

# MINNIE STREET CORRIDOR STUDY

## PUBLIC AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT PLAN

PROJECT NO: 1524.50105.01



### Prepared for:

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Public Works Department, Engineering Division  
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Appendix A: Study Mailing Area

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADF&G .....	Alaska Department of Fish and Game
ARRC .....	Alaska Railroad Corporation
AST .....	Alaska State Troopers
City .....	City of Fairbanks
CSS .....	Context Sensitive Solutions
DEC .....	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
DOT&PF .....	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
DNR .....	Alaska Department of Natural Resources
EPA .....	Environmental Protection Agency
FHWA .....	Federal Highway Administration
FMATS .....	Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System
FNSB .....	Fairbanks North Star Borough
GVEA .....	Golden Valley Electric Association
MACS .....	Metropolitan Area Commuter System
MOU .....	Memorandum of Understanding
NEPA .....	National Environmental Policy Act
PEL .....	Planning and Environmental Linkage
PAIP .....	Public and Agency Involvement Plan
ROW .....	Right Of Way
SHPO .....	State Historic Preservation Office
UAF .....	University of Alaska Fairbanks
USACE .....	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USFWS .....	United States Fish and Wildlife Service

## **1.0 STUDY TEAM**

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## 2.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

### 2.1 Overview and History

The City of Fairbanks (City), in coordination with the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is proposing to upgrade Minnie Street. Before the environmental and design phases of the project begin, a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study is desired to define a “vision” for the Minnie Street corridor, taking into account the greater neighborhood area circulation patterns. The Minnie Street Corridor is focused on the section of Minnie Street that is bordered by Illinois Street to the west, and Old Steese Highway to the east, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Study Location



The objectives of the PEL Study will be to establish a shared vision for the Minnie Street corridor, garner public and agency concurrence on the scope of the proposed improvement concepts and identify environmental concerns in anticipation of future environmental documentation efforts. The outcome of the PEL Study will be a planning document that identifies a prioritized plan with one or more distinct projects that have independent purpose and need, logical termini, and independent utility. The distinct project(s) will work in concert to achieve the shared vision for the Minnie Street corridor.

## **2.2 Purpose of the Public and Agency Involvement Plan**

This Public and Agency Involvement Plan (PAIP) details the proposed methods for communicating information with agencies, organizations, and the public for the Minnie Street Corridor Study. The objective of this effort is to work directly with the interested public and applicable agencies to communicate the goals of the study and gather input from stakeholders. These methods will be used throughout the study duration. Involvement opportunities for future projects resulting from the PEL study will be detailed in a subsequent plan.

## **3.0 REGULATORY COMPLIANCE AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

As part of preparing this PAIP, consideration has been given to the guidance set out in sections 510.1 (Public Involvement Program) and 510.2 (Participants) of the Alaska Highway Preconstruction Manual, and applicable sections of the Environmental Procedures Manual (yet to be published) as agreed to by the team. In addition, the study team will incorporate public involvement guidelines and recommendations of Section 168 (23 U.S. Code 168), which defines the process for integrating planning and environmental review. This includes adequate notice of opportunities for review of planning documents, ability to comment, and notification that this planning document may be adopted during future project environmental review. Public involvement methods and techniques used during the PEL study will be crafted with other laws and orders (National Environmental Policy Act [NEPA], environmental justice) in mind in order to streamline future efforts in the corridor.

The study team will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VI documents will be displayed at public meetings and documented in the meeting record.

## **4.0 IDENTIFICATION OF STAKEHOLDERS**

Below is an initial list of stakeholders. When possible, these entities will be included in the study mailing list. This list will expand throughout the study.

### **4.1 Public and Other**

- General Public
  - Property owners and residents in adjacent neighborhoods
  - Business owners in adjacent areas
  - Non-profit organizations in adjacent areas
  - Commuters
  - Recreation trail users
  - Bicyclists and pedestrians

- City of Fairbanks
  - Fairbanks City Council
  - Fairbanks Fire Department
  - Fairbanks Police Department
  - Fairbanks Public Works (street maintenance and garbage service)
- FMATS
  - Technical Committee
  - Policy Board
  - Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
  - Freight Advisory Committee
- Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB)
  - FNSB School District
  - FNSB School District Transportation Department
  - Metropolitan Area Commuter System (MACS)
  - Parks and Recreation Department
- Other interested parties
  - Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC)
  - Fairbanks Storm Water Advisory Committee
  - Tanana Valley Watershed Association
  - Alaska Trucking Association
  - Catholic Schools of Fairbanks
  - Explore Fairbanks/ Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center
  - Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce
  - Spruce Street Montessori School
  - University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF)
  - Access Alaska
  - Local Churches

