

# 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue Upgrade Patterson Street to Muldoon Road

PM&E Project Number 05-02

## PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN *For a Context Sensitive Solution/Context Sensitive Design*

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## 1.0 OVERVIEW

The Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) is proposing to make changes to 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Patterson Street and Muldoon Road to improve vehicle circulation, pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle safety, road surface and subsurface, drainage, and lighting. The MOA Department of Project Management and Engineering (PM&E) will supervise the environmental approval, preliminary design, plans, and specifications for the changes and eventually supervise the construction of the improvements.

PM&E has retained Lounsbury & Associates, Inc. (Lounsbury) to lead the design and planning effort. Lounsbury will be assisted by specialist technical design consultants and Brooks & Associates (B&A) to provide public involvement support.

This public involvement plan outlines a process to support development of a context sensitive solution (CSS) or context sensitive design (CSD). Qualities of projects, in term of design and process, that achieve a context sensitive solution include:

### Transportation Design:

- ✓ The project satisfies the purpose and needs as agreed to by a full range of stakeholders. This agreement is forged in the earliest phase of the project and amended as warranted as the project develops.
- ✓ The project is a safe facility both for the user and the community.
- ✓ The project is in harmony with the community and preserve environmental, scenic, aesthetic, historic, and natural resource values of the area.
- ✓ The project exceeds the expectations of both designers and stakeholders and achieves a level of excellence in people's minds.
- ✓ The project involves efficient and effective use of resources (time, budget, community) of all involved parties.
- ✓ The project is seen as having added lasting value to the community.

### The Design Process:

- ✓ Communicate with all stakeholders in a manner that is open and honest, early and continuous.
- ✓ Tailor the highway development process to the circumstances. Employ a process that examines multiple alternatives and that will result in consensus on approaches.
- ✓ Establish a multi-disciplinary team early with disciplines based on the needs of the specific project and include the public.
- ✓ Seek to understand the landscape, the community, and valued resources before beginning engineering design.
- ✓ Involve a full range of stakeholders with transportation officials in the scoping phase. Clearly define the purposes of the project and forge consensus on the scope before proceeding.

- ✓ Tailor the public involvement process to the project, include informal meetings.
- ✓ Use a full range of tools for communication about project alternative (e.g. visualization).
- ✓ Secure commitment to the process from top agency officials and local leaders. <sup>1</sup>

## 2.0 PROJECT PROCESS

The project, following a context sensitive solutions process, includes the following steps:

- ✓ Step 1: Develop Community/Agency Involvement Program – as described in this document.
- ✓ Step 2: Identify project issues and define the problems to be solved – several tools identified in this plan will help the project team identify project issues and problems to resolve in the project development process. The process is greatly served if all parties bring the issues to the project early in project development. These issues and problems are fully described in the in the project’s purpose and need.
- ✓ Step 3: Determine evaluation criteria – prior to coming up with alternatives and in concert with the all project stakeholders, determine how the alternatives will be evaluated. What community values are important? What elements of the street may be a priority over another? This is an important step before you identify alternatives.
- ✓ Step 4: Develop Design Options – what options are available within the project limits? What are the design details? How do they fit together? What are the pieces of the design – sidewalks, bicycle lanes, lane widths, right of way widths, etc. The design options are joined in different combinations and become distinct alternatives to be evaluated and documented in the preliminary engineering and design study documents.
- ✓ Step 5: Develop and Select the Preferred Alternative – by applying the evaluation criteria to the design options in an iterative process with project stakeholders. The selected preferred alternative will reflect compromise. Compromise arrived at through multiple conversations, use of simulations and illustrative graphics, etc.

## 3.0 DRAFT PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

The draft purpose and need contained in this public involvement plan reflects the MOA and its consultants’ thoughts as of this writing.

### 3.1 Project Purpose

The purpose of this project is to design an upgrade of the street to current urban collector standards.

