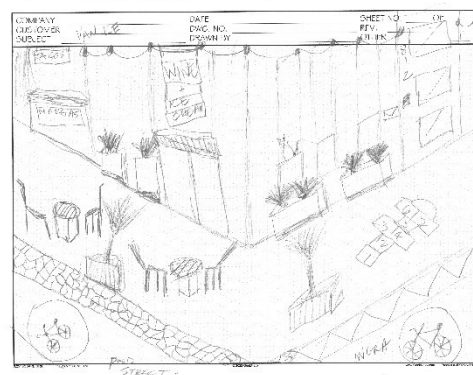
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This map explores a Gambell main street and parallel Greenway. • The Gambell main street would include multi-story, mixed-use development with housing and businesses, including small businesses. • The Greenway includes a curvy multi-use pathway, landscaping, shared outdoor spaces, and bridges for major roads to cross over the Greenway. • This includes infill development for commercial, residential, and green spaces, and notes Carr's is a critical food supply. • (This second map is a sketch for the one above).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This map shows the Greenway connecting the creek greenbelts includes a taglines to “Be a Fairviewer!” and “STEAMing Ahead!” (meaning Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math). • The map highlights key destinations including: the Cordova mushing route, Arena District, Innovation Area and community fabrication lab, Rec Center, elementary school, and parks and trails. • Note, the Greenway would connect the Chester Creek and Ship Creek trails, though this map says “Fish” Creek instead of “Ship.” • The purple map is an earlier version of the final map.



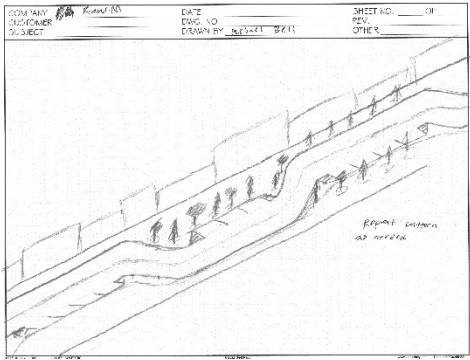
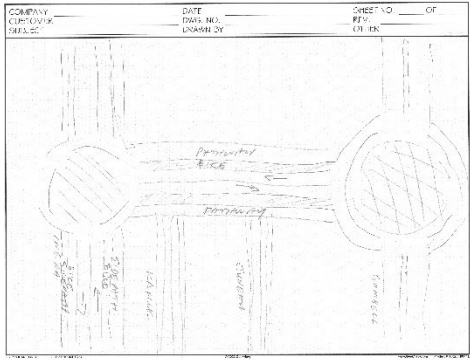

- This map explores the preliminary alternative D in the Seward to Glenn PEL study. This includes a Viaduct Bypass through the Chester Creek greenbelt. It shows the Port of Alaska and Whitney Road, the Glenn and Seward highways, Merrill Field, and West/East/South Fairview.
- The Viaduct could include colored concrete (green) and sound deflectors (fireweed color).
- This would also include a restored North Fork of the Chester Creek.
- This design would “restore economic vitality of Fairview with construction of greenway along Hyder St alignment,” “coordinate with Reconnecting Fairview land use changes,” “incorporate natural color into viaduct material (blend in with greenspaces),” and “enhance the natural environment with restoration of Chester Creek North Fork.”

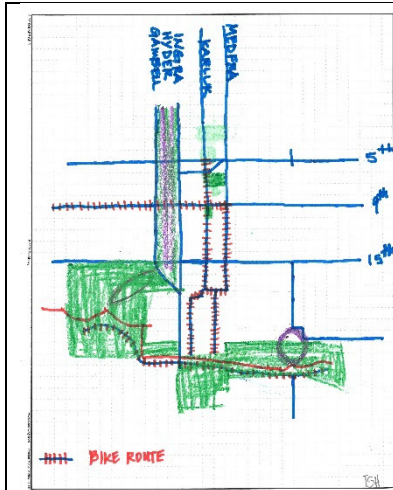


- This map highlights land use and development changes along the corridor between Gambell (with 2-way traffic) and Hyder (a pedestrian street). There would also be distinct intersections for pedestrian crossing.
- New uses include an outdoor market in Carr’s back parking lot, art galleries, restaurants, food truck / tasting room (tacos & margs), a park and amphitheater, and small storefronts for vendors. There would also be multi-use housing and infill home development.
- There would be a trail connection south of 15th Ave, which then meanders between Hyder, an ally, and Gambell Streets.
- There would also be additional landscaping and trees along all streets, including Gambell.

