



Public Open House Summary

Meeting Date: Wednesday, June 22, 2016

Project: South Tongass Highway Rehabilitation

Subject: **Summary: June 21 Public Open House in Saxman, Alaska**

Project Staff/Agency Attendees:

Chad Howard (DOT&PF)

Jim Scholl (DOT&PF)

Chris Croft (HDR)

Allison Biastock (HDR)

Carol Snead (HDR)

Public Open House Summary:

On Wednesday, June 22, 2016, the South Tongass Highway Rehabilitation project hosted a public open house from 4:30PM to 6:30PM at the Ted Ferry Civic Center, in Ketchikan, Alaska. The purpose of this event was to share information about the project's preliminary design, scope, and schedule, and to solicit public feedback. Approximately 36 people attended.

Meeting Materials

- Handouts (project fact sheet, comment sheets)
- Graphic posters with project information
- Project map on a central table upon which attendees could write comments

Comments

Summary: Generally, the open house attendees were supportive of the project. The primary themes involved safety improvements, including requests for safer parking, pathway and roadway pedestrian facilities, roadway icing and drainage, and traffic calming. Some property owners in the project area attended and were curious about potential acquisitions, and expressed concerns about road widening and the addition of a pathway in an already constrained corridor. Those owners on the water side of the highway south of Totem Row were particularly concerned. Several area property owners also asked about DOT&PF's encroachment policy.

Four formal written comment forms were received.

In addition, the following informal comments were noted by staff while engaging with open house attendees.

Informal comments received by staff:

- There should be restroom facilities along the trail, similar to the Centennial Trail in the Seattle area.
- The pathway needs garbage cans. Folks hang garbage bags along the pathway on the fences to help keep litter off the ground.
- The harbor parking lot near Deermount is not an option for pathway parking, there is already a battle for the existing spaces there.



- DOT&PF's ROW keeps changing. Every time it's on the map it is different. It's frustrating.
- Pedestrians are in danger at the Deermount intersection; we need a pushbutton crosswalk there.
- At Oyster Avenue, water runs down that street leading to dangerous icing in the winter.
- I just want to make sure no one is taking the path away!
- Per separating the pathway from the road, can we use something not as ugly as a fence and still provide a safe barrier?
- Support for a fish pass structure in the cataloged stream south of Saxman from ADF&G habitat biologist.
- Users prefer a separated pathway and not a widened paved shoulder. A widened paved shoulder does not give users perception of safety.
- Request for additional parking locations along the pathway. Rotary Beach during the summer time is full with vehicles making it difficult to find parking to access the trail.
- No comments about purpose and need.

Comments written on the tabletop strip map

- Public parking, possible link to trail (pointing at Harbor area parking near Deermount).
 - (On same note, another person wrote: parking only for harbor)
- Add a pushbutton crosswalk signal for pedestrians – Deermount intersection
- Re: traffic on Deermount:
 - Deermount allows locals to bypass downtown
 - There is a school up Deermount, and the associated traffic
 - Deermount is one of the only streets to access Bear Valley (area behind downtown)
 - There are lots of left turns from Deermount onto South Tongass
- At Deermount and South Tongass intersection: “turning radius for trucks.”
- Near the short gravel peninsula just south of the USCG station, the highway adjacent to that was identified as a common wildlife crossing. “They get caught here.”
- Drainage off Forest Park creates dangerous conditions, especially in the winter, same for Oyster Avenue.
- Proposed passing lane just south of the Saxman Seaport.
- There is a buried culvert near the first home on the ocean side of the highway south of the Saxman Seaport.