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<sup>1</sup> *A Guide to Best Practices for Achieving Context Sensitive Solutions, National Cooperative Highway Research Program, Report 480, Transportation Research Board, p3*

### 3.2 Project Need

- *Current Standards:* Roadway elements such as, pavement, drainage, lighting, driveways, curb cuts, sidewalks and curb ramps do not meet current MOA and national standards.
- *Pedestrian/Bicycle/Transit:* This section of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue includes Creekside Park and Creekside Park Elementary School, contains a public transit route, and intersects with Muldoon Road, a major transit corridor. For these reasons, it is especially important that safe and adequate pedestrian facilities are a part of the improved street.

### 4.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

The public involvement plan provides PM&E with an outline of the methods to obtain public input as the project development occurs. The plan contains a listing of the tools and methods as well as a schedule of their use.

Before any public involvement activities can begin for either project PM&E, in consultation with Lounsbury and Brooks & Associates, will determine the question to be resolved by public participation and the level of public input it will support on the spectrum developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).

<http://iap2.org/practitionertools/index.shtml>

This PIP has been based on an public participation at the INVOLVE level, which states the following goal:

**To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.** © IAP2 2005

This level also includes the following Promise to the Public:

**We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.** © IAP2 2005

Increasing Level of Public Impact \				
INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:	<b>Public Participation Goal:</b>	Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and /or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	<b>To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered.</b>	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:	<b>Promise to the Public:</b>	Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:
We will keep You informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	<b>We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.</b>	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Example Tools:	Example Tools:	<b>Example Tools:</b>	Example Tools:	Example Tools:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>√ Fact Sheets</li> <li>√ Web Sites</li> <li>√ Open Houses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>√ Public comment</li> <li>√ Focus groups</li> <li>√ Surveys</li> <li>√ Public Meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>√ <b>Workshops</b></li> <li>√ <b>Deliberate polling</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>√ Citizen Advisory committees</li> <li>√ Consensus-building</li> <li>√ Participatory decision-making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Citizen juries</li> <li>Ballots</li> <li>Delegated decisions</li> </ul>

At this level of participation, the public is provided opportunities to influence the project design, however, final decisions rest with the PM&E. Working at the INVOLVE level means that elements of the INFORM and CONSULT levels may also be used.

#### 4.1 Public Outreach and Notification

Public outreach and notification will be accomplished using the following tools:

- ✓ Door-to-door Personal Introduction along the Corridor
- ✓ Project Web Site
- ✓ Newsletters and Other Print Media
- ✓ Public Meetings
- ✓ Public Service Announcements
- ✓ Community Council Meetings
- ✓ *Anchorage Daily News* Advertising

#### 4.2 Individual and Group Public Input

The project will affect those neighborhoods, businesses and residents with direct access to 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The project team will contact these individuals using the following tools:

- ✓ Adjacent Tenant, Homeowner and Business Meetings
- ✓ Community Council Meetings
- ✓ Door-to-Door Visits / Door Hangers
- ✓ Newsletters
- ✓ Individual Door-to-Door/Face-to-Face Discussions
- ✓ Telephone, Fax, Email and U.S. Postal Service Communications

The project team will document verbal and written communication from the public in a summary. Copies of the summary will be distributed to the PM&E Project Manager.

#### 4.3 Public Involvement Activities

##### 4.3.1 Identify Stakeholders/Prepare Mailing List

Mailing lists will be developed for project mailings—newsletters, notices, etc. The project is within the boundaries of the Northeast Community Council. State legislators, Senator Gretchen Guess, and Representative Tom Anderson represent the area. Anchorage Municipal Assembly members Ken Stout and Paul Bauer represent residents.

The following is a preliminary list of potential user groups that may have an interest in this project and will be included in project mailings. This list will be expanded as research and input identify others.

The public involvement process for the 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue Upgrade will include the following potentially affected interests (PAI).

##### General Public

The general public using the facility fall into this group of potential affected stakeholders. Community members that frequently or occasionally use the roadway will include users of

Creekside Park and families and staff of Creekside Park Elementary School as well as transit riders. The mailing list includes business, property owners and residents with the mailing list boundary.

