



Hillside ROADS P L A N N I N G

Newsletter
Hillside Roads Edition
July 2000

To:

Design Concepts Being Developed

Design concepts for each of the Hillside Roads will be developed over the summer of 2000. These will range from repaving the existing two lane roadway and shoulders to construction of a four or five-lane road. Curb and gutter and construction of a separated pathway or sidewalk on one or both sides of the roads will be considered. Each major intersection will be evaluated to determine the need for turning lanes, additional signing, of traffic signals. Sight distance issues will also be considered. Environmental impacts will be studied including air quality, noise levels, school and park properties, and the filling in of wetlands, for each design concept.

Public Weighs in on Hillside Road Projects

Thank you for the input! Public meetings held last fall for three Hillside Road projects provided the planning teams for O'Malley, Huffman and Abbott road input for planning future improvements to these roads. The following highlights some of the input we received from local area residents.

Next Public Meeting

The next public meeting is scheduled for September 6, 2000. This meeting will be combined to present road concepts for all of the Hillside Road projects, including Abbott Road, O'Malley Road, and Huffman Road.

For more information contact...

Web Site: www.hillsideroads.com



Hillside Roads Update Hotline: 222-ROAD

Abbott Road

Lake Otis Blvd. to Birch Road
State of Alaska DOT
Project Manager: Jim Childers, P.E.
P.O. Box 196900
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Huffman Road

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DOWL Engineers
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State of Alaska DOT
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O'Malley Road

New Seward Hwy. to Hillside Dr.
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Improvements...

Improving pedestrian facilities.

Comments we received consistently expressed the desire to see separated pathways along Hillside's major streets.

Improving safety of intersections.

The more frequently mentioned intersections include Huffman at Gregory Road; the Carrs driveway and Lake Otis. For O'Malley Road, concerns were expressed about intersections with Commodore, Cange Road, Birch Road, Lake Otis, and Rockridge. In addition, people were concerned about access to the Alaska Zoo and Anchorage Golf Course. For Abbott Road, concerns were expressed for intersections or driveways into Service High School and at Lake Otis Parkway.

Improve or add roadway shoulders.

Comments consistently reflected the public's desire to improve roadway shoulders.

Reduce speed and congestion.

Many Hillside residents expressed concern about the high speed of traffic on area roads and the congestion at peak hours, particularly near major cross streets.

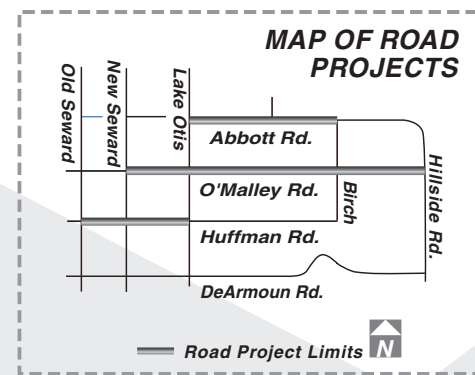
Other concerns expressed include that the projects improve lighting at intersections, improve the roadbed, provide landscaping and equitably spread traffic on all Hillside Roads. The full text of the Scoping Summary reports for these projects are available on the web site (www.hillsideroads.com) or by calling any one of the project teams.

Hillside Roads Traffic Forecasts

A Hillside area traffic study has been developed which forecasts traffic for Abbott Road, O'Malley Road, and Huffman Road. This study will be used to develop detailed design recommendations for each project, including the number of traffic lanes needed for each project corridor, and the size and control of inter-

sections. The Municipality of Anchorage projects a population growth of 3% over the next 20 years. This growth will result in the need to widen some roadways, especially those segments closest to the New Seward Highway.

ROAD PROJECTS



Abbott Road: Lake Otis Parkway to Birch Road

The development of a road project for Abbott Road has been continuing through the winter of 1999-2000. The project is in the Preliminary Design and Environmental Phase. In this phase, projects concepts and issues are reviewed with the public and agencies before a detailed design can be put together. Department of Transportation and Public Facilities staff is performing this preliminary engineering work.

