

Illinois Street Reconstruction Project

**FAIRBANKS METROPOLITAN AREA
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

<http://dot.alaska.gov/nreg/planning/fmats/index.shtml>

TIGER DISCRETIONARY GRANT APPLICATION

ILLINOIS STREET RECONSTRUCTION

HPRI-EBL-MGS-F-M-0663(4)/63102

TITLE PAGE

1. SPONSORING ORGANIZATION

City of Fairbanks
800 Cushman Street
Fairbanks, AK 99701

2. NAME OF THE PROJECT

Illinois Street Reconstruction Project – Highway Project
Location: Fairbanks, Alaska – Urban Area
At Large Congressional District - Alaska

3. CONTACT INFORMATION

City of Fairbanks
Department: Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System (FMATS)
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4. Amount Requested: \$15,000,000
5. A waiver of the \$20 million minimum grant size is requested.

BACKGROUND

ILLINOIS STREET RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT – FMATS

The Illinois Street Reconstruction Project (hereinafter “Project”), a surface transportation project eligible under Title 23, United States Code, is a project of **regional significance** to the Fairbanks North Star Borough, City of Fairbanks and the local **Metropolitan Planning Organization** (MPO), known as Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System (FMATS). A vicinity map is shown in the Environmental Assessment that can be found at http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/projectinfo/project_pages/illinois_street/ (Figure 1, page 3).

FMATS, as a department of the City of Fairbanks in the urban area, requests \$15 million to reconstruct this primary north-south corridor between the heart of downtown Fairbanks and the surrounding areas. FMATS requests a **waiver of the \$20 million minimum grant size** for the purpose of funding this significant project in this smaller urban area. FMATS only became recognized as an MPO in the last census with a population of 51,926, formalizing the MPO in 2003. FMATS intends to fund the remainder of this project with their annual allocation of funding and with the State of Alaska contributing the non-federal share of the project, or 9.03%

ARRA AND THE FAIRBANKS AREA MPO

Due to a sub-allocation issue in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), the FMATS MPO did not receive any economic recovery funding for transportation projects. Apportionments to States, including Alaska, were divided into 3 “pots” as follows:

- 3% was dedicated to Transportation Enhancements
- 67% was for use on projects anywhere in the State
- 30% was allocated for urbanized areas over 200,000 and other areas. (In Alaska, there is only one area with a population over 200,000 – Anchorage)

The allocation for areas under 200,000 is further divided into 2 pots:

- areas under 200, 000
- and areas under 5,000. The law requires that the calculation for areas under 5,000 be an amount which is not less than 110 percent of the amount of funds apportioned to the State for the Federal-aid secondary system for fiscal year 1991.

In the case of Alaska, this calculation resulted in the entire suballocation for areas under 200,000 going to areas of under 5,000. Fairbanks ranks as Alaska’s second largest city, and only other MPO within the State, yet no funds were allocated to it from the ARRA distribution. The

Fairbanks North Star Borough, in which the Fairbanks urban area lies, has a population approaching 100,000, nearly 15% of the State's overall population. This grant would provide timely and significant assistance to the Fairbanks area as we begin to feel the effects of the economic slowdown. Alaska typically experiences a delay in the effects of economic downturns as compared to the lower 48. News released in June 2009 indicates that Alaska's run of job growth ended in May 2009, with preliminary estimates showing the state had netted 1,200 fewer jobs in May than it had a year earlier. The industry facing the largest loss of jobs is the construction industry with a loss of 1,000 jobs from the previous May (Anchorage Daily News article published June 19, 2009). The prediction by a state labor economist is that Alaska will dip into a recession this year.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT BENEFITS

After over twenty-five years in project development, this project is expected to break ground in spring of 2010. It will achieve long-term public benefits by improving safety, efficiency, livability and the quality of life. This project will deliver programmatic results. It is a project that will foster planned economic benefits as it is a catalyst project identified in the Vision Fairbanks Downtown Plan (hereinafter "Vision Fairbanks"), which can be viewed at <http://www.visionfairbanks.com/>. Vision Fairbanks has been incorporated into the Regional Comprehensive Plan and adopted by resolution by the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) and the City of Fairbanks. It will provide pedestrian facilities where they are currently lacking, propel the build-out of the Retail Hot Spot in downtown Fairbanks thereby increasing employment and achieving sustainability in the downtown core area.

It will re-construct the main arterial into downtown Fairbanks. This project has been in the preliminary engineering, design and right-of-way acquisition phase for over 25 years. It is the final stages of right-of-way acquisition. It will provide economic stimulus by creating .00001 jobs per federal dollar obligated, which is equivalent to 5.59 jobs per capita.

PROPOSED FUNDING SCENARIO

Through the years, the Project has become increasingly expensive and FMATS will struggle to construct the project with current federal/state allocations and with the competing projects that will be ready for construction in the same time period. This project is estimated to cost 3.5 times one year's annual federal allocation. Under the current funding scenario, the construction of this Project will prevent FMATS from building other planned projects. The State and FMATS, through General Funds and Highway Trust Fund allocations, have contributed \$28 million thus far in the development of this project. In light of this situation, the proposed new

funding scenario for the Illinois Street Reconstruction Project can be reviewed at http://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/projectinfo/project_pages/illinois_street/tiger.shtml.

It outlines the amount of funding requested, source and use of all project funds, total project costs, percent of costs that would be paid with TIGER funds and percentage shares of all other parties providing funds including other Federal Funds. Since the environmental document, design and right-of-way acquisition are all in process, the funding scenario includes actual and anticipated funds by phase.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The scope of the Project is to reconstruct Illinois Street from 1st Avenue to College Road including the Chena River, Noyes Slough crossings. It also includes replacing the Cushman Street Bridge as funding allows. A vicinity map is located within the Environmental Assessment located at http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/projectinfo/project_pages/illinois_street/.

The Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed in August 2005. The preferred alternative as described in the EA is as follows:

Barnette Street would be a one-way, southbound street with a new bridge crossing the Chena River. Traffic would move south in two 12-foot through lanes. This alternative creates a 10-foot parking lane and pedestrian bulb-outs at the intersections along the west side from 7th to 1st Avenue. Curb bulb-outs (extensions) are placed at intersections, which narrow the street to provide visual distinction and reduce pedestrian crossing distances. Bulb-outs provide a visual signal to drivers that a crossing is approaching, thus slowing traffic. They make waiting pedestrians more visible and distinguish parallel parking areas. This alternative includes 11-foot sidewalks along the east side and eight-foot sidewalks along the west side of Barnette Street from 7th Avenue to 1st Avenue (Figure 2).

The existing Cushman Street Bridge would be replaced in a future phase of this project. From 1st Avenue north to the Doyon Place/Terminal Street intersection, Illinois Street would have two lanes of one-way, northbound through traffic. This alternative creates a triangular open space between the new Barnette Street Bridge and the Cushman Street Bridge.

From the new Doyon Place/Terminal Street intersection to Phillips Field Road, the Preferred Alternative would create four lanes of traffic, two lanes for northbound traffic and two lanes for southbound traffic. This alternative includes left turn pockets at the Doyon Place/Terminal Street intersection and at Church Street and Phillips Field Road intersections. Between Doyon/Terminal and Minnie Street, the Preferred Alternative would create two southbound traffic lanes, two northbound through lanes, and dedicated left turn

lanes at all road intersections except for Slater Street. This alternative would close off the existing driveway extension to the property housing OK Lumber and create a new driveway to the south of the Minnie Street intersection. This driveway would be limited to right-turn-only entrance and exit maneuvers. The Preferred Alternative would create an island separating north and southbound traffic from the Phillips Field Road intersection north to Minnie Street, limiting Slater Street to right-turn-only entrance and exit maneuvers. This alternative would widen Minnie Street at Illinois Street to provide dual left turns from Minnie Street onto Illinois Street.

The Preferred Alternative would construct Illinois Street between Doyon Place/Terminal Street and College Road with curb and gutter, eight-foot sidewalks on the west side, and 10-foot sidewalks on the east side. The exception is a short stretch between Minnie Street and the Monroe Catholic School where eight-foot sidewalks would be installed. It would create three lanes (two through lanes and one two-way-left-turn lane) on Illinois Street between Minnie Street and the Noyes Slough. It also includes the construction of a new bridge at Noyes Slough. The existing curve on Illinois would be flattened to meet desirable horizontal curve criteria. Ending at College Road, the Preferred Alternative would add a left turn lane to provide dual left turn lanes from Illinois Street onto College Road. This project addresses the needs of the urban area by providing safer access to downtown Fairbanks for vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

Geospatial data for the project, including an interactive map of the location and its connections to the existing transportation infrastructure can be found at:

http://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/projectinfo/project_pages/illinois_street/files/illinois_with_link_s.pdf. Geospatial data provided include, but is not limited to, accident data, AADT, water

bodies, hydrants, sewer and water lines:

http://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/projectinfo/project_pages/illinois_street/files/illinois-street-geo-inv.pdf

2009: ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT RE-EVALUATION

Subsequent to the selection of the preferred alternative in 2005, Vision Fairbanks was adopted in 2008. This plan can be found at: <http://www.visionfairbanks.com/>. Vision Fairbanks embraces the Project as part of an overall traffic flow revision intended to establish a framework for economic development of the core downtown area south of the Chena River converting the streets south of the River, namely Cushman and Barnette, to two-way traffic as part of a separate project. The merging of these two projects has resulted in changes to the Illinois Street Project that has increased the cost as outlined below. The funds from this grant

would help to offset the impact of these unexpected costs that ultimately maximizes the community value of this Project.

The FMATS Policy Committee requested that the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT & PF) incorporate the Vision Fairbanks's concepts into the future developments of the Project. To this end, the DOT & PF agreed to widen the proposed Barnette Street Bridge to accommodate the recommendation of turning both Cushman Street and Barnette Street to two-way traffic. In June 2009, a Public Open House was held to discuss the changes to the 2005 Environmental Assessment. The DOT & PF was re-evaluating the EA due to the passing of three years and to incorporate changes since the original Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The proposed changes were to include the Barnette Street Bridge widening, potential acquisition of additional property, a scope change to delete Barnette Street from 1st to 7th Avenue (this will be developed under a separate state-funded project), and the inclusion of a crossover to accommodate Cushman Street two-way traffic. The City of Fairbanks commented during this period that due to the adoption of the Vision Fairbanks Downtown Plan, the re-evaluation of the environmental document provided an opportunity to consider the community developments since 2005. Of particular interest was the possibility of evaluating and modifying the intersection of Illinois, Cushman, Barnette, Doyon and Terminal Streets and considering a roundabout instead of a five-way intersection, as recommended in the Vision Fairbanks Downtown Plan. The State has since done a precursory review of that option, conferred with FHWA, and determined that consideration of a roundabout at the intersection north of the Chena River would be the ultimate recommendation in achieving the Vision Fairbanks plan. FMATS will approach this ultimate build-out in phases and is not addressed in the current environmental document.

The final re-evaluation of the EA is anticipated to be approved in September 2009. This project will construct a signalized intersection at the Doyon/Terminal Intersection and provide for one-way bridges as an interim phase.

The DOT & PF estimates the design and right-of-way acquisition to be completed by Spring 2011 at which time the project will request authority to advertise the second phase for construction. The project will take two years to complete due to the short construction season at 65 degrees latitude (May – September, although paving must be complete by mid-September).