## **4.2 Utility Companies**

- Alaska Communications
- Alaska Power & Communication Services (APT)
- Fairbanks Natural Gas, LLC
- Golden Heart Utilities (GHU)
- Golden Valley Electric Association (GVEA)
- Interior Gas Utility (IGU)
- Utilities Services of Alaska, Inc. (USA)

### **4.3 Government, Regulatory, and Resource Agencies**

- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
- Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF)
- DOT&PF Maintenance & Operations (DOT&PF M&O)
- Alaska State Troopers (AST)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Federal Highways Administration (FHWA)
- State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
- State Senators and Representatives from Study Area
- United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)



## 5.0 STAKEHOLDER ISSUES AND CONCERNS

We know that stakeholders will be concerned about both corridor-wide and intersection-specific matters, such as access, non-motorized facilities, right of way (ROW), construction impacts, and impacts to adjacent neighborhoods and roadways.

**Table 1: Stakeholder Issues and Concerns**

Topic	Concern
<p>PEL Study/Public and Agency Involvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring clear communication of the PEL process, its purpose, outcomes, and next steps to the public and agencies.</li> <li>• This area is used by a broad range of stakeholders (residents, businesses, freight, transit, commuting public). How will the PEL study team gather input, and prioritize and address concerns by stakeholders?</li> </ul>
<p>Current Corridor Conditions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agencies and the public are concerned about safety, access, retaining the distinctive characteristics of the neighborhood, and traffic volumes.</li> <li>• The Minnie Street corridor is a narrow road with substandard sidewalks and built development up to the right of way. The historic nature of the neighborhood and limited right of way places a constraint on the ability to widen the road</li> <li>• The Noyes Slough Bridge is an aged asset. DOT&amp;PF bridge section has determined this bridge as structurally deficient and there will be a potential project to replace the bridge.</li> <li>• Traffic volumes along Minnie Street are higher than is desirable for a residential setting street owing to non-neighborhood traffic using Minnie Street to connect between the eastern and western sides of downtown Fairbanks. However, it is classified as a Minor Arterial due to the east-west connectivity it provides.</li> </ul>
<p>Impacts Related to Future Projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Right-of-way impacts are likely with any proposed solution.</li> <li>• Construction will result in temporary impacts to businesses and commuters.</li> <li>• Area residents are concerned about noise, light/ illumination, visual impacts and impacts on neighborhood character related to future projects.</li> <li>• Determine the overall role of Minnie Street while keeping the historical characteristics as deemed a priority by stakeholders.</li> </ul>

## **6.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT METHODS**

The following subsections identify the methods proposed to reach agencies and stakeholders with study information. The study team will discuss outreach efforts and select other tools for involving the public and agencies if feedback is considered insufficient. See Figure 2 for an overview of public involvement activities throughout the PEL Study process.

### **6.1 Mailing List and Email**

DOWL will develop and maintain a mailing list of interested agencies, organizations, and individuals, including all residents, business owners, organizations and property owners adjacent to the study corridor (see Appendix A). This list will include both postal and email addresses to provide meeting and milestone notices to stakeholders.

### **6.2 Website with interactive mapping and comment features**

A website will be set up at: [www.minniestreet.com](http://www.minniestreet.com). The website will contain background information on the study, a schedule, meeting information, links, and other documents, and contact information for the study team. In addition, the study team will use the website with interactive mapping and comment features to enable real-time public engagement about the corridor and associated issues.

The email address [minniestreet@dowl.com](mailto:minniestreet@dowl.com) will be listed on all communication materials. This email address will be linked to a distribution list that includes the City, FMATS, DOT&PF, and DOWL Project Managers.

### **6.3 Social Media**

DOWL will work with the City public information team to craft and schedule study-specific content for the City, FMATS, and DOT&PF Facebook page, and Twitter feed accounts. Social media advertising campaigns will be initiated in advance of the public open house meetings.

### **6.4 Internal and External Stakeholder Coordination**

Initially, the study team will conduct work sessions with key internal and external stakeholders to establish a shared message of the study objective and goals, review steps in the PEL process, and confirm a shared approach and study vision.

The outcome of these presentations will be a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between The City, FMATS, DOT&PF and select regulatory agencies affirming their commitment to the PEL process.

Presentations will be made to the FMATS Technical Committee and Policy Board at relevant milestones. If requested, additional small group, government, or agency presentations will be scheduled. A business working

group consisting of representatives from key stakeholders will be established if needed to enable the study team to provide regular updates and gather feedback.

Agency outreach in particular will be focused on full engagement in the options development process and the analysis of potential environmental effects in order to gain agency buy-in on the process for identifying and evaluating solutions. This effort will follow a Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) process which will include submittals to the FNSB Planning and Zoning Commission at appropriate stages.