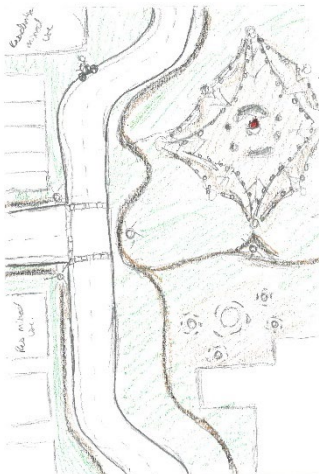
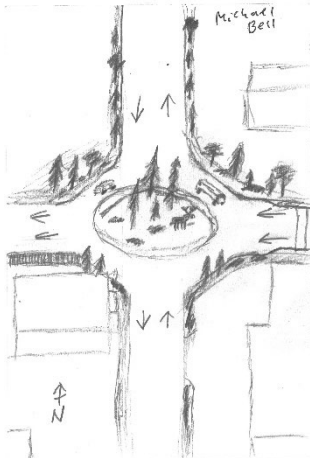


- This map showcases a street corner of Fairview, where a pedestrian street and Ingra Street have wide sidewalks and bicycle lanes.
- The sidewalks would include landscaping and be activated with outdoor seating and chalk art.
- There would be multi-use buildings with housing and providing businesses, especially restaurants serving tacos, margaritas, ice cream, wine, and more.

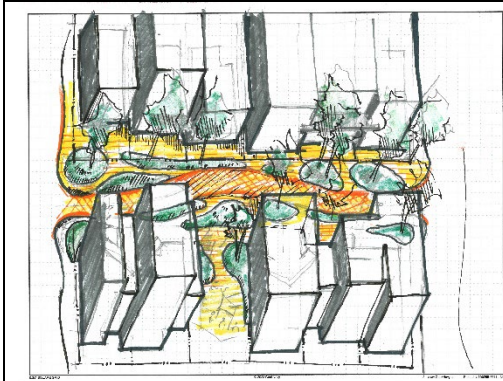
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Greenway map shows a chicane pattern for the roadway, alternating on-street parking for traffic calming and shared-use of the roadway. • There would also be trees and landscaping added along the roadway.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This map shows a roadway with two, opposite direction driving lanes with bicycle lanes and multi-use pathways on both sides. This cross section could also apply to Ingrá Street. • There is some exploration of roundabouts at key intersections as well.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This flyer advertises the Fairview Fun Hall! It is like a food hall, but includes music and dancing. • The “Best dancing floor” is a suspended dance floor with live DJs and bands. • The “best food of the world” celebrates different cultures in the neighborhood, including: Somali, Korean, Samoan, Turkish, Russian, and Latin American foods. • It would also be “close to the Sullivan!”



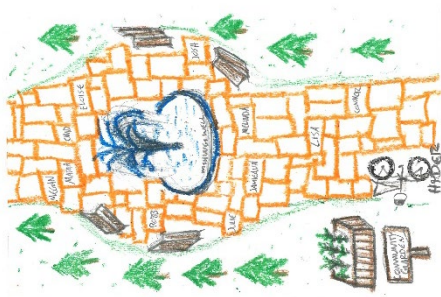
- This map features a bike route through Fairview from the Chester Creek Trail, with the Greenway featured between Gambell and Ingra Streets.
- There are bike routes also along Karluk, Medfra, and 9th Avenues (potentially referring to the 10th Avenue bicycle boulevard?).
- The map also notes the missing north-south connection at Sitka Street and the Chester Creek Trail.



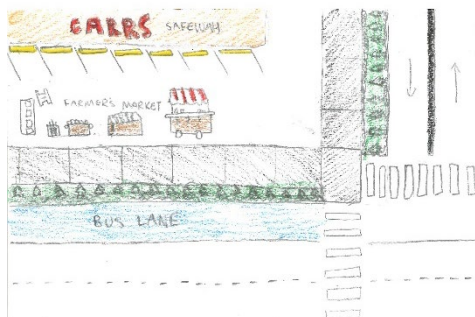
- This map card shows a roundabout with landscaping (and even moose!).
- It shows two cross streets, one with two lanes of opposite-direction traffic, and one with two lanes of same direction traffic.
- The second map card shows a section of the Greenway, with a chicane design. It includes two driving lanes with a bicycle lane.
- It includes landscaping and activated outdoor spaces, including a picnic table area and an outdoor fire pit or amphitheater section.
- The land use along the corridor would also be residential mixed-use development.