Permits required for the Project include:

- Corps of Engineers Permit Section 10/404 (POA-2007-1741) received 3/26/09; expires 3/31/2014
- FNSB Floodplain Permits (468, 469) received 4/7/09, no expiration

- State Department of Fish and Game Title 41 Habitat Permit (FH09-III-0036) received 3/20/09, expires 12/31/2012
- State Department of Environmental Conservation 401 Water Quality Certification, expires 2/2/2014
- Section 106: No adverse effects concurrence complete
- Programmatic 4(f) complete
- State Department of Environmental Conservation Non-Domestic Wastewater Permit (pending)
- State Department of Environmental Conservation Utility Crossing Waivers (pending)
- Coast Guard Section 9 Bridge Permit (pending)

The following website link provides a reference to materials submitted to the other agencies to demonstrate compliance with Federal, State and local regulations.

http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/projectinfo/project_pages/illinois_street/permits.shtml

TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES ADDRESSED: A SUMMARY

This project addresses numerous transportation challenges as detailed throughout this application. In summary, this project addresses pavement conditions that are so poor that they are rated eligible for reconstruction. It addresses the lack of pedestrian facilities and non-ADA compliant facilities that are much needed along this corridor as a link to the core downtown area and other major centers of employment. It relieves congestion as delays for intersection movements are unacceptable or failing for 2000 and 2035 peak hour conditions, contributing to the existing carbon monoxide and growing PM_{2.5} air quality problems in the area. It addresses safety (the 1st/Avenue Cushman Street intersection had 120 accidents over the past ten years) by reconfiguring traffic and the addition of a new bridge over the Chena River on Barnette Street and confusing roadway configurations are geometrically altered to promote safety.

PROJECT PARTIES

The Illinois Street Reconstruction Project is included in the current FMATS 2006 – 2009 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the upcoming 2010- 2013 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) , which can be found at:

http://dot.alaska.gov/nreg/planning/fmats/fmats_tip.shtml.

Approval of the new 2010 – 2013 TIP is estimated to occur prior to September 30, 2009.

The Policy Committee, the decision-making body of FMATS, is made up of the Mayors of the Cities of Fairbanks and North Pole, the Mayor of the FNSB, the Regional Director of the State of Alaska DOT & PF, the Director of Air Quality of the State Department of Environmental

Conservation, a FNSB assembly representative and a Fairbanks City Council representative. The Project is being designed and constructed with the oversight of the State of Alaska DOT & PF, and will be maintained by the City of Fairbanks and the Fairbanks North Star Borough. FMATS is a department of the City of Fairbanks.

PRIMARY SELECTION CRITERIA: LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

STATE OF GOOD REPAIR

The aim of this project is to reconstruct Illinois Street because its current state threatens future economic growth and stability due to its poor condition. Illinois Street is a minor arterial into downtown Fairbanks. It was constructed in 1970. A wearing course of asphalt surface treatment (E-chip) was laid in 2003. Rut depth averages between .28 and .35. The International Roughness Index (IRI) ranges from 267 and 302 and the Pavement Serviceability Rating (PSR) is approximately 2.1. A PSR less than 2.5 is considered Poor Condition, warranting major rehabilitation or reconstruction. AADT ranges from 11,000 – 15,900 on all road segments. Large cracks allow water to enter the roadbed, which further damages the pavement structure. Potholes and other hazards for drivers result from water expanding and contracting through freeze-thaw cycles common to the area's climate. Illinois Street has no remaining service life based on the PSR. There are no pedestrian facilities on nearly half of the current facility. The sidewalks that do exist are narrow and substandard. Existing curb and gutter are crumbling and is only present from Cushman Street Bridge to Phillips Field Road. North of this area, stormwater flows off the road surface to the surrounding lots, causing flooding. A large portion of stormwater eventually percolates into the ground. Lane configurations are unconventional and confusing and experience long delays during peak traffic flows.

Under the no-build outcome, the State of Alaska would continue routine maintenance of the existing facility, through the design year of the project, 2035. It would not correct safety problems along the route and accidents would continue to occur, and increase as traffic volumes increase. Existing pedestrian facilities do not meet desirable ADA criteria for curb ramps and no facilities exist north of Slater Street. The no-build alternative would leave the Monroe Catholic High School and Slaterville neighborhoods without adequate pedestrian access to downtown. This alternative would not improve drainage and untreated runoff would continue to flow into the Chena River and Noyes Slough. Both are designated as impaired water bodies for certain pollutants. Eventually, routine maintenance would not be able to keep up with the deterioration of the facility.

The City of Fairbanks will assume maintenance responsibility when the facility is complete. It has a capitalized policy which includes property, plant, equipment, and infrastructure. The City defines capital assets as assets with an initial, individual cost of more than \$5,000 for machinery and equipment, \$1,000,000 for buildings and infrastructure, and an estimated useful life of greater than one year. Infrastructure is depreciated using the straight-line method over the useful life of the asset with a full year of depreciation in the year of acquisition and disposal. The City anticipates the useful life of this project to be 30 years.

Sustainable sources of revenue are available for long-term operations and maintenance of the project. They are currently working with the State to achieve maintenance efficiencies, particularly with their snow removal efforts. This additional responsibility actually fits in well with current routes and enables the snow plows to operate on a more efficient route.

ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

Vision Fairbanks places a major emphasis on an effort to reverse the trend of suburban sprawl and inefficient use of resources, a first step toward reclaiming downtown as an active and vital center and increase the area’s economic competitiveness. Historically, Fairbanks has experienced a “boom and bust” growth cycle associated with gold and natural resource extraction. The result is an increase in development sprawl, including big-box retail, and service and entertainment uses that are contributing to a loss of local identity and character.

To achieve this goal, Vision Fairbanks identified several Catalyst Projects; projects that have immediate and sustained results. Cushman Street Improvements and Illinois Street Reconstruction are two of these transportation-related projects that were deemed necessary in order to achieve a third catalyst project, The Retail Hot Spot. The Retail Hot Spot provides an essential focal point and concentration of retail uses that is intended to attract economic development, residents and visitors to downtown Fairbanks. It is approximately 240,000 square feet located between 5th and 6th Avenue on Cushman Street.