#### Special Interest Groups

Alaska Center for the Environment  
Alaska Truckers Association  
Anchorage Citizen's Coalition  
Anchorage Road Coalition  
Anchorage Trails and Greenways Coalition  
Transit Works  
Polar Little League Teams

#### Agencies

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)  
U. S. Corps of Engineers (USCOE)  
State of Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, Central Region (ADOT&PF)  
Alaska Department Natural Resources (ADNR)  
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)  
State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)  
Federal Highway Administration

#### Local Government

Mayor's office  
Project Management & Engineering (PM&E)  
Anchorage Fire Department (AFD)  
Anchorage Police Department (APD)  
Anchorage Public Transportation Department (People Mover, Anchorage Rides, Share-a-Ride)  
Anchorage Municipal Assembly Members  
Anchorage School District (ASD)  
Anchorage Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Environmental Services  
Anchorage Department of Parks & Recreation  
Anchorage Urban Design Commission

#### Utilities

Alaska Communications System (ACS)  
Anchorage Water and Wastewater Utility (AWWU)  
Chugach Electric Association (CEA)  
ENSTAR Natural Gas Company (ENSTAR)  
GCI Cable (GCI)  
Municipal Light and Power (ML&P)

The initial mailing list will include mail recipients in the area within the boundaries shown on map below (Figure 1). In addition to the stakeholder mailing list, two other lists will be prepared. The first will be officials (state, municipal entities and state legislators) who would

receive project correspondence as noted above. The second is a listing of agencies and agency contact individuals (see below). Individuals will be added to the stakeholder list throughout the project from requests and sign-in sheets at meetings.

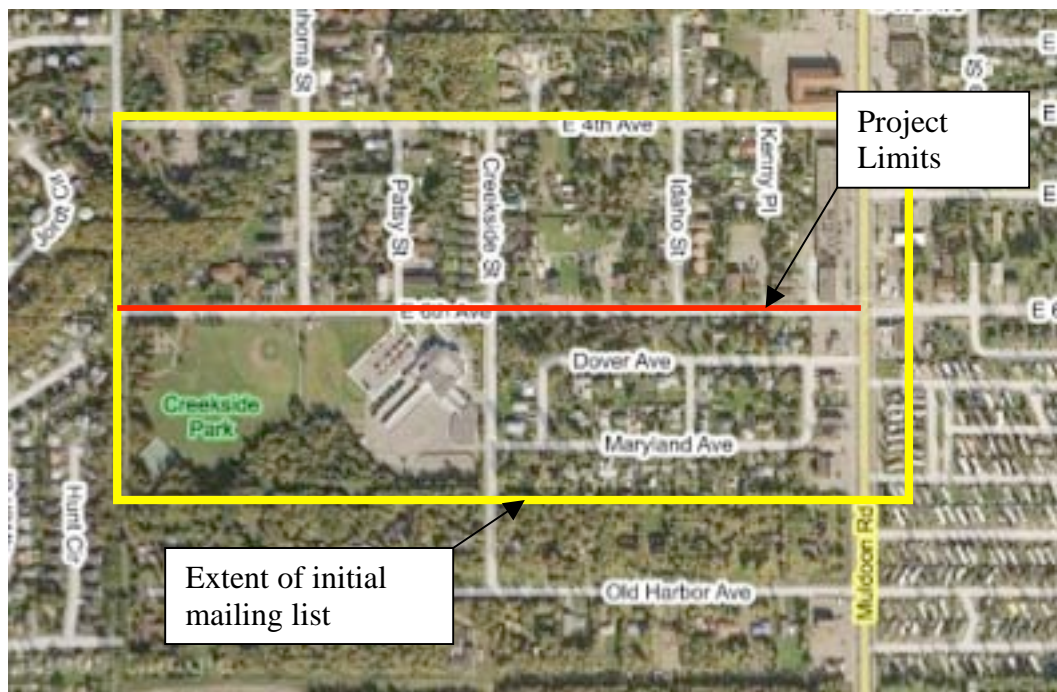


Figure 1. Mailing List Area (Google Maps™ base map)

#### 4.3.2 Public Meetings

For all meetings, materials will be reviewed by PM&E prior to the meeting and comment will be summarized for project records after the meeting.