A public meeting was held October 19th 1999 at Service High School. Issues and concerns raised in that meeting are being taken into consideration and will be helpful in developing alternatives. A field survey of the ground surface, utilities, drainage, and structures was completed this winter. The survey information is being used to create a base map to evaluate project alternatives.

Service High School Studied

A primary concern raised in October was the traffic congestion at Service High School. In November 1999, the Department gathered traffic counts during the morning peak hour. The Department processed these counts and met twice this winter with the Anchorage School District (ASD), the Service High School Administration, and the Service Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA). The Department has also met with the Municipality of Anchorage Traffic Engineering Division. We discussed Service High School renovation plans and are coordinating future road/school improvement concepts. With this multi-agency input, the Department has evaluated several concepts for improved access to the school, including driveway changes, signals, and bridges. ○ ○ ○

One effective strategy at Service High School would implement new access and circulation patterns at the school driveways. Traffic studies and simulations demonstrate that existing congestion may be reduced by half or more. The Anchorage School District is evaluating these proposed changes related to their site planning and will submit a final plan to the Department this summer. One option may be to test these changes using temporary signs and barricades under real traffic conditions this fall. This real-time application will help to refine ideas for more permanent changes.

Huffman Road: Old Seward Highway to Lake Otis Parkway Status Report

The DOWL Team and ADOT&PF have spent the last several months working at developing traffic growth rates and examining accidents/safety issues within the project corridor. We have generated accurate plan and profile drawings, which will be used for preliminary design purposes. At this time we are developing four alternatives that represent various levels of capacity and safety improvements for motorized and non-motorized users. The alternatives reflect the feedback we received during the public meetings held last fall, as well as the information collected through the scoping process. Over the next month or so we will be developing preliminary designs for the four alternatives and preparing a preliminary engineering report with construction cost estimates. We intend to have that information ready for presentation at the September 6, 2000 joint Hillside Roads public meeting. After

hearing the comments from the public and applying engineering evaluation, we will arrive at a preferred alternative that will be carried forward in the design and environmental documentation process.

The environmental documentation phase is on going. Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessments are being finalized for the properties in the corridor to determine the potential for encountering contamination during road construction activities. The wetlands report has been finalized. Baseline and existing conditions for noise within the corridor have been established and once the alternatives have been developed, modeling will continue to determine future noise levels.

O'Malley Road: New Seward Highway to Hillside Drive

The O'Malley team has been busy on several fronts. The first is developing the environmental documentation for the project by completing the Phase I site assessment, field work associated with the corridor wetlands determination, and developing a scoping summary report. The second is developing traffic data for the project. Lounsbury assisted DOT&PF by completing the Hillside Roads Traffic Forecast Report and began the safety analysis and traffic counts. The safety analysis includes completion of accident diagrams showing location, type and time of the accidents. Additional analysis of the accident statistics will result in recommendations for intersection or roadway improvements. Traffic counts at O'Malley Road intersections will reveal what traffic is through traffic and the number and direction of turning traffic. Rockridge Road counts were completed before school closed for the summer, other intersection counts are underway. The data will provide a basis for recommended intersection improvements.

The next several months will be spent developing alternatives for the corridor that reflect the input received from the public at the November 1, 1999 meeting, community council meetings, emails and telephone conversations. The alternatives will be based on the volume of traffic forecast to year 2015 and the intersection traffic counts. The team will present their preliminary roadway improvements at the September 6 public meeting held jointly with other Hillside Roads planning projects.

If you have any questions or comments you may email us (mabrooks@alaska.net), leave a message at 222-ROAD, or contact Jim Sawhill, P.E. at Lounsbury Associates at 272-5451. We look forward to continuing to work with the public to develop the future O'Malley Road.



All of the work products completed to date have been posted on the Hillside Roads web site under the Huffman Road subdirectory and can be viewed or downloaded. We encourage you to make use of the web site (www.hillsideroads.com).

If you have any questions or comments you may email us at huffman@dowl.com, leave a message at 222-ROAD, or contact Stewart Osgood, P.E. at DOWL at 562-2000. We look forward to continuing to work with the public to chart the future of Huffman Road.

