



METROPOLITAN PLANNING
Community Advisory Committee
4700 Elmore Road
Anchorage Alaska, 99507

Community Advisory Committee Resolution 2024-002

1 **RESOLUTION OF THE COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE REGARDING THE MINNESOTA**
2 **DRIVE PEDESTRIAN WALL**

3

4 WHEREAS:

5 The role of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) includes reviewing transportation plans and
6 programs, and locations and site plans for roadway improvement projects.

7 Transportation plans and programs are ineffective until and unless applied to transportation decisions,
8 including the design of roadway safety improvement projects

9

10 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: the CAC has a role to play in tracking and supporting the**
11 **implementation of transportation safety plans and projects in Anchorage.**

12

13 WHEREAS:

14 The AMATS Safety Plan is premised on Vision Zero, as adopted by the Municipality of Anchorage, and
15 premised also on a Safe System Approach, as adopted by the U.S. Department of Transportation. The
16 Safe System Approach asserts that death and serious injuries are unacceptable results of a
17 transportation system.

18 The Municipality of Anchorage has adopted Vision Zero with a mission of creating a culture of safety and
19 getting to zero fatalities, and Vision Zero Principles include

- 20
- 21 • Human health and life are priorities in our community
 - 22 • Traffic deaths and severe injuries are preventable
 - 23 • We are human and make mistakes. The roadway system should be designed to protect us
 - 24 • Speed is a critical factor in crash severity.
 - 25 • Responsibility is shared between system designers and road users.

26

27 Minnesota Drive, Benson Boulevard, and West Northern Lights Boulevard on the Municipality's "high
28 injury network," meaning a high number of people have been killed and severely injured in traffic
29 crashes along these routes.

30 The segment of Minnesota Drive near Benson and Northern Lights Boulevards is a top-ranked non-
31 motorized crash location in the Alaska Department of Transportation (ADOT) Central Region.

32

33 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Municipality and ADOT have a clear responsibility to improve non-**
34 **motorized safety at this intersection.**

35

WHEREAS:



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1 This intersection is on the boundary of Spenard Community Council (SCC) area and Turnagain
2 Community Council (TCC). Community Councils represent the interests of their residents as provided by
3 Anchorage Municipal Charter.
4 SCC was NOT consulted regarding the design or installation of the wall and even those members who
5 keep a close eye on such projects were completely surprised, according to SCC’s chairperson.
6 The Spenard Corridor Plan (2020) vision presents Spenard as a “model for the region for its contribution
7 to the citywide and regional transportation system and its network of urban active transportation
8 facilities”.
9 The Spenard Corridor Plan also includes goals to “create great public streets,” to “create a safe
10 pedestrian and bike network,” to “accommodate safe and balanced roadway access,” and to “design for
11 Anchorage”.
12 The median wall/fence did nothing to resolve pedestrians’ need for safe, convenient access across
13 Minnesota Boulevard, given that pedestrian crossing from the southeast to the southwest west corner,
14 where commercial services are concentrated, requires a triple-bypass on three crosswalks, which takes
15 about eight minutes.
16 SCC and TCC similar adopted resolutions (in November and December 2023) rejecting the construction
17 of the recent median wall/fence, stating that:

18 “The construction of the Minnesota Wall fence does not meet the vision for the neighborhood and does
19 not address the pedestrian dangers at the Minnesota, Benson, and Northern Lights intersections” (SCC
20 and TCC); and in addition, the wall/fence“ has the potential to increase the safety hazard by obstructing
21 driver pedestrian and bicycle rider visibility in this area (TCC).”

22 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: the CAC finds that the current median wall/fence does not resolve the**
23 **community need for safe and convenient non-motorized crossing of Minnesota Boulevard at Northern**
24 **Lights and Benson Boulevards, and is a not a model for safe and balanced roadway access or great**
25 **public streets.**

26
27 And

28 WHEREAS:

29 SCC and TCC have requested specific remedies for this project:

- 30 • Collaborate with community stakeholders(including SCC and TCC) and the public to identify
31 effective solutions and pedestrian improvements along Minnesota Drive in this area;
- 32 • Remove the center wall structure along Minnesota Dr. between Benson and Northern Lights
33 Boulevard as soon as possible; and
- 34 • Add two crosswalks at the “missing” sections (the fourth legs) at Minnesota Drive at both
35 Benson and Northern Lights Boulevards; and
- 36 • Add time to the traffic light cycles to improve safe pedestrian crossing (TCC).
- 37 • Implement these pedestrian safety and visual improvements as soon as possible

38
39 SCC and TCC have received letters from ADOT in January 2024 stating that desired pedestrian crossings
40 will be evaluated in the upcoming AMATS Minnesota Drive Sidewalk Repairs project, but there is no
41 timeline and no assurance that crosswalk installation falls within the scope of work. In addition, ADOT



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1 offers future evaluation through the AMATS: Minnesota Drive and I/L Street corridor Plan. This action is
2 a broad plan for over four miles of urban corridor, not a near-term solution for an acutely dangerous
3 intersection.

4 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: the Community Advisory Committee requests AMATS to call upon**
5 **ADOT to help implement adopted safety plans and goals by:**

- 6 • **Setting a timeline for a remedial safety project in 2024 that engages the Community Councils**
7 **and other stakeholders, as requested by SCC and TCC,**
- 8 • **Address SCC and TCC concerns that the median fence/wall has made non-motorized crossing**
9 **less safe;**
- 10 • **Make effective improvements to both the safety and convenience of non-motorized crossing**
11 **of Minnesota Drive at Northern Lights and Benson Boulevards as soon as possible,**
- 12 • **and**
- 13 • **Ensure stakeholder collaboration for future non-motorized safety projects in Anchorage by**
14 **engaging Community Councils and stakeholders at the early scoping stage and during project**
15 **design.**

16
17 Respectfully,

18

19 Matt Cruickshank
20 AMATS CAC Chair