The initial public meeting will introduce the project team, the project, the proposed public participation opportunities and schedule to the public. The project team will have basic background information available at this time including: aerial photography, existing rights-of-way, existing cross-section, utility locations and other pertinent data. Emphasis will be on the project team communicating the need for and the constraints of the project and on eliciting from the public the goals they wish to see met by the project's outcome and the criteria by which they wish design alternatives to be evaluated.

#### 4.3.3 Project Comments

The Public Involvement Coordinator, Anne Brooks, P.E., is the designated contact for the public for this project. She can be reached via email, telephone or fax. All public communications will also include contact information for the MOA, and Consultant project managers. All requests will be coordinated with Lounsbury and/or MOA PM&E as deemed appropriate. Public responses will be documented in project records.

#### 4.3.4 Documentation

This task includes documenting the public involvement efforts. The documents will be presented chronologically to provide future project phases with the complete project history. Comments and responses will be summarized.

5.0 SCHEDULE

**6<sup>th</sup> Avenue Upgrade Patterson Street to Muldoon Road**

Public Involvement Plan

<b>Date</b>	<b>Public Involvement Tool (Group/Activity)</b>	<b>Project Purpose</b>	<b>Time and Location</b>
Throughout project	Mailing List	Continuously updated	N/A
Throughout project	Web Site Development	All Phases—updated at 4 key points in project	[URL to be acquired]
Throughout project	Public Involvement Plan	Covers public outreach all phases.	N/A
03/2006	Walk the Alignment with Flyer and Project Questionnaire	Notify corridor residents and businesses of project, discover potential issues	Project corridor
4/2006	Northeast Community Council	Announce project, invite community to public meeting	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday, 7 pm Muldoon Community Center
05/2006	Postcard #1	Announce project and upcoming public meeting.	To Mailing list
05/2006	<i>Anchorage Daily News</i> display advertising	Announce project scoping and upcoming public meeting.	Not applicable
05/2006	Public Meeting #1	Introduce project, seek public input on project scope and alternative evaluation criteria	Creekside Park Elementary School, 7-9 pm
TBD (09/2006)	Urban Design Commission	Present alternatives	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday, Assembly Chambers
TBD (09/2006)	Planning and Zoning Commission	Present alternatives	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday, Assembly Chambers
TBD (09/2006)	Postcard/Newsletter #2	Provide overview of alternatives, seek input on design details	To be mailed to mailing list
TBD (09/2006)	Northeast Community Council	Present alternatives and announce upcoming public meeting.	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday, 7 pm Muldoon Community Center
TBD (09/2006)	<i>Anchorage Daily News</i> display advertising	Announce upcoming public meeting.	Not applicable
TBD (09/2006)	Public Meeting #2	Present alternatives, & solicit comment	Creekside Park Elementary School
TBD (01/2007)	Postcard/Newsletter #3	Present preferred alternative	To be mailed to mailing list
TBD (01/2007)	Northeast Community Council	Present preferred alternative and announce upcoming public meeting.	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday, 7 pm Muldoon Community Center
TBD (01/2007)	<i>Anchorage Daily News</i> display advertising	Announce upcoming public meeting.	Not applicable
TBD (01/2007)	Public Meeting #3	Present preferred alternative and draft DSR	Creekside Park Elementary School
TBD (05/2007)	Northeast Community Council	Provide notice of construction start and contractor contact information	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday, 7 pm Muldoon Community Center
TBD	Public Meeting #4	Present preferred alternative, final DSR, outline construction schedule	Creekside Park Elementary School

DSR = Design Study Report

TBD = To Be Determined

## 6.0 PROJECT TEAM LIST

### Contracting Agencies

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#### **Municipality of Anchorage**

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