

Spenard Community Council Resolution

2024-04

A Resolution in Support of Actions to Protect Pedestrians

WHEREAS, the Spenard Community Council (“SCC”) is an organization representing the interests of the residents of the Spenard area of Anchorage; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of community councils is to provide a direct and continuing means of participation in local government and local affairs; and

WHEREAS, a pedestrian is a person on foot walking, running, bicycling, riding scooters, skateboards, skates, using a wheelchair, tricycles, or quadricycle. In other words, a pedestrian is a person not in a vehicle moving around our community; and

WHEREAS, according to the ADOT&PF, a pedestrian is also a “Vulnerable Road User,” which is any person who chooses to walk, bike, or roll on Alaska’s roadways. Vulnerable road users are considered “vulnerable” because they lack the visibility, protection, and deference given to motor vehicles; and

WHEREAS, a record 13 pedestrians have been killed in Anchorage this year after being struck by a vehicle, the highest annual number with three months remaining in the year¹; and

WHEREAS, in Anchorage, the majority of these collisions and deaths have occurred on high-speed highways and arterials, including roads within Spenard; and

WHEREAS, roads within Spenard that are part of the city’s Vision Zero “high injury network” include Minnesota Drive, Northern Lights Boulevard, Benson Boulevard, Arctic Boulevard, and Tudor Road²; and

WHEREAS, goals to promote safe and connected pedestrian and bicycle networks identified in the *Spenard Corridor Plan* (October 2020) include, “enhance and protect neighborhoods surrounding Spenard Road,” “create great public streets”; “create a safe pedestrian and bike network,” “accommodate safe and balanced roadway access,” and

WHEREAS, people have the right to cross roadways on foot and should be able to do so without fear of death by vehicle;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Spenard Community Council urges the State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) and the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) to take the following immediate actions:

¹ Theriault Boots, M. (September 26, 2024). “Fatally flawed”: What this year’s 13 pedestrian deaths tell us about Anchorage’s roads. *Anchorage Daily News*.
<https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/anchorage/2024/09/26/fatally-flawed-what-this-years-12-pedestrian-deaths-tell-us-about-anchorages-roads/>

² Municipality of Anchorage (December, 2019). *Anchorage Vision Zero Year 1 Update*.
<https://www.muni.org/Departments/traffic/Pages/visionzero.aspx>

- Reduce speed limits without delay by 10 mph on corridors identified in the Vision Zero “high injury network,” AMATS Safety Plan³, and the Strategic Highway Safety Plan/Vulnerable Road User Plan⁴.
 - For Spenard, these include: Minnesota Drive, Benson Boulevard, Northern Lights Boulevard, Spenard Road, and Tudor Road.
- Launch continuous public education campaigns for safe driving practices, especially as they relate to interactions with vulnerable road users.
- Reduce speed limits to a maximum of 35 mph in corridors with multi-modal facilities and transit.
- Include quick-build solutions for:
 - Creating separation and safe spaces for drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians, which also calms traffic.
 - Installing more frequent crosswalks and mid-block crossings, including pedestrian beacons for better visibility.
 - Building road diets that naturally enforce slower, safer speeds.
- Prioritize snow removal and maintenance by clearing pedestrian facilities first.
- Increase lighting along high-speed corridors.
- Until design changes are implemented to encourage slower driving speeds, fully fund and support regular and consistent enforcement of speed limits at state and municipal levels.
- Install speed feedback signs and increase traffic enforcement in key dangerous locations.
- Mid- to longer-term actions include:
 - Adopting a Complete Streets Policy for the ADOT&PF.
 - Update the Design Criteria Manual (DCM) to allow for prioritizing safe designs for vulnerable road users.
 - Reduce lanes, especially on high-speed roadways.
 - Discontinue use of the 85th percentile speed study considerations and instead design and re-design roadways in core urban areas for vehicle speeds no higher than 30 miles per hour.
 - Increase and enforce penalties for drivers who strike a vulnerable road user.
 - Prioritize vulnerable road user safety (pedestrians and bicyclists) in all transportation planning, design, maintenance, and construction projects, including designs to encourage slower driving speeds.

Resolved, this _____ day of _____ 2024.

Spenard Community Council President

Date

Vote: _____ in favor, and _____ opposed.

³ MOA Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions. (March, 2024). AMATS Safety Plan. <https://publicinput.com/a8536>

⁴ State of Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities. (August, 2024). Alaska Strategic Highway Safety Plan 2023-2027. [https://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/shsp/#:~:text=What%20is%20the%20Strategic%20Highway%20Safety%20Plan%20\(SHSP\)%3F&text=The%20SHSP%20is%20the%20statewide.%C2%A7%20148](https://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/shsp/#:~:text=What%20is%20the%20Strategic%20Highway%20Safety%20Plan%20(SHSP)%3F&text=The%20SHSP%20is%20the%20statewide.%C2%A7%20148).