In identifying the long term employment benefits resulting from the completion of this project, the quality of jobs supported and the number of jobs were considered. Jobs will be retail, office and tourism/entertainment positions. It is estimated by the Downtown Association of Fairbanks that 960 - 1500 jobs could be created as a result of the development of the Retail Hot Spot. The job creation estimate was developed using industry standards for calculating employment as follows:

Land Use Designation	Square Feet/Employee
Commercial Retail	500-800
Commercial Tourism/Entertainment	500-800
Commercial Office	300-500

If these standards are applied to the Retail Hot Spot concept, found on page 19 and 21 of Vision Fairbanks, the following jobs would be created at build-out:

Development Around Square	Square Feet	Employees
Retail Anchor	158,000	200 – 316
E-1 Retail and Office		
Retail	6,000	8 - 12
Office	140,000	280 – 460
E-2 Retail Housing and Commercial		
Retail/Commercial	11,000	14 – 22
Residential		30 units
E-3 and E-4 Retail, Office, Commercial		
Retail/Commercial	43,000	54 – 86
Office	190,000	380 - 630

Economic competitiveness can also be demonstrated through the increased effectiveness of the new transportation system that includes the Illinois Street Reconstruction project as well as the conversion of Cushman and Barnette Street to two-way traffic. It is the purpose of these projects to slow traffic through the downtown area to encourage travelers to stop and shop.

The Fairbanks area is not an Economically Distressed Area as defined by 42 U.S.C. 3161. However, the unemployment rate in Alaska was 8.3% in May up from 6.6% from the same period one year ago. The unemployment rate for the Fairbanks North Star Borough was 7.2% for the same period. While the state’s unemployment rate remains well below the U.S. rate, it is important to note, that the construction industry experience a 1,200 job loss in the last year. Also, historically, when national recessions have driven the U.S. unemployment rate above 7 percent, Alaska’s population gains from migration have also spiked. The nation’s June 9.5 percent unemployment rate was a 26-year high and the nation had already lost 6 million jobs in what is developing into the worst post-war recession to date. That could mean Alaska is about to see migration numbers turn positive to a degree not seen in years. For more information,

please review Alaska Economic Trends June 2009 Volume 29 Number 6 found at:

<http://labor.state.ak.us/trends/jun09.pdf>

LIVABILITY

The Fairbanks Downtown Transportation Study (Alaska DOT & PF, 2001) described the Illinois Street project as a “Cornerstone project, offering solutions to a number of key traffic and pedestrian circulation issues in the heart of the downtown core area”. In its current state, livability in downtown Fairbanks is compromised due to congestion and delay along Illinois Street as traffic volume increase over time. These conditions deter people from using Illinois Street for travel to downtown Fairbanks and cause motorists look for alternate routes to reach the Downtown core, negatively impacting businesses. This project will alleviate the congestion and improve accessibility and mobility of people and freight. It improves pedestrian access along Illinois Street, providing ADA-compliant sidewalks where no sidewalks currently exist. It provides connectivity between the commercial district on College Road to the residents of the downtown core area. It upgrades the streetlights, improves drainage, provides an aesthetically pleasing corridor and constructs bridges to current standards.

This project is the result of 25+ years of transportation planning and design. The recent integration of Vision Fairbanks coordinates these efforts with local land use planning, which developed guidelines to improve livability within Fairbanks. Vision Fairbanks identifies projects that have a special emphasis on convenience of transportation options, reducing travel times, smart growth, creation of open space and addresses proposed land use and the associated transportation facilities necessary to make it successful. With this renewed interest in downtown, it outlines specific land use and circulation frameworks that will guide the development of privately- and publicly-owned parcels of land. The transportation framework is an integrated and comprehensive system that supports the ability of locals and visitors to walk, bike, ride transit and drive to their destinations. It is a multi-modal system. One of the three main corridors studied under the plan is the Garden Island/Illinois Street Corridor. This plan was developed within a focus of community participation in the process. Details of this process are documented in Vision Fairbanks.

The Illinois Street corridor in downtown Fairbanks serves not only as a transportation corridor but is also the location of community activities and an economic hub. The Fairbanks Downtown Transportation Study (Alaska DOT & PF, 2001) considered existing and long-term transportation demands. The study recommended resolving long-standing issues with the Illinois Street Reconstruction Project. The study described this project as a “Cornerstone project, offering solutions to a number of key traffic and pedestrian circulation issues in the heart of the downtown core area”. Subsequently, Vision Fairbanks (Fairbanks North Star Borough, 2008),

adopted by the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) and the City of Fairbanks, envisions a roundabout at the Cushman, Illinois and Barnette Street intersection to serve as a gateway feature to downtown. The roundabout will improve auto circulation at a difficult intersection of five streets: Illinois, Cushman, Barnette, Doyon and Terminal. It will also reduce air quality impacts by eliminating stop and go traffic associated with signalized intersections. This particularly important as Fairbanks is maintenance area for carbon monoxide.

ACCESS

This project will significantly enhance user mobility and accessibility. Many of the intersections along both Illinois and Barnette Streets currently have long delays during peak traffic flows. For unsignalized intersections, AK DOT&PF considers 25-50 seconds of delay unacceptable, and more than 50 seconds of delay is a failing intersection. Signalized intersections with more than 80 seconds of delay are unacceptable. In the following tables, cells in bold depict delay for intersection movements that are unacceptable or failing for 2000 and 2035 peak hour conditions.

Barnette Street Intersection Delay

<i>Barnette Intersection</i>	2000		2035	
	Westbound Approach	Eastbound Approach	Westbound Approach	Eastbound Approach
DELAY (seconds)				
2 nd Avenue	-	69	-	56
4 th Avenue	-	22	-	43

Source: Kinney, Capacity Analysis Report, 2004.

Cushman/Illinois Intersection Delay

<i>Cushman/Illinois Unsignalized Intersections</i>	2000		2035	
	Westbound Approach	Eastbound Approach	Westbound Approach	Eastbound Approach
DELAY (seconds)				
Terminal/Doyon	>120	54	>120	>120
Church Street	36	-	>120	-
Charles Street	-	26		49
<i>Cushman/Illinois Signalized Intersection</i>				
College Road	32		50	

Source: Kinney, Capacity Analysis Report, 2004.

