

## Fairview Community Council

### *A Resolution Relating to the Seward to Glenn Highway Connection Planning and Environmental Linkages Study*

#### **Resolution 2024-05**

Whereas, The Seward to Glenn Highway Connection Planning and Environmental Linkages ( PEL ) Study has developed multiple alternatives to connect the Seward and Glenn Highways; and

Whereas, Fairview Community Council (FVCC) has a vested interest in this study, which includes the entire council boundary, and because the council has advocated for a long-term solution for the highway connection currently sited along 5th and 6th Avenues and the Gambell-Ingra couplet; and

Whereas, Fairview is a neighborhood with historically vulnerable populations, sections of the neighborhood earning as low as \$27,196 annually per household and up to 70.4% minority areas;<sup>1</sup> and

Whereas, The impacts of siting the highway through Fairview with the Gambell-Ingra couplet were well known with the city acknowledging the negative impact of the highway in 1965, that the corridor would “cut the neighborhood and create an island two blocks wide and ten blocks long;<sup>2</sup> and

Whereas, The highway corridor through Fairview is one of the most dangerous stretches of the road in the state, with data from the PEL study documenting from 2008-2017, 136 major injury crashes and 19 fatalities, with an example of the highest crash rate of 145.7 fatal and major injury crashes per million vehicle miles traveled at Ingra Street between 5th and 6th Avenues;<sup>3</sup> and

Whereas, The city and state have not enacted solutions to address the highway connection, including most recently the incomplete “Highway to Highway” process (2011), which has led to years of further disinvestment along the corridor and especially on Hyder Street where the proposed “cut and cover” alternative was identified but not implemented; and

Whereas, The purpose and need of the study does not include addressing congestion, but instead includes the purposes to address accessibility, safety, livability, and to “improve neighborhood connections and quality of life;” and

Whereas, The Seward to Glenn Highway Connection PEL Study has preliminary alternatives for public review and comment; and

Whereas, Every alternative includes long-term priorities for the Fairview neighborhood, including restoring Gambell as a main street and a Greenway or “Regional Trail Connection” between the Chester Creek and Ship Creek Trails; and

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<sup>1</sup> Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (January 2022). *A Basic Description of the Environmental Setting*. Seward to Glenn Highway PEL Study.

<sup>2</sup> Reamer, D. (2023, May 25). Why Planners Routed a Highway through Anchorage’s Fairview Neighborhood. *Anchorage Daily News*. <https://www.adn.com/opinions/2023/05/25/opinion-why-planners-routed-a-highway-through-anchorage-s-fairview-neighborhood> Anchorage Daily News.

<sup>3</sup> Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (January 2022). *A Basic Description of the Environmental Setting*. Seward to Glenn Highway PEL Study.

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**Resolution 2024-05 Continued**

Whereas, The long-term alternatives assume the need for a high-speed, controlled access freeway between the Seward and Glenn Highways, prioritizing single-occupancy vehicle through-traffic over residents' quality of life and local connectivity; and

Whereas, The construction of a controlled-access freeway through a densely developed part of the Anchorage Bowl would "relocate" hundreds of homes and businesses and would eliminate, in perpetuity, tax receipts from those homes and businesses purchased for right-of-way; and

Whereas, The MTP 2050 (no highway connection) Alternative takes a more balanced approach to meet the overall purpose and need of the study by reducing speeds in the corridor, adding Complete Streets projects within the study area, and rerouting freight out of Downtown; and

Whereas, Current best practices for transportation planning include less impactful solutions at lower costs to manage, including improving active transportation facilities, increasing transit, Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO), and Transportation Demand Management (TDM); and

Whereas, The Fairview Community Council partnered with NeighborWorks Alaska to receive the U.S. DOT Reconnecting Communities Grant to move forward in 2024 in collaboration with the PEL Study team and outcomes; and

Whereas, The Reconnecting Fairview planning effort will focus on the Gambell-Ingra Corridor through a robust public-involvement process to address land uses and transportation facilities within the corridor;

*NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED*, That the Fairview Community Council supports the MTP 2050 alternative, or other "no highway connection" options that integrate meaningful TSMO and TDM options, as a long-term solution for the corridor to achieve the purpose and need of the study and neighborhood priorities to increase safety along the corridor, remove uncertainty and disinvestment along the corridor, and provide opportunity to revitalize the corridor and the neighborhood as a whole; and

*THEREFORE, BE IT ALSO RESOLVED*, The Fairview Community Council requests the Seward to Glenn Highway Connection PEL Study continue working closely with the Reconnecting Fairview planning effort to align its schedule and outcomes.

After establishing the necessary quorum of at least 15 members, the Fairview Community Council by a vote of \_\_\_\_\_ Ayes \_\_\_\_\_ Nays \_\_\_\_\_ Abstentions.

Attested this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

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James Thornton, President,  
Fairview Community Council