- This map showcases a meandering Greenway with landscaping and trees.
- The corridor includes multi-story buildings, including residential and commercial properties.
- There is also an outdoor space, potentially a pavilion, to gather outside.



- These map cards are like puzzle pieces to connect and construct the corridor.
- The Hyder Street section includes an active transportation corridor with commemorative bricks, benches, and a wishing well. It is also surrounded by a community garden, trees, and landscaping.



- The corridor would also include a two-way bike path with bike racks.
- There would also be a pedestrian walkway with wayfinding adjacent to a bus-only lane and bus stops.

- The Gambell Street section includes a bus lane adjacent to two driving lanes.
- There is a separation between the roadway and the wide sidewalk with a greenspace.
- Carr's parking lot would also host a Farmer's Market

A Neighborhood Walk in Fairview

*Anchorage Design Week
February 25, 2024*

Mary Dean Broussard
AARP AK
Age-Friendly Anchorage



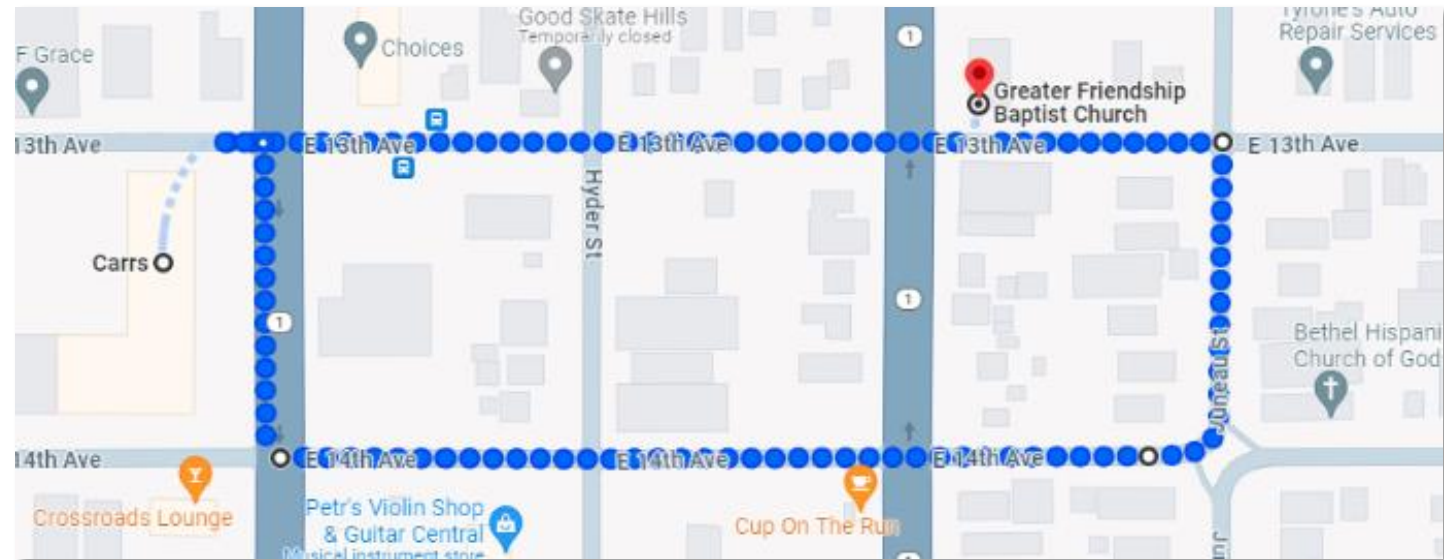
The Route for the Fairview Neighborhood Walk

The starting point for our walk was the parking lot of the Greater Friendship Baptist Church (GFBC.)

We headed west on E. 13th Ave crossing Ingra St., Hyder St. then Gambell St. to the parking lot of the Carrs grocery store.

The return walk took us on E. 14th Ave. headed east crossing the same 3 streets.

2024 Anchorage Design Week was hosted by the Anchorage Museum in partnership with the Fairview Community Council and NeighborWorks Alaska. This walk audit was hosted by AARP Alaska and Anchorage Park Foundation, with a special thank you to Greater Friendship Baptist Church for hosting and participating in the event.