## **6.5 Public Open Houses**

The study team will host at least two (2) open house style public meetings (including concurrent online streaming and live question-and-answer facilities using Facebook). The first meeting will be held in Winter 2017/2018, during the data collection and traffic and safety analysis. The second meeting will be held Summer 2018 following options development and evaluation. Open house materials will be made available on the PEL study website after each public meeting.

Meeting notes will be prepared as documentation for PEL study records. The records will show attendance, meeting materials, presentations, and a summary of verbal and written comments.

## **6.6 Postcards/E-Newsletters**

Postcard mailers, two (2) each: A postcard will be distributed to announce each public meeting at least two weeks in advance. The postcard will be mailed and an electronic version will be emailed to the contact list and will contain graphics and text explaining the study and asking for public input. Additionally, up to four (4) e-newsletters will be distributed at relevant study milestones.

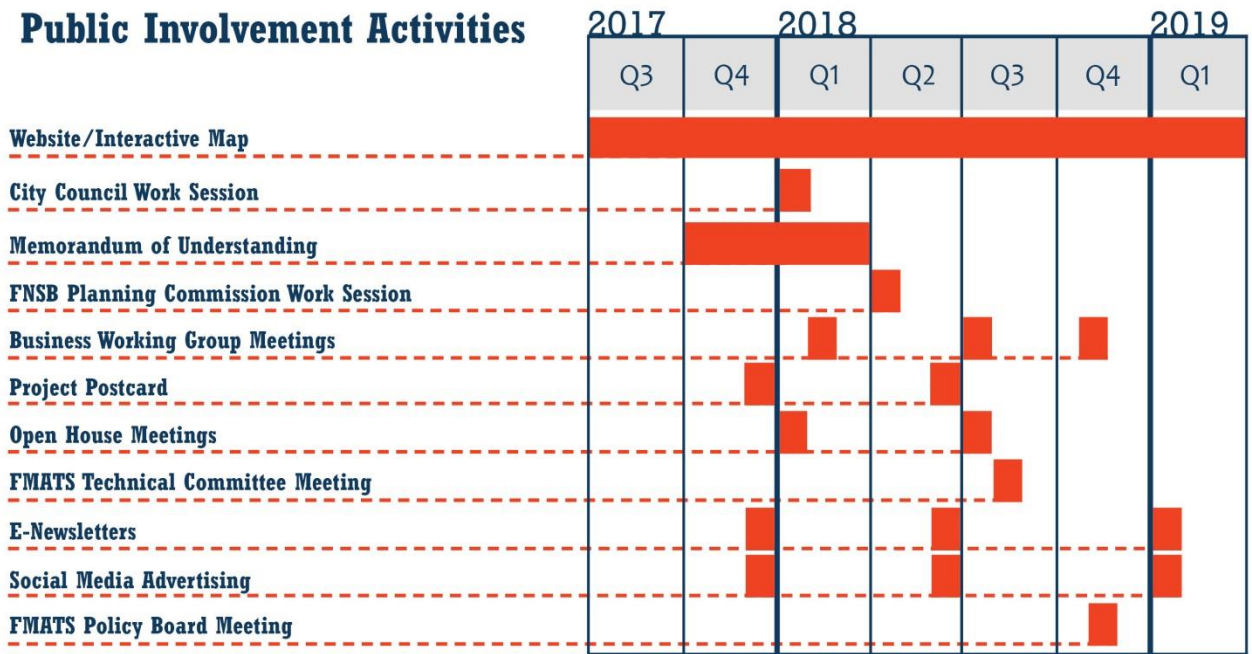
## **6.7 Advertising**

Public meetings will be advertised in the Fairbanks Daily News Miner, on the statewide DOT&PF website, the above noted Social Media, through email notices to the contact list, on the State of Alaska Online Public Notice system, and on the City and FNSB calendars. Meeting advertisements will be prepared in advance to allow for City, FMATS, and DOT&PF approval.

## **6.8 Media Communications**

Communication with the media may be one of the most powerful tools for keeping a broad public audience informed throughout the study and to encourage continued input throughout the duration. The study team will consult with the City of Fairbanks Project Manager, Public Information Officers, FMATS, and DOT&PF representatives prior to any media communications. Media communications may include press releases, media briefings, telephone interviews, and communication with elected officials.


**Figure 2: Public Involvement Schedule**

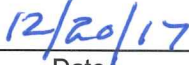


## 7.0 COMMENT RESPONSE AND DOCUMENTATION

Comments received via email, mail, phone, or in written form will be distributed to the study team and documented in a comment database managed by DOWL. All comments and questions will be replied to within two (2) business days and included as an appendix to the PEL.

### APPROVAL

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Engineer, City of Fairbanks

  
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Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Director, FMATS

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Project Manager, DOT&PF

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# APPENDIX A

## Study Mailing Area

