



September 25, 2024

Dear Alaskan,

The Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) are shocked and saddened by the recent, disturbing trend of pedestrian road fatalities in Anchorage over the past two weeks. Our staff extend our condolences to the families and friends of the individuals who tragically lost their lives. These incidents are devastating reminders of the need to prioritize road safety for all users—pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers alike.

This time of year presents increased dangers for pedestrians and drivers, as the combination of decreasing daylight and the absence of snow cover creates darker-than-usual conditions. We encourage drivers to slow down, especially in high-pedestrian areas, and stay alert to the potential of pedestrians crossing roadways outside of well-lit crosswalks. Pedestrians are advised to wear reflective or light-colored gear and remain vigilant when crossing streets.

DOT&PF hosted a Symposium on Safe Roadway Behaviors early last week, followed by a Partners in Safety focus group and a public open house at the Loussac Library on Sept. 18. These events provided an opportunity for community members to engage with department and discuss local road safety concerns. We are grateful for the input received, which will help shape future safety initiatives. For those unable to attend, we are still gathering feedback through a [community safety survey](#),¹ and we encourage all residents to share their thoughts and concerns about road safety.

DOT&PF remains committed to improving road safety for all users through initiatives such as Partners in Safety, the Strategic Highway Safety Plan, and the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), which prioritize reducing traffic-related fatalities and protecting vulnerable road users. We look forward to strengthening key partnerships that share our vision of eliminating traffic fatalities, including the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS), Municipality of Anchorage (MOA), Anchorage Police Department (APD) and Department of Public Safety (DPS).

Some of the immediate actions we are taking include:

- Meeting with community councils in every corridor identified in the AMATS Safety Plan and our Strategic Highway Safety Plan/Vulnerable Road User Plan to discuss speed limit reductions.
- Installing speed feedback signs in key locations.

¹ <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/2e5e6b1389fd4ae6977d57968153b7e3>

- Launching a public education campaign to promote safe driving practices, including reminders that pedestrians have the legal right to cross at crosswalks, how higher speeds increase stopping distance, how tinted windows impair visibility, and the importance of not blocking crosswalks at signalized intersections, among other important safe driving behaviors.
- Considering quick safety measures, such as retroreflective gear for pedestrians or added roadside features to prevent high risk crossings.
- Working with the Alaska Department of Public Safety on statewide education and outreach and traffic safety and enforcement recommendations.

For more information and updates on our road safety initiatives, please visit www.dot.alaska.gov/besafe.

Sincerely,



Ryan Anderson, P.E.
Commissioner
Alaska Department of Transportation
and Public Facilities



Sean Holland, P.E.
AMATS Policy Board Chair
Central Region Director