Alaska-Richardson-Steese Highways Corridor Action Plan (CAP)

Data Assembly – Summary of Existing Planning Documents and Efforts within Study Area

Updated May 10, 2023 DRAFT

Introduction

As part of the context analysis for the Alaska-Richardson-Steese Highways Corridor ("the Corridor") Action Plan, and to build a more comprehensive understanding of stakeholder perspectives on the needs and future direction of the Corridor, the project team reviewed and analyzed existing and previous Corridor-related plans. This **Plan Review** summarizes key information from past planning efforts such as vision statements, goals, objectives, strategies, and projects. This document also highlights areas of alignment and areas of potential tension between existing and past initiatives and plans, setting the stage for more robust dialogue among stakeholders.

From Project Scope:

"Data Assembly – Collect, analyze, and provide a summary of existing planning documents/efforts within the study area. Existing transportation studies that need to be analyzed and may impact this Plan can be found on the Department and Fairbanks Area Surface Transportation (FAST) Planning Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) websites. The State Rail Plan, Air Quality Plan, FAST Freight Mobility Plan, FAST Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, Interior Alaska Transportation plan, Alaska Statewide Transportation Plan, Richardson Highway Planning and Environmental Linkage Plan, and relevant Fairbanks North Star Borough transportation and land use plans should all be considered in this task. An assessment of current safety plans/policies/guidelines/standards should be evaluated. Military and private industry plans should also be included as part of this assessment."

Area of Study: The corridor consists of the following route:

- Beginning at Tetlin Junction (Alaska Highway MP 1307) to Delta Junction (MP 1422).
- Richardson Highway from Delta Junction to the intersection of Robert Mitchell Expressway in Fairbanks.
- Mitchell Expressway west to Peger Road.
- Peger Road north to Johansen Expressway.
- Johansen Expressway east to Steese Highway.
- Steese Highway north to Fish Creek Road and Fort Knox Mine.

Documents Assessed

** Document added in updated draft at suggestion of TAC members during March 21, 2023 meeting.*

Document Name	Agency	Year
Fairbanks Air Quality Plan	Fairbanks North Star Borough/ Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	In progress
* Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Roads Plan	Fairbanks North Star Borough	In progress
* Metropolitan Transportation Plan – 2045 in Motion	Fairbanks Area Surface Transportation (FAST) Planning	2023
Alaska Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan & Freight Plan Alaska Moves 2050	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities	2023
* Fairbanks Road/Rail Crossing Reduction/Realignment Plan	FAST Planning and Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities	2021
Fairbanks Non-Motorized Transportation Plan – Connect Fairbanks	FAST Planning	2020
* Native Village of Tetlin Community Plan 2020	Native Village of Tetlin in partnership with Tanana Chiefs Conference	2020
* Tanacross Community Plan	Tanacross IRA (Indian Reorganization Act) Council in partnership with Tanana Chiefs Conference	2020
FMATS Freight Mobility Plan	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and FMATS	2019
Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan	Fairbanks North Star Borough	2019
FNSB Eielson Air Force Base Regional Growth Plan	Fairbanks North Star Borough	2018
Alaska State Rail Plan	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities	2016
* Richardson Highway/Steese Expressway Corridor Planning and Environmental Linkages Study Report (Public Review Draft)	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities	2015
* Delta Bison Interim Management Plan	Alaska Department of Fish and Game Division of Wildlife Conservation	2012
Interior Alaska Transportation Plan	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities	2010
* North Richardson Highway Scenic Byway Corridor Partnership Plan	North Richardson Highway Scenic Byway Communities with assistance from the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities	2009
* Fairbanks North Star Borough Regional Comprehensive Plan	Fairbanks North Star Borough	2005

Plan Descriptions

Fairbanks Air Quality Plan (in progress)

The Fairbanks Air Quality Plan identifies potential control measures and strategies, including rules and regulations that could be implemented to reduce air pollutant emissions from industrial facilities, commercial processes, on and off-road motor vehicles, and other sources.

Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Roads Plan (in progress)

The purpose of this plan is to evaluate and update the 1991 Comprehensive Roads Plan's vision, goals, strategies, actions road corridors, and functional classifications. The process of updating the plan includes: understanding how the borough has and is projected to grow and change along with related challenges and opportunities for a future roads network; taking advantage of new and improved data on things like permafrost, wetlands, and other topographical features; and sharing examples of successes and lesson learned from the 1991 Plan and related roads policies.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan – 2045 in Motion (2023)

This plan guides transportation network improvements for motor vehicles, transit, pedestrians, bicyclists, and freight users. It lays out a long-range vision for the transportation system in the urbanized area of the Fairbanks North Star Borough, including Fairbanks and North Pole.

Alaska Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan & Freight Plan (Alaska Moves 2050) (2023)

Alaska's Long-Range Transportation Plan and Freight Plan (LRTP/FP) takes a comprehensive approach to clearly map out our future transportation goals and priorities. The LRTP/FP will include a long-range vision, policies, and implementation actions that will guide Alaska's transportation system for the next 25 years.

Fairbanks Road/Rail Crossing Reduction/Realignment Plan (2021)

The Fairbanks Road/Rail Crossing Reduction/Realignment Plan (Plan) is to serve as a near term planning document that will enable FAST Planning and partnering agencies, including the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), to: implement a more efficient and effective approach to integrate road/rail crossing elements into the larger multi-modal and intermodal transportation framework; address at-grade rail/road crossings to relieve congestions on the roadways; improve network safety and efficiency.

Fairbanks Non-Motorized Transportation Plan – Connect Fairbanks (2020)

Connect Fairbanks is a regional nonmotorized transportation plan. It outlines policy, programmatic, and infrastructure improvements to increase the number of Fairbanks area residents walking, cycling, and accessing transit and improve the safety and comfort of those who already do.

Native Village of Tetlin Community Plan (2020)

Tetlin's Community Plan includes an overview of the community including information regarding its history, culture, population, infrastructure, transportation, subsistence, cultural well-being, and economy. This plan also includes a detailed list of community priorities, in addition to strategies and steps that the Native Village of Tetlin will take to achieve them. None of the plan's priorities or items in the action plan are specifically tied to the Alaska Highway or corridor. The plan mentions that some seasonal employment opportunities in the mining industry are available to village residents.

Tanacross Community Plan (2020)

Tanacross IRA Council partnered with Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC), Planning and Development (P&D) program to prepare this community plan. The Tanacross Community Plan is designed to continually be updated as the goals and objectives identified in the community plan are accomplished. The goals and objectives included in this plan reflect the top priorities identified by Tanacross' community members and are used to plan future projects and guide future development. The plan does not specifically mention or address the Alaska or Richardson Highways except to note that Tanacross is unique in that it is located on the road system (unlike many Interior villages) and residents rely on the proximity of Tok and Fairbanks via the highways for goods and services.