The capacity of the present facility is inadequate for existing peak hour traffic at all of the crossstreet, unsignalized intersections along Illinois Street. The unimproved facility's capacity would remain inadequate for the design year (2035) for peak hour traffic at these intersections. The lines of cars waiting at these intersections become excessive and effect upstream operations or block ingress and egress at minor cross-streets, further deteriorating capacity at signalized intersections (Kinney, Capacity Analysis Report, 2004 - http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/projectinfo/project_pages/illinois_street/files/traffic-study.pdf). Traffic volumes are expected to increase through 2035. Figure 7 of the EA shows current and future annual average daily traffic numbers.

Additional peak hour capacity issues for the project corridor include:

- The northbound queue on Illinois Street at the Phillips Field Road intersection backs into and blocks Church Street (2000 and 2035).
- The westbound left queue blocks right turn land access at Minnie Street (2035).

SHORT AND LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

Although the Illinois Street Reconstruction Project is of high value in and of itself in the improvements it offers over the existing conditions, it also ties in to the long-term picture of sustainability planned for the downtown Fairbanks area. Promoting sustainability is one of the community goals used as a guiding principle in the development of Vision Fairbanks, which was incorporated into the Fairbanks North Star Borough Regional Comprehensive Plan. It serves as a guide to the future development of the downtown area with the goals of increasing private investment, employment, commerce and property tax base. This project promotes consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns. One of the Community Goals used as a guiding principle in the development of Vision Fairbanks was to promote sustainability.

The fundamental concept to improve the sustainability, vitality and economic viability in the downtown was accepted in response to the community goals identified in the Vision Fairbanks development and public process. Seven key downtown revitalization strategies represented in the concept were presented. One identifies Cushman Street as the signature street linking the civic anchor with the retail hot spot and the Chena Waterfront. Another preserves and improves pedestrian, auto and truck safety and circulation along the Barnette/Illinois corridor and a third anchors Cushman Street with roundabouts to create a beginning and end to the street to form a highly identifiable Cushman Gateway.

Vision Fairbanks offers a three-tiered implementation strategy: Catalyst projects, time-sensitive projects and build-out projects. Cushman Street Improvements is a catalyst project in Vision Fairbanks. Because Cushman Street ties directly with Illinois Street, the two projects must be developed in unison. Vision Fairbanks calls for turning Cushman and Barnette Street two-way from Airport Way to north of the Chena River. Illinois Street must be reconstructed accordingly to accommodate this new circulation pattern since it ties directly into both streets. It includes the construction of a new bridge across the river that ties into Barnette Street. Conversion of Cushman and Barnette Street to two-way traffic will occur simultaneously with the Illinois Street project and is funded with \$6.8 million of state general funds. Illinois Street Improvements is also a catalyst project. It is the key to this revitalization effort.

If the project is delayed due to funding constraints, eventually routine maintenance will not be able to keep up with the deterioration of the facility. This project also promotes a more environmentally sustainable transportation system by addressing air quality, wildlife habitat and water quality issues as well. In 1998, Fairbanks and North Pole were designated as carbon monoxide (CO) Serious non-attainment areas. The area was determined to have attained the CO National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) by the December 31, 2001 attainment date. In 2004, the state received approval, and this area is now listed as a CO maintenance area. The Fairbanks area has not recorded a primary or secondary CO NAAQS violation since 1999. This project is determined to conform with the purpose of the current State Implementation Plan (SIP) and the requirements of the Clean Air Act Amendments. Air quality under the Build Alternative would be no worse than under the No Build Alternative for the design year of this project (2035). Detailed quantitative information can be found in Section 4.8 of the Environmental Assessment located at:

http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/projectinfo/project_pages/illinois_street/

The project provides for an increase in bicycle and pedestrian traffic due to the construction of new facilities that provide for these modes where none or substandard ones existed. Noise level increases for the project do not substantially exceed existing noise levels and is detailed in Section 4.9 of the Environmental Assessment.

The project corridor is well within the urban boundaries of Fairbanks and does not support a variety of wildlife resources. There are no eagles' nests in the corridor and the Chena River bank-side wildlife habitat is severely limited. The in-stream habitat for the section of Noyes Slough impacted by this project has been compromised by previous commercial activities and there is little or no nesting habitat within the project corridor. Noyes Slough and the Chena River are catalogued anadromous waters and require an Essential Fish Habitat Assessment and consultation with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Nation Marine Fisheries Service. A Fish Habitat Permit has been obtained.

This project provides an opportunity to benefit in-stream habitats by preventing or treating sediment and pollutant runoff into streams. The project will coordinate landscape design options and potential riparian habitat restoration options with local government to make sure they are compatible with the community goals along the riverfront, including willow cutting placement at the top of bank riprap. It will channel stormwater to ceptors and be filtered before discharging into the Chena River and Noyes Slough.

SAFETY

Illinois Street has several safety deficiencies along the route. Existing pedestrian facilities do not meet desirable ADA criteria for curb ramps. There are no pedestrian facilities north of Slater Street, more than half of the project length. Monroe Catholic High School is on Illinois Street, located in the area without pedestrian facilities. Tourists and the general public walk in the street. The Illinois Street Corridor has crumbling concrete curb and gutter, narrow, substandard, or non-existent sidewalks, substandard street lighting and confusing lane configurations. The Illinois Street Reconstruction Project addresses the following deficiencies that will thereby improve the safety of the facility.