Sidewalks, Streets and Crossings

E. 13th Ave. Sidewalks

- Between the church and Ingra St., the sidewalk was partially cleared of snow however there was a thick layer of bumpy ice covering the sidewalk.
- The sidewalks on the remainder of 13th Ave. were sometimes partially cleared of some snow, however there was always a hardened layer of ice and snow on all visible sidewalks.
- It was not possible to determine the width of any of the sidewalks due to the snow cover. The sidewalks that were shoveled only had a path that was less than two feet wide. Shoveling was very sporadic.





E. 13th Ave. Sidewalks (continued)

Some members of our group braved walking on the 13th Ave. sidewalks but most people, neighborhood and our group, walked in the street. The condition of the street was far from ideal, it was covered with hard packed snow and ice but at least it was flat. Wearing crampons made the walk safer. There was not much traffic on E. 13th St but that might be because we were there on a Sunday

There is no separation between E. 13th St and the sidewalks. The current sidewalk condition for the entire stretch we covered was poor to extremely poor given the accumulation of snow and ice. At some points boulders of ice were present on the sidewalk path (top photo.)

The E. 13th Ave. sidewalks have many interruptions for driveways from both homes and businesses.

Due to snow and ice accumulation, it was impossible to determine if sidewalks have curb cuts on Ingra St., Hyder St and Gambell St.

E. 14th Sidewalks

- E. 14th Ave. Sidewalks have not been cleared. Perhaps they have never been cleared since the first snowfall in Nov. 2023.
- In the Hyder St. area, the E. 14th Ave sidewalk area was covered with a large pile of snow. It looked like it was used as an area to dump plowed snow (see photo.)
- In the current conditions (accumulated snow and ice) it is impossible to determine whether there are:
 - Curb cut ramps to assist people crossing using wheelchairs, walkers or strollers.
 - Tactile ground surfaces when a sidewalk is ending (such as at an intersection.
 - Any separation or barrier from the street
 - Although the sidewalks are not currently visible it is likely that there are many interruptions for driveways.



Juneau St. Sidewalks

The residential feel of Juneau St. was enhanced by traffic calming measures including a small island to the south and bollards bumping out from sidewalks to slow traffic.

There was snow and ice accumulation on Juneau St. But about half of the sidewalks had been cleared recently as shown in the photo on the bottom left.

Although both are north/south cross streets between E. 13th and 14th Ave., as a pedestrian the difference in the appearance of Juneau and Hyder St. is striking.



The Streets

- Traffic lights seen are at the intersection of E. 13th Ave. and Ingra St. and E. 13th Ave. and Gambell St. are clearly visible to drivers and pedestrians. Each has a crosswalk and a push button crosswalk signal. The crosswalk are only partially visible due to snow and ice accumulation.
- There is no audible component for the crosswalk.
- There is no signage alerting drivers to pedestrians crossing at the intersection of E. 13th Ave. and either Ingra St. or Gambell St. Nor is there signage alerting drivers to pedestrians crossing at the intersection of E.14th Ave. And Ingra St. And Gambell St.
- Due to snow and ice accumulation, it is not clear if there is a pedestrian crossing at the intersection of E. 13th Ave and Hyder St.
- There is no dedicated bike lane in any of the area covered in the walk.



Street Safety and Appeal

The parts of E. 13th Ave. and E. 14th Ave. east of Ingra St. have a more residential feeling than the same streets on the west side of Ingra St. More of the properties are in better repair east of Ingra St. sidewalks were better shoveled (although not great.) The Greater Friendship Baptist Church is the largest building in this neighborhood east of Ingra St. It appears the GFBC is a good neighbor and helps keep the neighborhood functioning as a welcoming and well-kept area. Unfortunately, the sections of E. 13th Ave. And E. 14th Ave that are west of Ingra St. and east of Gambell do not have that sense of a reasonably well-maintained neighborhood. There is a mixture of residential and commercial properties; as noted in the previous section almost all sidewalks had not been shoveled for quite a while.

While Fairview east of Ingra St. and west of Ingra St. have some very distinct characteristics, there are also common features, or more often lack of features. This includes:

- There are no places to sit.
- The bus stops recorded did not have any seating or shelter. However, shoveling had been done to reduce the snow berm between the street and the posted bus schedule at the bus stop on E. 13th Ave. between Hyder St. and Gambell St.
- The types of street lighting were mixed. There was some pedestrian scale lighting on both E. 13th and E. 14th Ave. between Hyder and Gambell St. The most common type of lighting was not scaled for pedestrians.
- Only 1 speed limit sign was seen on the .5-mile loop we covered. The sign was not actually on the path of our walk but was spotted in the distance north on Ingra St. From E. 13th Ave.
- There were no trash receptacles on the streets covered in our walk.