FMATS Freight Mobility Plan (2019)

The Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System (FMATS) and the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) have teamed together to develop the Freight Mobility Plan (FMP). This plan has been designed to: Assess existing conditions; Identify freight goals, objectives, and performance measures; Quantify existing and future freight flows; Identify potential freight corridors and development zones; Make recommendations to improve freight mobility; and Document an implementation action plan.

Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan (2019)

This plan serves as a community resource and guide for short and long-term housing, transportation, utilities, recreation, and commercial needs. The plan was developed in response to rapid growth in the project area and the anticipated arrival of two squadrons of F-35A fighter jets at Eielson Air Force Base, expected to bring approximately 3,300 new residents to the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB); the plan is written to guide development during and following this growth.

FNSB Eielson AFB Regional Growth Plan (2018)

The Fairbanks North Star Borough sought and secured a grant from the U.S. Department of Defense, Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) to develop this Regional Growth Plan (RGP) toward assessing and preparing the FNSB community for the benefits and potential impacts of the F-35 Beddown. The RGP includes: a robust review of current and projected needs of incoming F-35 families, and existing and other future FNSB residents; a summary of existing programs, services and infrastructure, and anticipated gaps; and recommended strategies for addressing gaps.

Alaska State Rail Plan (2016)

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has developed this State Rail Plan to formulate a vision for rail in Alaska as well as guide the State's rail freight and passenger transportation planning activities and project development plans over the next 20 years.

Richardson Highway/Steese Expressway Corridor Planning and Environmental Linkages Study Report (Public Review Draft) (2015)

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) evaluated the Richardson-Steese corridor through the Fairbanks urbanized area to identify safety and mobility deficiencies and the most effective solutions to address these deficiencies. The Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) process was used to incorporate public and agency input and environmental resource information early in the transportation analysis to develop solutions that can be moved into implementation in a streamlined manner. The objectives of the PEL study were to: identify cost-effective corridor-wide improvements to address existing and projected traffic congestion and safety issues; conduct a preliminary assessment of environmental effects from proposed improvements; involve the public and agencies throughout the planning process;

document the planning process and decisions to support future project-level environmental reviews; and, streamline implementation of recommended improvements.

Delta Bison Interim Management Plan (2012)

This plan aims to outline the mission of how to maintain a healthy, free-ranging bison herd in the Delta Junction area that provides the greatest reasonable opportunity to hunt and view bison while also keeping conflicts between bison and private property owners to the minimum level possible using all management techniques available to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. This plan was meant to be an "interim" plan pending resolution of the issue of fencing.

Interior Alaska Transportation Plan (2010)

This document is a component of the Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan. The purpose of the Interior Alaska Transportation Plan (IATP) is to develop a 20-year regional transportation plan that guides future investments toward vital transportation projects consistent with the DOT&PF overall mission, addresses regional needs, and enhances the movement of people and goods within the Interior. As a necessary component of the Statewide Transportation Plan, the IATP analyzes railroads, highways, rural interconnecting roads and trails, aviation, and river transportation.

North Richardson Highway Scenic Byway Corridor Partnership Plan (2009)

A corridor partnership plan is developed locally and is intended to be a tool for communities along the byway. Its purpose is to identify the key features along the byway and methods to enhance and promote those features over time. A corridor partnership plan (CPP) is also required for state scenic byways seeking implementation grants or designation as a National Scenic Byway or All-American Road. This CPP was developed to address each of the 14 points recommended by the National Scenic Byways Program to ensure that the byway will be eligible for national byways grant funding or national designation if a local community chooses.

Fairbanks North Star Borough Regional Comprehensive Plan (2005)

The Fairbanks North Star (FNSB) Regional Comprehensive Plan provides the foundation for future growth coupled with responsible stewardship of major attributes of the community. The Plan addresses issues of land use, economic development, transportation and infrastructure, environment and community and human resources. The goals, strategies, and actions developed for each of these sections form the basis for ordinances and programs to guide land development and use. It is also a guide for responding to change in the community.

Areas of Alignment

This section highlights areas of alignment or similar goals within the agencies and planning documents that might be relevant to the Alaska-Richardson-Steese Corridor Action Plan and that were reviewed as part of this assessment. Illustrative quotes and excerpts help highlight these alignments and relationships among existing plans.

A. The Alaska, Richardson, and Steese highways are recognized on the local, state, and federal level as important transportation routes for economic development, resource development, and strategic defense.

- "Industrial use highways are defined by Alaska Statute 17 AAC 35.010 as routes with design features allowing them to accommodate long and/or heavy loads. In response to the Peak Gold deposit south of Tok, which will send trucks full of ore along the Alaska and Richardson Highways through Fairbanks and along the Steese Highway, DOT&PF is considering making at least part of this route an industrial use highway. This would help defray the cost of wear from approximately 80 ore trucks using these highways each day." – *Pg. 78, Alaska Moves 2050: Long Range Transportation Plan, Appendix D – Transportation and Freight Plan Technical Memorandum 2023.*
- "Improving regional connectivity means we need to provide more efficient transit options while maintaining freight activity and the transportation of goods to, from, and within the region." – *Pg. 7, Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2023.*
- "Freight facilities and routes are an integral part of an economically viable region. The Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) population is expected to grow to 125,184 by 2050. With this population growth, there will be an associated increase in local jobs and consumer spending. In addition, planned projects such as the Eielson Air Force Base (EAFB) expansion and potential projects such as the Alaska Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project have the potential to generate even more future freight activity in the Fairbanks area. Evaluating freight movement and mobility is critical to the area's future increased demand for freighting various goods to support their growing population and economic activity and will lead to more efficient multimodal transportation mobility and intermodal freight movements and connections." – *Pg. 44, Technical Memorandum #2, 2045 in Motion FAST Planning Metropolitan Plan Update 2023.*
- "STRAHNET (Strategic Highway Network) highways are important to the United States' strategic defense policy and provide defense access, continuity, and emergency capabilities for defense purposes. Alaska has nearly 1,400 miles of roadway on the STRAHNET, including elements of the Richardson Highway, Sterling Highway, Glenn Highway, and the Tok Cutoff Highway, among many others." –*Pg. 68, Alaska Moves 2050 – Transportation and Freight Technical Memorandum 2023.*
- "Unlike most Interior Alaska Athabascan villages, Tanacross is located on the road system. Tok, a town of about 1,400 with lodging, restaurants, and several convenient stores that offer a variety of goods, is located 12 miles south of Tanacross. Village residents can also drive to Fairbanks, 192 miles northwest of Tanacross, for a wide selection of goods and services. The drive along the Alaska Highway takes under four hours to drive one-way, on paved, two-lane roads; and then after passing Delta Junction, drivers reach the Richardson Highway." – *Pg. 28, Tanacross Community Plan 2020.*
- "The region's transportation network is a critical component of the local economy, and therefore, the preparation of the FMP (Freight Mobility Plan) is an important step that the region must take to adequately identify future freight mobility issues and develop the necessary long-term solutions." – *Pg. 2, FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019.*

