

NLCC Road & Traffic Safety Committee Meeting Minutes

June 23, 2024 - 3pm

Attendees: Rod Hanson, David Willaquer, Nickel LaFluer, John Miller.

Update on Bogard-Seldon Resolution

Rod Hanson attended the MVP/MPO Policy Board Meeting on 6/18/24 to discuss the resolution.

- Board consists of Borough Mayor, Palmer Mayor, Wasilla Mayor, representatives from Chickaloon Tribe and Knik Tribe, the Borough Manager, and a representative from Alaska DOT&PF.
- They meet once a month w/ staff.
- Kim Sollien is the MVP/MPO Coordinator in charge of the non-profit organization responsible for long range municipal planning. Minimal staff at this point.
- Resolution was in the pre-read materials for the Policy Board meeting.
- Rod did not read the resolution to the Board, but provided context:
 - Talked about why we felt the resolution was important, outreach, what we do and thanked Kim for the prior presentation earlier in the year. Told the Board the NLCC had been encouraged by State Senators, MSB, DOT, and others to submit such a resolution outlining our concerns and recommendations.
- Rod expressed concern about safety; appreciation for prior long range and specific planning efforts; but community frustration with the lack of follow-through and execution of the projects and solutions.
- There was a large document from staff called a Unified Planning Work Program. Rod only found one reference to a specific Bogard Road Project, and that was a focus on the section from Greentree to Earl Dr. This is only about one-fifth of the section of Bogard we are concerned about.
- Adam Bradway from DOT mentioned that they have struggled with funding over the years and are taking a piecemeal approach. He indicated there is other Bogard road work planned.
- Rod invited DOT - Adam Bradway and his associate Chris Bentz to attend the upcoming NLCC June 2024 Meeting.
- Rod also invited MSB Planner Julie Spackman and MSB Public Works Director Tom Adams to the June Meeting.
- Rod shared that the MSB is exploring frontage roads along Bogard with the goal to eliminate intersections at Caribou and Bear St and force traffic onto Moose St w/ Bogard.

This aligns w/ Cottonwood Lp entrance as well which would help traffic turning into that neighborhood.

Future Meetings in which NLCC plans to speak to our Bogard-Seldon Resolution include:

- July 15 Planning Commission Meeting
- July 16 Borough Assembly Meeting
- August 15 Borough-wide Road Service Area Board Meeting

John Miller also shared the resolution at RSA25 Meeting

- Summed up the purpose of the resolution and conveyed that this voice was coming from the community council with feedback sourced directly from the citizens of that community.
- Rod asked John about what it would take to speak at the larger (Big Board) RSA meetings - Rod will need to reach out to the clerk Rachel Bolinger.
- This may be an additional opportunity to influence borough residential street design standards and borough policy regarding road service areas in addition to discussing the Bogard-Seldon resolution.

Capital Improvement Program

Safe Routes to Schools Project:

- David Willequer discussed a prior survey that was performed by the MSB for schools within the borough
- Survey was done in 2014 and many of the schools had very little feedback provided by parents and school faculty.
- Within recent years - parents appear to be much more involved in schools, at least that is the case for Finger Lake Elementary School and between recent population increases in the Mat-Su Borough and changes made to traffic handling and the use of apps by schools during school pickup times to coordinate release of students - it has led to some significant changes amount of traffic and congestion during peak hours.
- Dave recommended asking the borough to perform a follow up to this survey and source data from not only faculty and parents, but from residents of connecting streets and subdivisions and from citizens that use neighboring trails or school playground equipment as well as bus drivers, both current and former. Recommendation to establish a feedback loop - perhaps add signs at each school with a QR code to submit feedback and/or include as an option in Mat-Su Problem Reporter.
- David Willequer will gather information and share it during Thursday NLCC meeting regarding 2014 survey done for MSB Safe Routes to School Zone project.
- Link to document:
https://matsugov.us/docs/general/16869/msb-srts_final-inventoryrecommendations_final_14y12m02d_smaller.pdf

Radar Speed Signs Update

- Signs installed on Serendipity, Lakeview, and Engstrom last week.
- They were set to gather data in stealth mode.
- Signs were re-programmed this morning to display speeds and continue to gather data. One of the traffic signs (Lakeview) was not gathering data during the last week. Willow branches may have been blocking the radar. Problem has been addressed.
- Some batteries are lasting approximately 1 week at this time.
- Batteries rotated and Rod will be trying to determine which batteries may need replacement.
- All signs are displaying speeds now.
- Rod to send files to David Willequer for analysis.

MSB Design Standards for Residential Streets

- Issue is with narrow paved streets, no shoulders, and very steep and deep ditches.
- Residents and RSA contractors are frustrated because it's hard to plow and easy to go off the shoulder. We have seen maintenance equipment, police vehicles, and numerous private vehicles stuck in the steep and deep ditches.
- Borough design standards are being questioned. Ditch depth is overkill and results in very narrow paved surface with no shoulders. Recently paved streets were much safer as gravel roads before they were rebuilt ... they were wider, with shoulders, and shallower ditches.
- NLCC plans to engage with the RSAs to see if this is a borough wide problem and if we could partner to influence design standards..

New Road Project - Engstrom to Trunk

- Engstrom cannot support additional traffic at this time - recommendation to aggressively expedite this new road construction. Would have been great to have this road in place before the Engstrom / Bogard Roundabout project.
- Additional recommendation to connect a pedestrian walkway along this Engstrom to Trunk Path and add a pedestrian walkway that connects with this and down to Bogard Rd.
- Rod to request a status update from the MSB during Thursday's meeting and inform them this is going to be a large area of concern for the NLCC.

Meeting Adjourned at 3:51.

Minutes Approved: _____ Date: _____