More about Ingra St. and Gambell St.

This is often referred to as the Ingra/Gambell couplet. South of Ingra and Gambell Streets is the Seward Highway, the 2 streets become the Glenn Highway at 5th and 6th Avenue. The volume of traffic is generally very high and often has many Semis passing through.

Both Ingra and Gambell St. have sidewalks however there was no sidewalk visible on the day of our walk. We were not comfortable walking on the sidewalks along Gambell or Ingra Streets. Snow from the roadway was recently plowed onto the sidewalks making a narrow and unsafe walking surface. Gambell Street, like Hyder Street, also has utility poles in the middle of the sidewalks. Rather than walking on Gambell St. sidewalks, our group instead walked in the maintained Carr's parking lot

The speed limit is 35 MPH. The fastest vehicle we recorded during our walk on a quiet Sunday afternoon was travelling 40 MPH. One of the walkers reported that "even when vehicles are going the speed limit it is uncomfortable to walk directly next to them and it still feels too fast."

Ingra St. & E. 14th Ave.

Street Safety and Appeal continued

In the current conditions (accumulated snow and ice) it is impossible to determine whether there are:

- Curb cut ramps to assist people crossing using wheelchairs, walkers or strollers.
- Tactile ground surfaces when a sidewalk is ending (such as at an intersection.
- Any separation or barrier from the street

Although the sidewalks are not currently visible it is likely that there are many interruptions for driveways.

Impressions of the route include:

- The streets on the route do not have a safe and appealing presentation, particularly west of Ingra St.
- Overall, the location does not appear to be safe from crime, harassment or similar threats. Again, this is true particularly west of Ingra St.

Final Thoughts and Recommendations

We saw one installation of streetscape art that commemorates civic heroes and was created by the Fairview Community Council.

The neighborhood we walked includes two distinct areas:

- One area is east of Ingra St. where the Greater Fellowship Baptist Church is located. The neighborhood is primarily residential, and the homes were mostly well maintained. The sidewalks' condition was not great due to snow and ice, but at least some effort had been made to maintain them. The area was quieter and felt safer than the same streets across Ingra.
- The area west of Ingra St. has clearly seen better days.



West of Ingra St.

This area is a mix of commercial and residential buildings leaning towards being more commercial. Some buildings appear unoccupied, and many have not received any love for quite a while. The area around Hyder St. seems eerily vacant and a perfect location for a Woonerf. The conditions of buildings and the maintenance of the road decline the closer one gets to Gambell St.

The route covered in this walk audit seems to exemplify the damage that is done to a community when a highway is placed right in the middle of it. East of Ingra St. And West of Gambell St. are vibrant middle-class communities that are thriving, or at least making a good attempt at thriving. The stretch of E. 13th and E. 14th Ave. that lies in between Ingra and Gambell St seems like the land that time forgot. Thriving is not a word that can be used to describe it, just barely getting by is more like it. E. 14th Ave. leading up to the intersection with Hyder St. almost felt like it was being used as a snow dump (see photos.) There are some decent buildings in this area as well.





What's a Woonerf?

A woonerf is a living street – where lower speed limits for vehicles are required. It is a street where active transportation and safety is the priority.

Viewing the small section of Hyder St. that we covered in this walk audit it seems like creating a Woonerf on Hyder St. would benefit this area greatly. It could be such a nice area to travel north and south for pedestrians, bikers and runners instead of attempting travel on the highways of Ingra and Gambell St. It could pump life back into an area that truly does seem like it has been forgotten. We saw many people on foot in this section, primarily navigating the streets because the sidewalks were not passable. More than half of the people we saw were disabled. Having a bit of a haven from traffic and weary buildings could be life-changing for some of them. There was a school crossing sign nearly buried in the snow off in the distance north on Hyder St. (p.9), maybe a Woonerf would give those children a safe place to play.

A winter Woonerf perhaps?



Anchorage Pilot Walk Audit 8/22/2022

Why this location?