- "Critical urban freight corridor routes (CUFC) are important freight corridors that provide connectivity to the National Highway Freight Network. Within the Fairbanks area, the CUFCs include: Van Horn from University Avenue to Cushman Street, South Cushman Street from Richardson Highway to Van Horn Road, Steese Highway from Johansen Expressway to Hagelbarger Avenue, Old Richardson Highway from Richardson Highway MP 351 to Petro Star Refinery, Peger Road from Johansen Expressway to Tria Road." – *Pg. 35, FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019.*
- "A regional truck route network should be assessed, implemented, signed, and enforced in the FMATS region as a means to concentrate heavy duty truck movements on selected roadways and corridors. While trucks use all roadways as needed, heavy duty truck movements should be focused on key regional freight routes to protect communities, increase safety, reduce neighborhood impacts, and alleviate bottlenecks. This FMP proposes a regional truck route network consisting of primary and secondary routes. The primary routes include Richardson Highway, Steese Highway, Van Horn Road, Peger Road, Airport Way, Geist Road, Old Richardson Highway, Johansen Expressway, Parks Highway/Mitchell Expressway, and South Cushman Street. … As part of the Designated Regional Truck Routes implementation strategy, freight corridor designation and design standards should be developed and implemented. Designated regional truck routes should not simply accommodate trucks; they should be designed for trucks. These standards will include pavement condition ratings, signage, and wayfinding, turning radii, corridor signalization, utility and signal pole location, landscaping, weight restrictions, trailer access, interaction with bicycle/pedestrian facilities, maintenance (wear and tear), and lighting, among others. Detailed design criteria for streets on the freight network should be included in the DOT&PF's Alaska Highway Preconstruction Manual. Designing for truck movements often requires balancing the needs of other, and sometimes competing, transportation modes." – *Pg. 82, FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019.*
- "The Richardson is the most important transportation corridor for vehicular travel between Fairbanks, North Pole and EAFB. Northern Region ADOT/PF and FNSB Planning staff indicate the Richardson Highway has more than enough capacity in the areas between Fairbanks and EAFB to absorb the additional traffic associated with the new F-35 growth in the FNSB." – *Pg. 129, Eielson Regional Growth Plan 2018.*
- "The Richardson-Steese corridor is primarily used by motorized vehicles, with passenger vehicles dominating the traffic stream. Traffic distribution is primarily passenger vehicles (93 percent) with approximately 7 percent heavy vehicles. The Richardson-Steese corridor also serves as a truck route, providing efficient movement of freight between Fairbanks and points north and east. Although only 8 percent of the traffic distribution is comprised of heavy vehicles, the corridor is a critical freight route supporting the oil fields on the North Slope." – *Pg. 32, Richardson Highway/Steese Expressway Corridor Planning & Environmental Linkages Study Report 2015.*
- "Priority within the corridor is for through traffic to accommodate higher volume through movements. Peak traffic volumes occur in the morning and evening commute time periods." – *Pg. 34, Richardson Highway/Steese Expressway Corridor Planning & Environmental Linkages Study Report 2015.*
- "Based on projected development needs, the most pertinent transportation issue currently facing the Interior region is the possibility of increased access needs for activities such as mining, tourism, and gas pipeline construction." – *Pg. 4, Interior Alaska Transportation Plan 2010.*
- "The economy along the Steese Highway relies on tourism, Fort Knox mine, and seasonal support for other mining operations in the area, sport hunting and subsistence." – *Pg. 98, Interior Alaska Transportation Plan 2010.*
- "The (North Richardson Highway Scenic Byway) is marketed nationally and internationally through existing tourism agencies tourism programs as well as by the byway communities. This strong

tourism-base has brought economic self-sufficiency to many communities along the North Richardson Highway Scenic Byway by ensuring a more stable tax base, sufficient year-round visitation, and more locally owned businesses." – *Pg. 5, North Richardson Highway Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan 2009.*

B. Communities and agencies have developed goals, strategies, actions, and recommendations that affect near and long-term planning for the corridor.

- The Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Roads Plan identifies several goals, actions, and strategies relevant to the Alaska-Richardson-Steese Corridor Action Plan including:
    - Develop and implement the functional classification map to better manage access, reflect local land use patterns, and integrate multiple transportation modes.
    - Classify roadways for access management and right of way dedication by their anticipated future function, based on projections of land use, population growth, and Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT).
    - Consider the future trip generation potential of key destinations and new developments when siting and classifying future road corridors in the functional classification map.
    - Strengthen economic vitality with a transportation network that supports a diversified, sustainable, and thriving local economy in the FNSB and Interior region.
    - Support the development of an adequate transportation network to serve commercial business activities in the borough. – *Pgs. 9 and 15, Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Roads Plan (in progress.)*
- "Recommendations (under Freight section): Provide efficient freight transportation through the corridor by reducing congestion, minimizing at-grade railroad crossings, and reducing vertical clearance obstructions." – *Pg. 51, Richardson Highway/Steese Expressway Corridor Planning & Environmental Linkages Study Report 2015.*
- "In the Transportation Analysis section of the plan, several recommendations were presented. These recommendations will be discussed at the public meetings in March and include recommendations for all of the transportation modes. Examples include the following:
    - Implement the state's Highway Safety Improvement Plan.
    - Continue to improve the state's pavement management system program.
    - Improve sight distances at wayside entry and exit points.
    - Eliminate several at-grade crossings" – *Pg. 370, Interior Alaska Transportation Plan 2010.*
- "Minimize and mitigate road network impacts on the natural environment and FNSB community by supporting DOT&PF and FAST Planning to establish and implement official heavy industry and trucking through-routes away from areas planned or zoned as residential or commercial." – *Pg. 10, North Richardson Highway Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan 2009.*
- "National Scenic Byways Program (NSBP) Corridor Management Plan Criteria #8: A plan to accommodate Commerce while still maintaining safety." – *Pg. 4, North Richardson Highway Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan 2009.*
- The Fairbanks North Star Borough Regional Comprehensive Plan (2005) identifies several goals, actions, and strategies relevant to the Alaska-Richardson-Steese Corridor Action Plan including:
    - To strengthen and expand the existing economy. - *Pg. 7*
    - Develop and maintain Fairbanks as the transportation hub for the Interior. - *Pg. 7*
    - Emphasize development and expansion of mining, local manufacturing, agriculture, tourism, convention, hospitality, and forest-related businesses. - *Pg. 7*

- To have a safe, efficient, multi-modal transportation system that anticipates community growth. - *Pg. 7*
- Encourage location, design and maintenance of roads based on their function and community needs. - *Pg. 8*
- Support multi-modal transportation linkages. - *Pg. 8*
- Make the Borough more pedestrian-friendly in urban and suburban areas and safer in rural and remote areas. - *Pg. 8*
- Integrate safe multiuse trail circulation into road networks and maintain multiuse trails for commuter and recreational purposes. - *Pg. 8*
- Support and maintain coordination with the Alaska Railroad. - *Pg. 8*
- To have sufficient public utilities and infrastructure to meet existing and future demands. - *Pg. 23*
- Appropriate infrastructures that support all land use categories. - *Pg. 23*
- Continue developing infrastructure that enhances the economic potential of mining developments, including adequate transportation into and out of the Borough. - *Pg. 23*

C. Maintaining safety – including passenger and commercial vehicle, public transportation, bicycle, and pedestrian safety - along the corridor roadways is addressed in several plans and emphasizes how future planning and projects may improve safety.