Tanker truck passing man in scooter – no sidewalk facilities

ROADWAY DEFICIENCIES

The existing lane configurations throughout the corridor can be confusing to motorists. Unexpected and non-standard traffic patterns exist. Between 2nd Avenue and 1st Avenue, Barnette Street is a one-way, two-lane facility (at 1st Avenue, Barnette is striped for three lane widths and tapers down to two lanes at 2nd Avenue). Because of the arrangement of one-way streets that cross Barnette, traffic moving east from 1st Avenue must merge and weave to the easterly most southbound lane in one block before continuing east on 2nd Avenue. 1st Avenue

between Cushman and Barnette is one-way, westbound. Traffic coming off the Cushman Bridge southbound from the right (outside) lane wishing to continue south on Barnette must cross one complete lane in one block to make a left onto Barnette Street from 1st Avenue. Traffic coming off the Cushman Bridge southbound from the left (inside) lane may stay in the center lane to continue south onto Barnette Street, but must navigate a tight turn (about 20 feet as painted from white line to lip of gutter) at the 1st Avenue/Barnette intersection or cross into the left (outside) lane for a dedicated left turn movement (Figure 5). From 1995-1999 there were 120 accidents at the 1st Avenue/Cushman Street intersection and 13 accidents at 2nd Avenue & Barnette Street. Confusing travel patterns are a likely contributing factor to these accidents (Kinney, Accident Analysis Report, 2004).

North of the Chena River, the following road segments and intersections exhibit safety concerns:

- Sight distance is obstructed at Church Street. The sight distance for left turning traffic at Church Street is about 280 feet, which is less than the 390 feet recommended for a 35 mile per hour (mph) facility. Five accidents occurred here from 1995 to 1999.
- The segment accident rate on Illinois Street between Charles Street and College Road is more than one-and-a-half times the statewide average. The accident rate at this location is 2.74 per million entering vehicles, compared to the statewide average of 1.60 per million entering vehicles for this type of roadway segment.

Obstacles along Illinois Street include:

- A power pole located by Photo Factory with “bites” removed by passing vehicles. It has been knocked over and sleeved.
- Pipe bollard at Senco Fasteners, Phillips Field Road and Illinois Street, which guards Senco Fasteners from vehicles colliding with the building.

Since the Accident Analysis Report, accidents along Barnette, Cushman, and Illinois Streets have continued. From January 1 to March 4, 2005 Fairbanks Police Dispatch Reports, which show accident date and location, list six accidents at 1st Avenue and Cushman Street. A noteworthy accident occurred on April 6, 2004. A Fairbanks woman, with two children on board, crashed through the Cushman Street Bridge rail while towing a trailer and dove off the Cushman Street Bridge. Miraculously, no one was injured in this accident.

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE FACILITY DEFICIENCIES

The existing Project Corridor does not connect pedestrian and bicycle paths from Downtown Fairbanks north to existing paths along College Road and the Johansen Expressway.

Cushman Street from 1st Avenue to Doyon Place/Terminal Street:

- Existing sidewalks on the Cushman Street Bridge are only six feet wide. This is too narrow for pedestrians and bicycles at the same time.

- The existing Chena River multi-use path ends at the narrow sidewalk along Cushman Street on the north side of the river. During spectator events on the Chena River, the sidewalk on the Cushman Street Bridge is much too narrow to accommodate large groups of viewers.

Illinois Street from Doyon Place/Terminal Street to College Road:

- There are no pedestrian signals at the Minnie Street and Illinois Street intersection.
- No pedestrian or bicycle facilities exist north of Phillips Field Road. Illinois Street borders the Slaterville neighborhood, Monroe Catholic School, and the Illinois Street Historic District. In the summer, large numbers of visitors as well as local residents attempt to walk in this area.

SURFACING DEFICIENCIES

The existing road surfaces are in poor condition and exhibit large cracks. The cracks allow water to enter the roadbed, which further damages the pavement structure. Potholes and other hazards for drivers result from the water expanding and contracting through freeze-thaw cycles common to the area’s climate. DOT&PF placed an E-Chip seal coat on the roadway in 2003. Because of the uneven road surface, much of the seal continues to be scraped off by snow removal plows in the winter.

EVALUATION OF EXPECTED PROJECT COSTS AND BENEFITS

The evaluation of expected project costs and benefits is not addressed since a waiver of the \$20 million minimum grant size requirements for Smaller Projects is requested.

PLAN FOR EVALUATING PROJECT PERFORMANCE

FMATS intends to monitor the construction of the Illinois Street Project, and through the ARRA reporting requirements, report the number of short-term jobs resulting from the construction activity. FMATS publishes a quarterly newsletter and will include the project successes as they progress. The Downtown Association will focus on the long-term outcomes anticipated as a result of the conversion of the downtown streets to two-way traffic and the associated development of the Retail Hot Spot.

PRIMARY SELECTION CRITERIA: JOB CREATION AND ECONOMIC STIMULUS

Job creation will directly result from the construction of Illinois, Cushman and Barnette Street. It is estimated that 40 fulltime and 119 construction jobs, both private and public will be created during this construction project. This data is based on a recent similar project within

the Fairbanks area and was provided by the DOT & PF construction section. Two labor apprentice positions will be required, totaling 2,000 labor hours. In addition to the construction contract funding estimated at over \$30,000,000, an additional \$5,000,000 will be spent on construction administration, inspection, and testing.

Public/Private	Type of Job	Number of Jobs	Full Time	Part Time
Private – General Contractor	Field Crews, Truck Drivers, Utilities Crew, Paving Crew, Landscaping Crew, Traffic Control, SWPPP	56	30	26
Private – Contractor	Bridge Crew	10	10	0
Private – Subcontractor	Survey Crew	10		10
Private – Subcontractor	Electrical Crew	10		10
Private – Subcontractor	Trucking	11		11
Private – Subcontractor	Fencing	5		5
Private – Subcontractor	Concrete Crew	15		15
Private – Subcontractor	Insulation crew	7		7
Private – Subcontractor	Traffic Control	6		6
Private – Subcontractor	Traffic Marking Crew	8		8
Public Employees	DOT & PF Field Crew	9	9	
Public Employees	City Engineer	3	1	2
Public Employees	DOT & PF Support – Materials lab, traffic and safety, quality assurance, environmental, construction manager, design and quality assurance review	19		19

The end result will allow for the development of the Retail Hot Spot which would stimulate a rapid increase in economic activity while preserving existing jobs downtown.