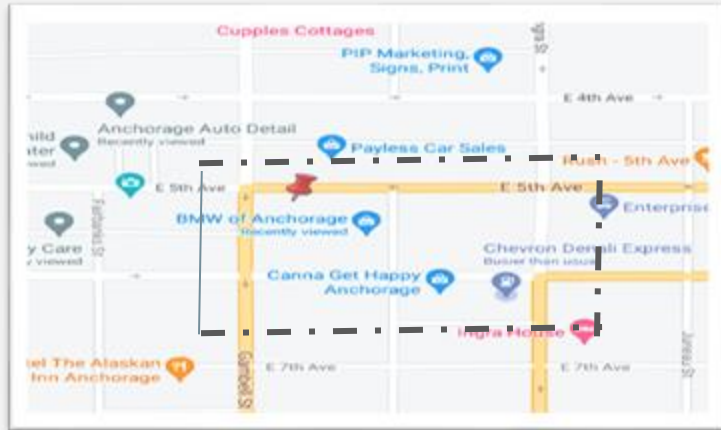
Based on the Anchorage Vision Zero 2019 Annual Report the most pedestrian deaths and severe pedestrian injuries in the municipality of Anchorage occurred close to the selected area. Our Walk Audit goal was to document problems we found, prioritize, and find solutions that can be implemented to improve pedestrian safety. In the image below severe pedestrian injuries are indicated by the red ring, severe auto crashes are the green rings, the dashed line shows the walk audit location.



Anchorage Pilot Walk Audit 8/22/2022

TRAFFIC, TRAFFIC, Traffic

Close up of the area covered in the Walk Audit



Our Observations:

- When the light on 5th at Gambell is green all the traffic moves very fast, both those turning left on Gambell and those travelling west into downtown. When the traffic is moving on the roads the movement and vibration can be felt on the sidewalk (particularly when Semis and Double Axles pass.)
- There is only one small speed limit sign on each block covered in th the walk audit.
- The speed limit sign on 5th is obscured by a tree branch.
- Most of the crosswalks in the block audited need to be repainted.
- There is no crosswalk or pedestrian signal on the Ingra side crossing 5th which means pedestrians most likely cross where and when they wish.
- Pedestrian crossing time varies between crosswalks observed. Frequently there is not enough time for pedestrians to cross safely.
- Pedestrians navigate many obstructions in the area covered. Navigating the sidewalk safely in a wheelchair, scooter or walker is challenging and sometimes impossible without entering the roadway.

General comments on this area:

- The area is primarily commercial
- There is frequently a high volume of traffic.
- In general, having multiple lanes of traffic increases the speed travelled.
- Large vehicles such as Semis, Double Axles and Buses require a larger turning radius increasing the challenge for pedestrians crossing the road.
- The blocks covered during the walk audit exemplify a road designed primarily for vehicular traffic. This is the intersection of the Glenn and Seward Highways - the two busiest highways in Alaska. There are frequent crashes of vehicle vs. pedestrians, vehicle vs. bicycle and vehicle vs. vehicle.



Considerations for Improvement - Slow Down Traffic



West of the audit location 5th Ave. transitions from highway to the main road that leads downtown. Add at least one compelling sign warning of increased pedestrian traffic



Increase the number and visibility of speed limit signs



Periodically set up portable digital signs that display the speed of traffic. All four streets observed during the audit could benefit from this.



Improve the Safety of Sidewalks



Improve maintenance of vegetation and bushes in the area.



Remove sidewalk obstructions or extend sidewalk to compensate allowing safe navigation for all pedestrians.



Remove sidewalk obstructions or expand the sidewalk allowing safe navigation for all pedestrians.



6th &
Hyder



6th & Ingra



Gambell
and 6th



North side of 5th
near Ingra

Repaint current crosswalks:



Many of the crosswalks need fresh paint. Winter presents still more challenges for pedestrians, when crosswalks are often not visible due to snow and ice. Also, in winter, snow is plowed on sidewalks, daylight is scarce and weather further reduces pedestrian visibility.

Consider crosswalk solutions that get noticed and can help slow down traffic!

Crosswalk Painted in 3D



Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon (RRFB)



Anchorage Pilot Walk Audit 8/22/2022



Post Walk Audit accident:



On 9/09/2022 at 6AM a bicyclist was in a collision with a car at the intersection of Gambell St. and E. 5th Avenue.



Unfortunately, the bicyclist was brought to the hospital with what officers described as “life threatening injuries.”



The bicyclist was traveling west on 5th and reportedly crossed Gambell when the “do not walk” sign displayed. A white sedan was travelling south on Gambell with a green light and did not stop to render aid to the cyclist. The police have asked the public to aid in identifying the vehicle.

Citation:

<https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/anchorage/2022/09/09/bicyclist-badly-hurt-in-collision-with-vehicle-near-downtown-anchorage/>

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