



GLENN HIGHWAY & HILAND ROAD INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENTS STAKEHOLDER MEETING ANCHORAGE FIRE DEPARTMENT

July 29, 2026, 3:30-4:00 p.m.

DOWL Office and Microsoft Teams

Project Team Attendees

Galen Jones, P.E., Project Manager, Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Kelly Kilpatrick, P.E., Project Manager, DOWL

Sam Tyler, P.E., Project Engineer, DOWL

Morgan McCammon, Public Involvement DOWL

Brian Partch, Deputy Fire Chief, Anchorage Fire Department

Meeting Summary

Members of the project team held a stakeholder meeting with a representative of the Anchorage Fire Department (AFD) at the DOWL Office and Teams on Wednesday, July 29, 2026, from 3:30 to 4:00 p.m.

Meeting Purpose

Galen Jones, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) project manager shared an update on the meeting purpose and project status. Kelly Kilpatrick shared the current design on screen.

- DOT&PF and the design team sought feedback from AFD on:
 - Emergency access along the proposed bridge pedestrian pathway.
 - Whether the proposed 8-foot-wide shared-use path would create challenges for emergency response.
 - Potential impacts of raised crosswalks/speed tables near roundabouts.



Bridge and Pedestrian Path Discussion

- The project is keeping the existing bridge in place, which limits available space and prevents widening the proposed path.
- Design constraints include:
 - Existing bridge width.
 - Snow storage and maintenance needs.
 - Landfill truck traffic.
 - Emergency access requirements.
 - General traffic operations.
- The shared-use path is currently planned as 8 feet wide, which is not wide enough for ambulances or most emergency vehicles to operate on directly.

Anchorage Fire Department Feedback

- Fire officials stated they are accustomed to adapting operations to varying site conditions and do not view the pathway width as a significant response issue.
- In the event of a medical emergency on the pathway:
 - Responders would likely access the patient on foot.
 - Patients could be transported by wheeled gurney back to a waiting ambulance.
 - AFD has alternative response equipment available, including off-road vehicles and specialty equipment.
- Because the area is very close to the local fire station, personnel and resources can respond quickly if specialized access is needed.

Barrier Height Discussion

- Proposed pedestrian barrier height is approximately 60 inches (5 feet).
- Lifting a patient over a barrier of that height would be generally considered impractical.
- AFD expressed their preference for maintaining the taller barrier for pedestrian safety rather than lowering it for emergency access purposes.

Emergency Access and Staging

- AFD noted that ambulances could stage at either end of the bridge and access the pathway from the nearest point.
- The design includes paved truck-mountable areas and over-height vehicle accommodations where ambulances could park temporarily if necessary.
- AFD suggested those areas would serve as effective staging and access points for incidents occurring on the bridge.



Ambulance Width Considerations

- DOT&PF asked what width would be required for an ambulance to drive the pathway and allow personnel to exit safely.
- AFD estimated:
 - Ambulance width is likely around 10 feet or more, depending on mirrors and body dimensions.
 - Providing enough room to operate around the vehicle would require substantially more width than currently available to open and egress through the cab doors.
- AFD acknowledged that widening the path enough for ambulance operations would likely have major project impacts with limited or no benefit to emergency response activities.

Roundabout Operations

- Fire personnel reported positive operational experience with modern roundabouts and diverging-diamond interchanges.
- Benefits cited include:
 - Better visibility of approaching emergency vehicles.
 - Improved driver awareness and yielding behavior.
 - Easier traffic flow management during emergency response.
- No concerns were raised regarding emergency vehicles navigating the proposed interchange.
- AFD did not identify a need to widen the proposed shared-use path or bridge to accommodate ambulance access.

Raised Crosswalks / Speed Humps

- DOT&PF discussed a request to add raised crosswalks at roundabout approaches on VFW Road.
- AFD stated:
 - Raised crosswalks are not a major concern for emergency response.
 - Emergency vehicles would simply reduce their speed when crossing them.
 - They are most problematic only when transporting critical patients and multiple traffic-calming devices create repeated delays.
- AFD did not take a position for or against the raised crosswalks and viewed the issue as primarily a transportation/design decision.

Lighting



- AFD expressed support for the proposed lighting improvements and noted that additional lighting generally benefits emergency response and public safety.

Coordination

- AFD offered continued support and coordination throughout project development.
- Fire officials offered DOT&PF the opportunity to:
 - Present the project directly to station crews.
 - Share animations and educational materials explaining traffic operations.
 - Reach out if community members raise concerns about emergency response impacts.
- AFD stated that very little in the proposed design would negatively affect their ability to respond to emergencies.
- AFD generally supports maintaining pedestrian safety features, using staging areas at either end of the bridge, and relying on established emergency response procedures rather than widening the bridge solely for ambulance access.