

Birchwood Community Council
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Resolution 001-2014 requesting Planning and Zoning Commission consider traffic impacts of the proposed Three Bears store in Chugiak (case 2014-011)

At its regularly scheduled public meeting on January 22, 2014, the Birchwood Community Council membership, by resolution duly made and approved, expressed concerns about the potential traffic problems resulting from a new Three Bears store near the North Birchwood interchange.

The council believes that although the petitioner's Traffic Impact Analysis, as accepted by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, may have underestimated the need for traffic mitigation, for example a traffic light to safely deal with increased traffic entering and leaving the new store.

Traffic at the North Birchwood interchange varies widely by time of day and day of the week. So, although overall traffic levels may not indicate a problem, there may still severe problems at specific times and days. The Council has several specific concerns:

The new store is quite near a large church, Birchwood Crossing, which produces large amounts of traffic on Sundays. When this is combined with local shopping patterns favoring Sunday as a shopping and errand day (since many residents have fairly long commutes precluding weekday shopping) we believe there is potential for severe traffic problems Sunday mid-day and afternoon.

The new store is also not far from a sharp curve that limits sight lines. Traffic travelling south on North Birchwood Loop, towards the Glenn Highway, will round that curve at 45 mph, and suddenly encounter slow cars turning left out of the Three Bears store (also towards the Glenn Highway entrance).

Traffic at the North Birchwood interchange is much higher during commuting hours than mid-day; we believe the additional traffic from the store, when combined with high commuting hour traffic, may also cause problems.

Therefore, we respectfully request that the Planning and Zoning Commission review the site plan and traffic impact analysis closely to determine whether or not any additional traffic mitigation may be needed, either immediately or in the near future, to deal with increased traffic at this intersection.

Respectfully,

Jill Flanders-Crosby, Co-Chair
Barbara Trost, Co-Chair