- "Freight modes continue to be a leader in the deployment of connected and automated vehicle technology nationwide (for example, truck platoons in the Lower 48 that use connectivity technology and automated driving support systems to enable vehicles to drive very close together). Features that promise to improve the safety and efficiency of freight movement are already being introduced." – *Pg. 23, Alaska Moves 2050 Statewide Freight Plan 2023.*
- "Overall, commercial vehicle crashes have significantly declined since 2016. Fatal crashes involving trucks have remained low and stable." – *Pg. 50, Alaska Moves 2050 Statewide Freight Plan 2023.*
- "Freight bottlenecks occur primarily in Anchorage, Wasilla, and Fairbanks and include segments of the Glenn, Parks, and Johansen Express/Steese Highways and other arterial roadways. DOT&PF and its planning partners improved performance at previously identified freight bottlenecks between 2017 and 2021." – *Pg. 51, Alaska Moves 2050 Statewide Freight Plan 2023.*
- "Community goals are at the heart of the 2045 In Motion MTP. These goals, originally established in the Envision 2045 MTP and updated in this edition of the 2045 in Motion MPT, have been modified to reflect new state and federal requirements. Safe, well-maintained roadways for vehicles; keeping freight moving (the region's lifeline; broadening our options: walking, bicycling, and transit. 2045 in Motion aims to resolve major freight bottlenecks and reduce at-grade rail crossings that hamper roadway safety and reliability while continuously assessing new needs that arise from the altered freight picture." - *Pg. 8-10, 2045 in Motion FAST Planning Metropolitan Plan Update 2023.*
- The 2021 Fairbanks Road/Rail Crossing Reduction/Realignment Plan identifies crossings in the corridor as priorities for improvement: Richardson Highway (3 Mile) Crossing (planned ADOT&PF project) and Richardson Highway (12 Mile/Peridot) Crossing – *Pg. 41-43, Fairbanks Road/Rail Crossing Reduction/Realignment Plan 2021.*
- "Seek to develop and maintain the corridor infrastructure to ensure the byway is safely traveled year-round." – *Pg. 6, North Richardson Highway Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan 2009.*

D. While mobile emissions are not considered a key contributor to air pollution in the Fairbanks area, plans still emphasize ways to reduce air pollution impacts of commercial vehicles.

- "Mobile Emissions - Alaska also has an anti-idle program. Alaska concluded that, due to relatively light traffic congestion in Fairbanks, low population and employment density, any additional transportation control measures would provide limited emission reduction benefits." – *Fairbanks Air Quality Plan, Air Plan Partial Approval and Partial Disapproval (in progress.)*
- "Freight Mobility Plan Recommended Policies. Anti-Idling Policy – It is the policy of FAST Planning to reduce the amount of idling by heavy vehicles and passenger vehicles, to reduce transportation-related emissions and improve air quality throughout the region. The policy should include the identification of best practices so entities that are not subject to the policy may identify ways to voluntarily reduce their idling. The policy should coincide with partner agency and organization efforts, such as the ARRC anti-idling policy implemented through the Locomotive Idle Reduction Program." – *Pg. 13, Technical Memorandum #5, 2045 in Motion FAST Planning Metropolitan Plan Update 2023.*
- "Goal 3: Protect the environment, improve air quality, and promote energy efficiency. Objectives: Minimize noise and air pollution impacts of freight-intensive land uses to the extent practical. Reduce air quality impacts on primary truck routes by considering signal-timing changes to reduce truck idling. Provide incentives for freight operators, companies, and organizations to use more fuel-efficient vehicles in their fleets." – *Pg. 11, FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019.*
- "Most of the region's air quality challenges are tied to emissions from heating buildings, but reducing auto emissions is also helpful. Options include winter anti-idling programs, diesel I/M inspection programs, and adding plug-ins to large parking lots." – *Pg. 149, Eielson Regional Growth Plan 2018.*
- Under "Environmental" section, the traffic analysis identified the following deficiencies that need to be addressed to provide safe and efficient transportation within the corridor
    - Address traffic congestion to improve air quality.
    - Traffic congestion at signalized intersections and trucks/buses stopping at railroad crossings result in increased idling and higher vehicle emissions.
    - The central portion of the corridor is in an area that is under a maintenance plan for CO.
    - The entire corridor is in an area that does not meet federal air quality standards for PM2.5." – *Pg. 53, Richardson Highway/Steese Expressway Corridor Planning & Environmental Linkages Study Report 2015.*

Areas of Potential Tension, Misalignment, or Conflict

This section highlights areas of potential tension, conflict, or concern within the agencies and planning documents reviewed as part of this assessment. Illustrative quotes and excerpts help highlight these potential misalignments of existing plans.

A. Existing and increasing commercial truck traffic in the corridor poses safety risks, maintenance requirements, infrastructure needs, and funding challenges. Additional pressures, like climate change and workforce shortages also pose ongoing challenges.