Vision Fairbanks recommends the downtown location of the University of Fairbanks – Tanana Valley Campus promote extended learning and job creation by encouraging programs for new business development, job opportunities with local employers and practical learning programs within the community.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

A Project Schedule demonstrating that the project can begin construction quickly upon receipt of the TIGER Discretionary Grant is located at:

http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/projectinfo/project_pages/illinois_street/files/illinois_project_schedule.pdf.

Work on the construction of the Barnette Street Bridge will occur in the winter of 2010/2011 and the reconstruction of the second Project phase will begin in the Spring of 2011. As you can see from the schedule, the construction window in Fairbanks, Alaska, is very limited due to the extreme weather conditions. The average **high** temperature in January is 2 below zero and the average low temperature is 19 below zero, with extended periods of 30 – 40° Fahrenheit and below the norm. Fairbanks also experiences up to 21 hours of darkness in the winter months. Construction occurs primarily in the months of May – September, although springtime snow often falls well into May and winter snow often fall in September. Completion of the project is estimated at September 2012. FMATS understands that priority will be given to projects that can be completed by February 17, 2012 but respectfully requests that consideration of Alaska’s harsh environment be given when evaluating this criterion.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND LEGISLATIVE APPROVALS

Permits required for the Project include:

- Corps of Engineers Permit Section 10/404 (POA-2007-1741) received 3/26/09; expires 3/31/2014
- FNSB Floodplain Permits (468, 469) received 4/7/09, no expiration
- State Department of Fish and Game Title 41 Habitat Permit (FH09-III-0036) received 3/20/09, expires 12/31/2012
- State Department of Environmental Conservation 401 Water Quality Certification, expires 2/2/2014
- Section 106: No adverse effects concurrence complete
- Programmatic 4(f) complete
- State Department of Environmental Conservation Non-Domestic Wastewater Permit (pending)
- State Department of Environmental Conservation Utility Crossing Waivers (pending)
- Coast Guard Section 9 Bridge Permit (pending)

Legislative Authority from the State of Alaska grants the DOT & PF permission to spend Federal Funds. \$26.2 of \$30 million of Legislative Authority for the construction of the Project has been secured thusfar. Legislative authority for the remainder of the project will be pursued in the Fiscal Year 2010 legislative session, beginning in January 2010.

Appn.	Legislative Authority	Amount	Total Funds
64525	82/03/48/09	\$1,670,555.56	\$1,670,555.56
60951	82/06/106/04	\$2,000,000.00	\$2,000,000.00
61699	30/07/113/21	\$10,000,000.00	\$10,000,000.00
64076	15/09/31/24	\$12,570,000.00	\$12,570,000.00
			subtotal \$26,240,555.56

STATE AND LOCAL PLANNING

This project is included in the FMATS 2006 – 2009 Transportation Improvement Program and will be included in the new FMATS 2010 – 2013 TIP, to be finalized by September 2009. Both documents can be found at: http://dot.alaska.gov/nreg/planning/fmats/fmats_tip.shtml.

As owner of the project, the State of Alaska DOT & PF has provided a letter supporting this project application and will cooperate in carrying out the activities supported by the TIGER Discretionary Grant. A copy of this letter can be found at: http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/projectinfo/project_pages/illinois_street/files/tiger-dot-letter.pdf.

TECHNICAL FEASIBILITY

The Environmental Assessment was completed in August 2005 and the re-evaluation of this document is estimated to be approved by the end of September 2009. The Preliminary Plans, Specifications and Estimates were completed and thoroughly reviewed in April 2008. With the recent modifications to incorporate the Vision Plan, some of these have been reworked. However, it can be stated that substantial preliminary engineering work is complete. The DOT & PF has assured the FMATS Policy Committee that the changes incorporated into the EA re-evaluation and the final design will not delay the obligation of funds for the construction phase. Phase 1 of the project, the construction of the Barnette Street Bridge, will begin in February 2010. The bridge work can be performed in the winter as it lessens environmental impacts. The next phase, Illinois Street Reconstruction, will begin in May 2011 and be complete by September 2012.

FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY

With receipt of TIGER funds, FMATS would be able to address the Phases 1 and 2 of the Illinois Street Reconstruction Project. FMATS will use its regular allocation as contingency reserves, if necessary.

The City of Fairbanks clearly has the ability to manage grants as the following information indicates. The City of Fairbanks manages over fifty federal and state grants per year. The City of Fairbanks Finance Department has experienced staff members that are responsible for grants management. The department has established and maintained a financial management system to ensure:

- there are accurate, current, and complete disclosure of the financial results of the grant;
- there are effective controls over and accountability for all grant funds and property acquired with grant funds;
- there are accurate comparison of actual and budgeted amounts;
- that the accounting records, which are supported by source documentation, adequately identify the nature and use of, grant funds;
- there are separate financial records for the accounting of funds related to the grant; and
- there are procedures to ensure timely reporting and receipt of grant funds.

SECONDARY SELECTION CRITERIA: INNOVATION

The Vision Fairbanks Downtown Plan, adopted in 2008, is the driving force behind turning Cushman and Barnette Street to two-way traffic. The fundamental concept identifies Cushman Street as the signature street linking the civic anchor with the retail hot spot and the Chena Waterfront. It also preserves and improves pedestrian, auto and truck safety and circulation along the Barnette/Illinois Parkway. This plan is the innovative approach the area has adopted to revitalize the downtown core. The Project will create a new downtown park on the waterfront in the newly formed triangle of the Chena River and the new Barnette Street Bridge and Cushman Street Bridge.

