

# Roadshow No. 1

## Delta Junction City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska

Thursday, May 25, 2023 | 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

On Thursday, May 25, 2023, approximately 20 community members and five project team members attended an open house hosted by the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) at the Delta Junction City Hall. Delta Junction is situated south of Fairbanks, Alaska and is unique to the other interior communities visited due to the large United States military presence at the nearby Fort Greely military installation. Community concerns and suggestions from the meeting are categorized by military, safety, non-motorized transportation, maintenance and operations, additional transportation options, and additional questions for Alaska DOT&PF.

### Military

Several community concerns reference military convoys, Military Convoys are groups of military vehicles making trips from across the state of Alaska to training facilities in or near Delta Junction. These convoys could be coming from as far south from Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson in Anchorage which is approximately 321 miles using the Glenn and Richardson Highways or from the north from Fort Wainwright in Fairbanks which is approximately 98 miles along the Richardson Highway. Concerns included:

- Young military members operating heavy equipment are not trained for the winter conditions.
- Convoys often go off road resulting in a crash during the winter.
- Outdated equipment is not made for long haul trips in harsh conditions.
- Often break down and with the size of equipment and the size of the shoulders can result in travel delays for other roads users.
- At one point a Fort Greely shuttle was talked about but never came to fruition. Transportation capacity due to military presence is still a concern for the community.
- Addition of a rail connection to assist in the movement of military equipment and personnel was suggested to help ease congestion.

### Safety

- Narrow width or no paved shoulder.
- Cracks in the road are dangerous for motorcycles.
- Area near Tanana Bridge has had multiple accidents, debris in the road, and even after being straightened out from a tight curve is still causing traffic to be backed up at times.
- Lack of passing lanes.

- Request for guardrails, particularly near the Tanana River.
- General comments about Delta Junction’s population increasing leading to the need for more facilities to accommodate the increase in people and traffic.

## Non-Motorized Transportation

- Unprotected shoulders that are directly adjacent to roadway traffic lanes are used for bicycle facilities. Narrow lanes and large vehicles cause bicyclists to feel unsafe on this facility, especially for older or younger riders.
- Communities of Fort Greely and Delta Junction are like one community due to school-aged children traveling back and forth and goods and services available in Delta Junction used by residents of Fort Greely. The two places are physically separated without a way to travel between the two without motorized transportation.
- Bicycles currently use vehicle traffic lanes to avoid rocks and debris in paved shoulder.
- There is a large walking community that is made up by tourists and those of an older age bracket that desire more pedestrian facilities and walking trails.
- Roadhouse in Delta Junction is popular for walking. There is a state campground on the eastside with no additional recreation access, but recreation across the highway. There are no crosswalks or indicators to prepare drivers for potential non-motorized users to be crossing the roadway for daily shopping and errands in Delta Junction.
- Specific request for crosswalks in the downtown area around the store, to route pedestrians around the triangle at the junction and from the Farmer’s Market to Sullivan’s.

## Maintenance and Operations

- Rocks and debris not cleared from existing shoulders.
- Delta M&O maintains their area well, but closer to Birch Lake some access in Priority 2 areas is inhibited.
- Frost heave creates a bumpy ride (referred to as “turbulence”) on the road between Fairbanks and Delta Junction.
- Concerns on the location of an improved Johnson Bridge. Locals would prefer it to be located to the northeast of the current location rather than to the southwest.
- The Richardson Highway near Tenderfoot needs major rehab work done.

## Railroad

- A railroad is wanted to reduce trucking traffic on the roadway facilities and possibly reduce the cost of goods to Interior Alaska.
- A railroad from Canada has been studied (A2A Project) and community is concerned the project is moving forward without consultation with the public due to the railroad not being publicly owned.

- If a railroad is constructed through town, there are community concerns with it at grade because it would delay emergency vehicles if a long train were going through the middle of town. Lack of redundancy in roads to get around the train if needed.

### **Additional Questions for DOT&PF**

- If there is an influx of trucks in our area with 10-20 axels, what will happen to our roads?
- Does the Interior Alaska Transportation Plan address the potential needs in 20 years if these heavy trucks do come through?
- If the bridges are not currently in the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) to be replaced, how will it be addressed with added stress of additional trucks?
- Does the state of Alaska have their own interstate standards?
- What is the planning process based on political will or actual needs defined by the community?
- Who at DOT&PF should a community member from Deltana contact for information on who is responsible for the maintenance and decisions of a road?