A1. Safety Risks and Concerns

- "The lack of truck parking on rural stretches of interstates has led large trucks to park along the sides of highways, which can create safety hazards." – *Pg. 51, Alaska Move 2050 Statewide Freight Plan 2023.*
- The 2019 Freight Mobility Study identified the following "Existing Freight Deficiencies" related to highway freight:
    - At-grade railroad crossings can delay freight movement through a) trucks waiting for trains to pass or b) required stopping at rail crossings for hazardous materials (e.g., motor fuel tankers).
    - Bottlenecks in the roadway system and associated congestion are found throughout the FAST-Planning area. Common bottleneck and congestion issues include insufficient queue lane storage and traffic signal phasing.
    - Roadway geometry is inadequate for large trucks in several areas around Fairbanks. Geometric issues include challenging left-turn maneuvers for oversize or double trailer configurations.
    - Traffic volumes make access onto major roadways difficult for freight traffic that needs time to get up to speed and requires large gaps in traffic.
    - Overhead signal mast arm clearance has been an issue that is being systematically addressed by DOT&PF. Oversize vehicles/loads have had to take longer, out-of-the-way routes to avoid low clearance signal mast arms. – *Pg. 46, Technical Memorandum #2, 2045 in Motion FAST Planning Metropolitan Plan Update 2023*.
- "Freight bottlenecks and congestion exist at the following locations and are expected to degrade as travel demands increase over time. Descriptions of the needs are provided in the FAST Planning FMP [only those pertaining to this corridor project are included here]:
    - Mitchell Expressway and Peger Road Intersection
    - Richardson Highway and Old Richardson Highway (12-mile) Intersection
    - Richardson Highway/ARRC 3-Mile Crossing
    - Richardson Highway and Peridot Street Intersection" - *Pg. 8, Technical Memorandum #3, 2045 in Motion FAST Planning Metropolitan Plan Update 2023.*
- "It was also noted during the stakeholder engagement process that bus routes serving several of the Salcha-Badger Road area schools, particularly the North Pole and Salcha schools, include bus stops on the Richardson Highway which is a concern due to the lack of bus stop waiting areas, lighting and vehicular speeds." – *Pg. 124 (Appendices), Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019.*
- "While the highway (Richardson) itself has surplus capacity, improvements are needed for safety and access, including better intersections, bridges, and pedestrian facilities. As explained by State staff, and as evident from planned projects, the State is moving toward a more access restrictive approach for the Richardson Highway." – *Pg. 129, Eielson Regional Growth Plan 2018.*
- "The portion of the Richardson-Steese corridor within the Fairbanks urbanized area has:
    - higher-volume cross streets;
    - signalized intersections;
    - higher motorized and non-motorized traffic volumes;
    - more congested peak-hour conditions;
    - traffic, access, and safety deficiencies;
    - narrower and more congested rights-of-way due to roadside elements, such as utilities, railroad crossing gates, signal poles, and signposts; and
    - a high level of use for shorter, non-commuting-type trips." – *Pg. 4, Richardson Highway/Steese Expressway Corridor Planning & Environmental Linkages Study Report 2015.*

- Comments and feedback from Freight Industry Representatives:
    - Truck and freight traffic through the corridor will continue to increase as a result of continued development on the North Slope.
    - Trucks hauling hazardous materials have to stop at the railroad crossings, increasing the risk of rear-end crashes." – *Pg. 48, Richardson Highway/Steese Expressway Corridor Planning & Environmental Linkages Study Report 2015.*
- "The traffic analysis identified the following deficiencies that need to be addressed to provide safe and efficient freight transportation within the Richardson/Steese corridor:
    - Improve the efficiency of freight movements through the corridor.
    - Freight and oversized load movements through the corridor are inefficient because large loads must divert around structural impediments such as traffic signal mast arms.
    - Non-exempt freight trucks must completely stop at railroad track crossings, slowing freight movements through the corridor.
    - Insufficient distance between the railroad crossing and left-lane exit at Old Richardson Highway prevents trucks from using this exit to access the industrial area south of the highway." – *Pg. 52, Richardson Highway/Steese Expressway Corridor Planning & Environmental Linkages Study Report 2015.*

A2. Infrastructure Impacts

- "New mining and natural resource extraction sites, such as Ambler Mine and Peak Gold Deposit in Tok, will increase truck traffic on existing facilities. Increased heavy truck traffic can accelerate roadway deterioration." – *Pg. 54, Alaska Move 2050 Statewide Freight Plan 2023.*
- "There are 237 at-grade rail crossings; 162 are across public facilities, which can cause freight delays." – *Pg. 54, Alaska Move 2050 Statewide Freight Plan 2023.*
- "Seasonal weight restrictions can temporarily reduce loads to as low as 50 percent of the legal maximum allowable weight. These restrictions impact both freight and construction contractors." – *Pg. 54, Alaska Move 2050 Statewide Freight Plan 2023.*
- "Along with the natural resource industries, Alaska's four military installations pose unique freight situations and challenges. Moving heavy and oversized loads as efficiently as possible across the network will continue to be a priority. Roads and bridges along key freight corridors will need to be designed to accommodate these movements, which can accelerate pavement rutting and deterioration." – *Pg. 63, Alaska Move 2050 Statewide Freight Plan 2023.*
- "Several planned large-scale economic development projects *[The Peak Gold deposit south of Tok is specifically named]* have the potential to influence population, economic growth, employment, and transportation needs, if they secure funding and are developed. It will be important to consider the impacts these projects may have on the transportation system, which may include increased vehicular and freight traffic (roadway, marine and rail); pavement and bridge condition degradation; travel time impacts; diminished capacity and service; and connectivity between modes." – *Pg. 40, Alaska Move 2050 Transportation Assessment 2023.*
- "There is a community desire to have reduced speeds and potentially channelization (turn lanes) on the Richardson Highway as it passes through Salcha to improve safety for vehicles turning into the community and for pedestrians crossing the Richardson Highway and waiting at school bus stops." – *Pg. 134 (Appendices) Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019.*
- "Richardson Highway/ARRC 3-Mile Crossing – This location has a history of crashes that can be partially attributed to the relatively high volume of fuel trucks and school buses that must stop at the crossing. According to the Richardson Highway MP 359 Interchange and Railroad Grade Separated

Facility website, vehicles that must stop at the railroad crossing (including freight traffic hauling) sometimes have difficulty maneuvering thought three lane changes in less than half a mile to use the existing left-hand exit." – *Pg. 50, FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019*.

- "In the 99705 area … additional increment of traffic combined with other sources of growth, is likely to create pressure for upgrading currently unmaintained residential and collector roads, and the possible need for improvements at key intersections, particularly along the Richardson Highway and Badger Road." – *Pg. 125, Eielson Regional Growth Plan 2018*.
- "Rapid commercial development has occurred over the last 15 years in the area west of the Steese Expressway, in the Bentley Trust area. Commercial uses in this area include major regional retail attractions, such as Walmart, Fred Meyer, Sportsman's Warehouse, Home Depot, Lowes and Walgreens, combined with a wide variety of restaurants, small retail stores, hotels, and industrial facilities. The rapid growth in this area has increased traffic congestion and resulted in the need for upgrades to and expansion of the collector and arterial road network." – *Pg. 12, Richardson Highway/Steese Expressway Corridor Planning & Environmental Linkages Study Report 2015*.
- From the results of the traffic analysis for the major corridor intersections. "The following conclusions can be drawn from these results:
    - Morning (AM) peak-hour operations are generally worse than evening (PM) peak-hour operations throughout the corridor.
    - The Airport Way, 3rd Street, Trainor Gate Road, and Johansen Expressway intersections currently fail (LOS [level of service] D or worse) during one or both peak hours of the day.
    - With the exception of the 10th Avenue and Badger Road intersections, all of the remaining corridor intersections are expected to fail (LOS D or worse) by 2030 during one or both peak hours of the day." – *Pg. 35, Richardson Highway/Steese Expressway Corridor Planning & Environmental Linkages Study Report 2015*.