SECONDARY SELCTION CRITERIA: PARTNERSHIP

The partnerships involved in the development, construction and maintenance of this Project are multiple and reach over many facets of the community. The State of Alaska DOT & PF has been developing this project for well over 25 years. The project has recently evolved to be consistent with the recently completed and adopted Vision Fairbanks, which outlines specific

land-use and circulation frameworks that will guide the revitalization of downtown Fairbanks. This plan was developed, with funding from the State and the Fairbank North Star Borough, by the Downtown Association of Fairbanks with assistance of an Urban Plan Task Force, Community Advisory Committee, the City of Fairbanks, FMATS and the Citizens of the Fairbanks North Star Borough. Specifics regarding the partnerships involved in this effort can be found on the “Credits” page of the Vision Fairbanks Plan. At a series of town hall-style meetings, attendees, at times numbering more than 400, defined the goals for a revitalization plan expected to span 20 years

DEMONSTRATION OF SUPPORT

Variations of this project have been in the planning stages for over 25 years. Local government bodies have passed resolutions urging DOT&PF to move forward with the project:

- City of Fairbanks Resolution 4318, 4/7/08
- Chena Riverfront Commission 2005-2, 3/7/05
- City of Fairbanks Ordinance 5494, 7/22/02
- Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) Resolution 2002-61, 8/22/02
- Main Street Fairbanks Resolution 2002-1, 8/14/02
- City of Fairbanks Resolution 4014, 7/15/02
- Chena Riverfront Commission Resolution, 2/7/00
- City of Fairbanks Engineering Department letter, 3/18/97
- FNSB Resolution 93-013, 1/28/93
- City of Fairbanks Resolution 3325, 5/18/92
- City of Fairbanks Resolution 1488, 7/10/78

In 2008, the Vision Fairbanks Downtown Plan was created in response to the public’s vision for future growth. It serves as a tool for citizens to proactively plan for development rather than reactively respond to development pressures. The master plan brings certainty to investors, developers, business people and residents by providing a clear vision of the community’s goals and a basis for development review and project approval. The plan is based on information gathered through an extensive community involvement process with well-attended meetings and workshops. The process included:

1. Stakeholder Meetings

The stakeholder committee, comprised of local public officials, citizens and business people, reviewed all plan materials and provided input before and after each workshop throughout the process.

2. Public Workshops

All four public sessions were interactive and engaged the community. Each session consisted of two parts: *Presentation*: project background, issues and designs were described. *Workshop*: a “town hall” type workshop was facilitated by Crandall Arambula. Participants responded to specific planned alternatives and summarized their issues by completing individual response sheets. Average attendance at each workshop was approximately 300 people

3. Additional Meetings

Additional meetings were held with policy committees, local advocacy groups and stakeholders.

4. Online Questionnaire

Additional information and interactive on-line response sheets were available on the Downtown Association of Fairbanks’ website. <http://downtownfairbanks.907group.com/>

Both the City of Fairbanks and the Fairbanks North Star Borough have adopted Vision Fairbanks. The City of Fairbanks and the AK DOT & PF, as owner, support this grant application. Their resolutions/letter of support can be found at http://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/projectinfo/project_pages/illinois_street/tiger.shtml.

FINANCIAL PARTNERSHIP

Both the Illinois Street Project and the Cushman Street Project are catalyst projects as identified in Vision Fairbanks. The conversion of Cushman and Barnette Street to two-way traffic will occur simultaneously with the Illinois Street project and is funded with \$6.8 million of State of Alaska general funds.

Because the City of Fairbanks and the Fairbanks North Star Borough have agreed to take over the maintenance of the newly constructed project, except for the signals and bridges, the DOT & PF has contributed the non-federal share of the project, or 9.03% of all project costs. To date, on preliminary engineering, design and right-of-way acquisition, the State has contributed over \$3.4 million and the State and FMATS together have allocated \$24.7 million of federal highway funds towards the development of this project.

FMATS requests \$15 for the Illinois Street Reconstruction project under this grant application for the construction phase of the project. The full cost of construction is currently estimated at \$30 million. The remaining funds will come from FMATS’ federal allocations and the State will pay the non-federal share of the project.

MAINTENANCE

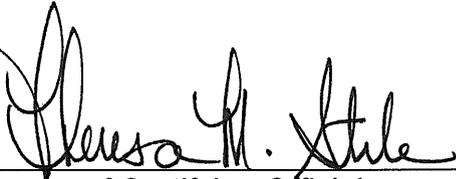
The State of Alaska DOT & PF currently maintains Illinois Street. A partnership arrangement has been reached between DOT & PF and the City of Fairbanks and the Fairbanks North Star Borough for the maintenance of the completed facility. The City of Fairbanks has agreed to maintain Illinois Street after construction is complete, including routine and preventive maintenance. City maintenance of Illinois will be energy efficient and sustainable. The City currently maintains the majority of the roads connecting to Illinois Street, including Cushman, Terminal, Church, Slater and Minnie Streets, thus efficiency will be realized through continuity of maintenance along the roadway corridor. Maintenance is sustainable as the City has entered into an agreement with ADOT to maintain Illinois in the future following reconstruction. The crews will maintain the roadway surface including routine plowing, sweeping, and striping. Street lights and signals will be maintained through a local contractor. Crack sealing will be done through FMATS using Preventive Maintenance funding. When the road reaches an age where pot holes occur, the City Public Works crews will hot patch. Storm drains will be maintained as well. The Fairbanks North Star Borough has agreed to maintain all landscape features. DOT & PF will maintain all signals and bridges. FMATS also has a strong Preventive Maintenance program and annually expends about 12% of its federal funds on such activities.

Assurance for Federal Wage Rate Requirements

On behalf of the applicant entity named below, I assure the following to the Office of the Secretary of Transportation of the United States Department of Transportation:

The City of Fairbanks will comply with the requirements of subchapter IV of Chapter 31 of Title 40, United States Code (Federal Wage Requirements) as required by the Recovery Act.

I have authority to make this certification on behalf of the applicant entity (that is, the entity applying directly to the Department of Transportation).



Signature of Certifying Official

Theresa M Strle

Printed Name of Certifying Official

Mayor

Title of Certifying Official

City of Fairbanks

Full Name of Applicant Entity

September 11, 2009

Date