

CHUGIAK COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**P.O. Box 671350
Chugiak, Alaska 99567**

February 17, 2011

TO: Jerry Weaver and Craig Lyon
Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS)
Municipality of Anchorage
4700 Elmore Road
Anchorage, Alaska
Phone: 343-7991, Emails: weaverjt@muni.org, lyonch@muni.org

SUBJECT: The Old Glenn Highway Upgrade Project and the Pedestrian Pathway
Between North Birchwood Loop and Chapel Drive

Dear Gentlemen,

At a recent Chugiak Community Council ("Council") meeting, a large number of residents described a severe safety hazard that was created by the Old Glenn Highway Upgrade Project over the summer. Initial Phase II project work reconfigured the pedestrian pathway on the Old Glenn Highway between North Birchwood Loop and Chapel Drive but made it unsafe for pedestrians. Before the highway upgrade, a safe pathway existed at this location. The delineation of the former pathway was obvious since the pathway had been separated from the driving lanes by a wide, vegetated drainage ditch. The pathway had been heavily utilized by pedestrians due to its proximity to Chugiak Elementary School, Chugiak Senior Center, Chugiak Post Office, both Peters Creek and Loretta French Parks, and bus stops.

Following the road upgrade work that occurred over the summer, this pathway was changed into a line-designated area existing on the same grade as the driving lanes and with no separation from the lanes. Now, with snow covering the designation lines, drivers do not know this area is a dedicated walking pathway as it merely has the appearance of a wide shoulder. Also, the ditch that once provided snow storage was eliminated so highway snow is now plowed into the pathway area resulting in a reduced pathway width. Pedestrians no longer use the pathway as it has become too dangerous. Also, horse riders no longer ride on the pathway since horses could get spooked from the close proximity to fast-moving traffic.

MOA Assemblymember Debbie Ossiander and John Rodda, Director of MOA Parks and Recreation, agreed with residents that this is a safety issue that needs to be fixed as soon as possible.

Jim Amundsen/ADOT Old Glenn Design Project Manager explained to residents why ADOT originally designed the pathway the way it did. He added that the safety issues associated with the reconfigured pathway could be fixed during the next construction season but any changes would first need authorization through AMATS.

There was a discussion of possible options on how to best fix the pathway. There was fair agreement that remediation work should be done next spring to re-do this eastside pathway by installing a six to eight inch high curb followed by repaving.

The Council unanimously passed a motion to recommend to AMATS that the recently reconfigured eastside pathway on the Old Glenn Highway between North Birchwood Loop and Chapel Drive (excluding Peters Creek Park) be made safe for pedestrians by re-building it to an elevated curb and asphalt-paved pathway, preferably with a wide separation from the shoulder.

Since that meeting, MOA Assemblymember Ossiander reported to the Council that AMATS needs a cost estimate for the proposed work. I emailed Jim Amundsen on January 25th to get such a cost estimate for you but have I have not heard back from him yet.

You may contact me at 688-0123 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Dave Baldwin
President
Chugiak Community Council

Cc Jim Amundsen/ADOT Old Glenn Design Project Manager
MOA Assemblymember Debbie Ossiander
MOA Assemblymember Bill Starr
John Rodda, Director of MOA Parks and Recreation