A3. Limited Funding for Maintenance or Improvements

- "Natural resource development and mining extraction are expected to grow by over 15 percent over the next decade. With growth in the freight-dependent sector, Alaska's freight transportation system must be prepared to accommodate large, heavy loads of metallic and mineral ores for use in manufacturing and processing in the state and for export to other states and nations. Reductions in oil production also impact Alaska's economy, as it is strongly dependent on the industry. This could lead to shortfalls in funding needed to improve freight transportation efficiency and connectivity." – *Pg. 23, Alaska Move 2050 Statewide Freight Plan 2023*.
- "The state has explored alternative funding sources, such as user fees and VMT-based (Vehicle Miles Traveled) charges. However, the high cost of constructing and maintaining highways, the relatively low user base, and the heavy industrial component to many highways has presented a challenge to these approaches. Given the challenges in implementing user-based fees and the state's fiscal constraints, alternative opportunities for funding major transportation infrastructure projects are being explored, including the following: Various industries have demonstrated a willingness to work with the state to fund transportation infrastructure they use. … Innovative financing may become an increasingly important tool for funding major transportation infrastructure projects, especially in remote and less-populated areas in which developable resources exist." – *Pg. 1, Alaska Moves 2050, Financial Assessment 2023*.
- "Many of these bottleneck and congestion points are known issues in the Fairbanks area. The 2045 MTP includes projects to address these problems. While these planned roadway improvements will

help, there is insufficient funding to implement all the needed roadway improvements." – *Pg. 51, FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019.*

- "Fairbanks' winter climate conditions present a challenge to freight mobility. During the winter, road conditions need to be maintained to maintain safe and efficient operations. Poor road conditions can result in delays in getting goods to their destination. Budgetary restrictions may limit the amount of maintenance that can be performed. Maintenance activities are largely funded by the State of Alaska. When the amount of state funding decreases, so does road maintenance. While DOT&PF receives funding from the federal government, those funds must be used for construction projects and preventative maintenance only." – *Pg. 57, FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019.*
- "Changing State Finances – State fiscal challenges are reducing State funding for transportation capital improvement projects, affecting both projects wholly funded by the State, and the ability of the State to gain available federal funding which require a relatively small (typically 10 percent) State match. To fill this gap, the (FNSB) Borough needs to begin generating more funding at the local level, so it can leverage state and federal funds, and begin covering a larger share of the costs for ongoing highway construction and maintenance." – *Pg. 124, Eielson Regional Growth Plan 2018.*
- "Without an EPA approved air quality plan and active measures to improve air quality, the FNSB stands to lose vital federal funding that helps improve the region's transportation system." – *Pg. 124, Eielson Regional Growth Plan 2018.*

A4. Climate, Weather, and Wildlife Impacts

- "Increasing frequency and severity of climate and weather events increases the risk of roadway incidents. Damaged or blocked highways delay the movement of freight." – *Pg. 54, Alaska Move 2050 Statewide Freight Plan 2023.*
- "Fairbanks' unique transportation needs: Winter conditions and the need for ice and snow removal continue to be the biggest barriers to driving, biking, walking, and taking transit. These conditions can also reduce visibility, increasing the chance of crashes. Between 2016 and 2020, over 50 percent of area crashes happened between November and February. Efforts like the Seasonal Mobility Task Force and the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities' winter maintenance priority policy help ensure snow is removed from the most heavily used facilities so people can go where they need safely and reliably." – *Pg. 4, Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2023.*
- "The lack of redundancy in Alaska's transportation system makes resiliency a top priority. Major events (e.g., landslides, avalanches, earthquakes), climate change and environmental impacts (e.g., melting permafrost, subsidence, erosion, flooding), or infrastructure damage could lead to downtime and closures. These delay the movement of essential goods and services to communities or essential intermodal connections." – *Pg. 23, Alaska Move 2050 Statewide Freight Plan 2023.*
- "Alaska's transportation system is subject to extreme weather conditions (e.g., ice and snow) that cause variations in subsurface temperatures and overall roadway conditions. In fall, the ground beneath highways begins to freeze. In spring, it begins to thaw. Through these processes, pavements become less stable, and highways are prone to damage by heavy and overweight vehicles. Per state regulations, DOT&PF may restrict or prohibit vehicle operations on a highway if it is at risk of being seriously damaged. Seasonal weight restrictions are commonly imposed between March and June." – *Pg. 88, Alaska Move 2050 Transportation Assessment 2023.*
- "Fairbanks' unique transportation needs: Much of Fairbanks' transportation infrastructure is built on permafrost. Permafrost reaches temperatures close to freezing in Alaska's interior and is especially vulnerable to thawing. The costs of maintaining infrastructure affected by permafrost thaw are projected to increase by 10 to 20 percent by 2030, and by another 10 to 12 percent by 2080.1 At-risk

structures include the Alaska Railroad and the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System—both of which pass through the Fairbanks North Star Borough." – *Pg. 4, Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2023.*

- "Fairbanks' winter climate conditions will continue to present a challenge to freight mobility in the future. During winter, road conditions need to be managed to maintain safe and efficient operations. Poor road conditions will result in delays in moving goods efficiently to their final destinations. Budgetary restrictions also may limit the amount of maintenance that can be performed into the future. As indicated by long term trends, winters are changing in the Fairbanks area. Historically, snow has been the primary winter concern. In recent years, ice has been more of a concern. Road design and maintenance needs will need to continue to adapt to meet these changing and evolving weather conditions into the future." – *Pg. 57, FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019.*
- "Asphalt thickness in the Richardson-Steese corridor is generally 2 to 2.5 inches, although borings of the Steese Expressway occasionally encountered asphalt 4 inches thick, and asphalt patches up to 16 inches thick. The asphalt pavement is underlain by 3 to 5 feet of fill comprised of poorly to well-graded gravels with sand. ... The groundwater table can fluctuate seasonally by several feet and may be directly affected by surface water bodies, such as the Chena River. Most reports indicate that thaw instability and settlement are high concerns across the Fairbanks region. Liquefaction is also a concern due to high silt and water contents." – *Pg. 18, Richardson Highway/Steese Expressway Corridor Planning & Environmental Linkages Study Report 2015.*
- "Impacts to or fragmentation of the high-value wetlands and bird habitat near the northwest corner of Steese Expressway and Johansen Expressway should be avoided." – *Pg. 46, Richardson Highway/Steese Expressway Corridor Planning & Environmental Linkages Study Report 2015.*
- "During Working Group meetings there was extensive discussion about whether fences should be built to enclose DBH either temporarily or permanently, or whether fences would be constructed around private lands to prevent bison access and damage. The Working Group reviewed the following fencing alternatives and issues: (A) Fences could affect public access on local highways and other roads. The AKDOTPF would have to be consulted and approve fences that affect state highway usage. (F) Fences could complicate problems with wildlife on highways." – *Pg. 10, Delta Bison Interim Management Plan 2012.*

A5. Workforce Shortages

- "Much of Alaska's workforce and wages are directly linked to freight-dependent industries; however, these industries are forecasting employment declines. … workforce shortages ranging from engineers, to drivers, to maintenance personnel are hindering opportunities for freight facilities to accommodate growing freight demand and new innovative technologies." – *Pg. 23, Alaska Move 2050 Statewide Freight Plan 2023.*

B. The Alaska State Rail Plan of 2016 offers several counterpoints to using only truck for freight movement along the corridor. *(All excerpts below are from the Alaska State Rail Plan 2016.)*

- "In addition to employment benefits, the availability of rail transport provides cost and logistical advantages. The presence of rail is especially important in areas where mining, military, and other industries move heavy loads of freight over long distances. Rail is more fuel efficient than truck on the basis of fuel burned per ton-mile transported. … The movement of freight by rail also improves safety and functionality of the state's highway system." – *Pg. iii*

- "The key rail freight issues and recommendations expressed during the outreach included the need to, 'Diversify the commodities carried. Explore future rail extensions/new railroads to support resource development.'" – *Pg., iv*
- "Objective – Ensure that the rail mode of transportation gets full and balanced consideration in state and regional freight and passenger transportation planning and other transportation related activities." – *Pg. v*
- "To implement the state's vision, the project team identified the following preliminary goals based on a review of existing plans; coordination with DOT&PF, the Steering Committee, and Technical Advisory Group (TAG); and a review of all the public input. … Support rail extensions to new locations to serve energy and resource development, general economic development, import/export, and defense needs as well as passenger service that supports personal travel and the tourism industry. Support Corridors to Resources: Corridors to Resources are an important part of Alaska's resources because they support economic and community development as well as emphasize intermodal connectivity. Corridors can include road, rail, pipelines, and utilities such as transmission lines." – *Pg. v*
- "Moving materials by truck has a negative impact on the existing highway system and on communities adjacent to the highway. The state should work with project sponsors to determine how rail can meet project needs." – *Pg. 7*
- "Rail transportation is considered one of the most energy-efficient modes of transportation used to move freight. Trains are typically 2.5 times more fuel efficient than trucks." – *Pg. 64*
- "Extending Transportation Facilities to Provide Surface Access to Resource Development Opportunities. While it may be less expensive initially to construct a road than a railroad, the cost of transporting bulk freight and resources by rail typically is lower on a per-ton mile basis than by road. Hence, for resource movement that is anticipated to involve large quantities of resources over a lengthy time period, rail should be thoroughly considered. The relative advantages and disadvantages of each transportation mode must be considered to ensure the best transportation access is provided to each resource area. Over time, the relative advantages may change as each area and its resources develop and mature. In long-term strategic planning for surface transportation, it would benefit the state to think in terms of transportation corridors as opposed to one specific mode. These corridors could then accommodate a single or multiple modes: roads, railroads, pipelines, and electrical and communication lines." – *Pg. 120*

Summary of Planned or Proposed Projects

This section provides a snapshot of planned or proposed projects along the project area, as identified in reviewed plans. The list presented below does not necessarily represent all potential and planned projects in the study area.

Project *(*in multiple plans)*	**Description**	**Plan(s)**	**Status or Priority** *(as defined in the plan)*	**Notes**
Steese Hwy/Chena Hot Springs Road Ramp Termini Roundabouts	Construct roundabouts at the Steese Highway and Chena Hot Springs Road Interchange. Work will include intersection reconstruction and improvements, roadside hardware, drainage improvements, ADA improvements, and utilities.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019	High	Immediate Term (0-10 Years) Freight Projects Identified for Implementation
Steese Highway MP 11-20 Rehabilitation and Widening	Rehabilitate the Steese Highway past Fox to support traffic and freight. Project will include widened shoulders, improved drainage, and intersection improvements	Alaska Moves 2050 – Freight Investment Plan 2023	Not on STIP (see note)	"The primary purpose of this listing is for documentation and future reference in the event additional federal dollars become available in the future."
Farmers Loop Road Interchange (at Steese Expressway)	Construct a grade-separated interchange at the intersection of Steese Expressway and Farmers Loop Road. Realign adjacent accesses as necessary to accommodate the selected interchange configuration. Construct improvements at the intersection of Farmers Loop Road and Farmers Loop Spur.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019	Low	Long-Term (16+ Years) Freight Projects Identified for Implementation
Old Steese Highway/Farmers Loop Road	Investigate potential improvements to make this unsignalized intersection crossing more comfortable for non-motorized users.	Metropolitan Transportation Plan – 2045 in Motion	Medium Rand (2028-2034)	FAST Planning Project
Steese Expressway/ Johansen Expressway Interchange *	Construct a grade-separated interchange at the intersection of Steese Expressway and Johansen Expressway. Realign adjacent access as necessary to accommodate the selected interchange configuration. Work includes a new bridge.	Alaska Moves 2050 – Freight Investment Plan 2023	Not currently on STIP (see note)	"The primary purpose of this listing is for documentation and future reference in the event additional federal dollars become available in the future."

Project *(*in multiple plans)*	Description	Plan(s)	Status or Priority *(as defined in the plan)*	Notes
	Reconstruct the intersection of the Steese Expressway with the Johansen Expressway, including adjacent access. Project will include bridge work, roadside hardware, drainage improvements, ADA improvements, and utilities.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019	Medium	Immediate Term (0-10 Years) Freight Projects Identified for Implementation
	Construct a grade separated interchange at the intersection of the Steese Expressway and Johansen Expressway. Realign adjacent access as necessary to accommodate the selected interchange configuration.	Metropolitan Transportation Plan – 2045 in Motion	Short Range (2023-2027)	Non-FAST Planning Projects
Old Steese Highway/Johansen Expressway	Install guide signs to direct northbound non-motorized travelers on the Old Steese Highway to the shared-use path along the Johansen Expressway	Fairbanks Non-Motorized Transportation Plan-Connect Fairbanks 2020	High	FMATS TIP Projects – bicycle and pedestrian projects
Steese Improvements	Reconstruct the Old Steese Highway from the Johansen to the terminus of the Wendell Avenue Bridge project and provide separated bicycle facilities, sidewalk, and transit facilities. Alternatively, bicyclists and pedestrians can share a path; however, use of a sidewalk in this area for bicycle transit is not recommended.	Fairbanks Non-Motorized Transportation Plan-Connect Fairbanks 2020	In Process	FMATS TIP Projects – bicycle and pedestrian projects
Johansen Expressway Interchanges	Very long-term growth in the Fairbanks area may require construction of an interchange on the Johansen Expressway to eliminate the at grade intersections at Old Steese Highway and at Hunter Drive.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019	Low	Long-Term (16+ Years) Freight Projects Identified for Implementation
Johansen Expressway Widening	Widen Johansen Expressway to accommodate additional westbound traffic between Steese Expressway and College Road.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019	Medium	Medium-Term (11–15 Years) Freight Projects Identified for Implementation
Johansen Expressway/Danby Street Interchange	Construction of a grade-separated intersection to handle long-term traffic growth and improve safety on the Johansen Expressway.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019	Medium	Medium-Term (11–15 Years) Freight Projects Identified for Implementation

Project *(*in multiple plans)*	Description	Plan(s)	Status or Priority *(as defined in the plan)*	Notes
Mitchell Expressway Parallel Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities	Construct bicycle and pedestrian facilities parallel to Mitchell Expressway	Fairbanks Non-Motorized Transportation Plan-Connect Fairbanks 2020	Low	FMATS TIP Projects – bicycle and pedestrian projects
Mitchell Expressway Interchange, Stages II and III	Construction of two more grade-separated interchanges on the Mitchell Expressway to provide for long-term growth in the Fairbanks areas and help to implement to original "Ultimate Freeway" status of the Richardson Highway/Mitchell Expressway/Parks Highway Corridor (Eielson0-Ester). Ongoing monitoring of community and traffic growth and changing travel patterns are important in selecting one of the alternate locations, which include Peger Road, University Avenue, and Lathrop Street.	Metropolitan Transportation Plan – 2045 in Motion	Very Long Range (Beyond 2045)	Non-FAST Planning Projects
Peger Road: Chena River – Airport Way	Construct separated path on east side of Peger Road.	Fairbanks Non-Motorized Transportation Plan-Connect Fairbanks 2020	Low	FMATS TIP Projects – bicycle and pedestrian projects
	Expand the Chena River Walk to the north side of the Chena River with approximately 2,200 linear feet of pathway from Peger Road to the existing Chena River pedestrian bridge crossing at Pioneer Park. Construct a connection of the existing pedestrian facilities along Peger Road.	Metropolitan Transportation Plan – 2045 in Motion	Short Range (2023-2027)	FAST Planning Projects
Fairbanks Rail Realignment	This project will optimize the alignment of mainline and branch track within the Fairbanks Area to improve customer response and minimize transportation conflicts with the adjacent communities.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019	High	Long-Term (16+ Years) Freight Projects Identified for Implementation
ARRC Fairbanks Freight Intermodal Terminal Rail/Truck Staging Area		Alaska State Rail Plan 2016		Long Term (5-20 Years)

Project *(*in multiple plans)*	Description	Plan(s)	Status or Priority *(as defined in the plan)*	Notes
Richardson Highway MP 359 Railroad Grade separated Facility	Construct a grade-separated facility on the Richardson Highway near MP 359 to reduce railroad/vehicle conflicts; improve connectivity with the Old Richardson Highway and provide Fort Wainwright south gate access.	Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019	On 2016 – 2019 STIP	Pedestrian underpass as part of FMATS TIP Projects – bicycle and pedestrian projects
Richardson Hwy MP 359 Railroad Overpass	Construct a pedestrian underpass east of the railroad crossing.	Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019	On 2016 – 2019 STIP	Pedestrian underpass as part of FMATS TIP Projects – bicycle and pedestrian projects
The North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project:	The existing route through North Pole has multiple at-grade rail crossings. By realigning 8-mile section of the railroad of Eielson Branch track to Tanana River Levee up to 11 crossings could be removed. An alternative has also proposed to realign the track landward of Tanana River Levee and road over rail at Richardson Highway Crossing, close 9 at grade crossings within the City of North Pole.	Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019		FMATS TIP Projects – bicycle and pedestrian projects
The Richardson Highway MP 353 – 357 Access/Safety Improvements project *	Improve access control on the Richardson Highway between approximate MP 353 -357. This project will upgrade and extend the existing frontage road system, construct at-grade intersections, and eliminate several existing access approaches onto the Richardson Highway.	Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019 FNSB Eielson AFB Regional Growth Plan 2018	On 2016 – 2019 STIP	
Richardson Highway MP 359 Interchange (12 Mile Village)	Alternatives are currently being considered for a grade separated interchange to reduce turning conflicts and crashes at the intersection, which historically has had a crash rate 2.5 times higher than the statewide average for intersections of that type.	Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019	According to the FMATS 2045 MTP Existing Conditions report, this project is in-process as of 2017.	Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan cites this project as being on the FAST Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) 2017-2020
Richardson Highway MP 359 Railroad Overpass*	Construct a grade separated facility on the Richardson Highway near Milepost 359 to reduce railroad/vehicle conflicts. Improve connectivity with the Old Richardson Highway and potential access for Fort Wainwright South gate.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019 Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019	High	Immediate Term (0-10 Years) Freight Projects Identified for Implementation

Project *(*in multiple plans)*	Description	Plan(s)	Status or Priority *(as defined in the plan)*	Notes
	Construct a grade separated facility on the Richardson Highway to improve operations and reduce railroad/vehicle conflicts. Work includes new railroad overpass bridges (#2366 and 2367).	Metropolitan Transportation Plan – 2045 in Motion	Short Range (2023-2027)	Non-FAST Planning Project
Richardson Highway MP 356–362 Bicycle/ Pedestrian Path*	Construct a paved bicycle/ pedestrian path on the Richardson Highway between MP 356–362, starting from the Richardson Highway/Airport Way intersection, continuing along the Richardson Highway to the Badger Loop North Bound Ramp, and terminating at the Badger Road/Old Badger Highway intersection.	Fairbanks Non-Motorized Transportation Plan-Connect Fairbanks 2020 Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019	High	FMATS TIP Projects – bicycle and pedestrian projects
	Construct a paved bicycle/pedestrian path on the Richardson Hwy starting from the Richardson Hwy/Airport Way intersection, continuing along the Richardson Hwy to Badger Loop Northbound Ramp, and terminating at the Badger Rd/Old Badger Way intersection. Improvements will include bridge work, roadside hardware, drainage improvements, ADA improvements, and utilities.	Metropolitan Transportation Plan – 2045 in Motion	Short Range (2023-2027)	Non-FAST Planning Projects
	Construct bicycle and pedestrian path connection between Fairbanks and North Pole by extending the proposed path from the Richardson Highway/Badger Road intersection to North Pole. Continue to allow bicyclists on Richardson Highway when complete.	Metropolitan Transportation Plan – 2045 in Motion	Medium Range (2028-2034)	Non-FAST Planning Projects

Project *(*in multiple plans)*	Description	Plan(s)	Status or Priority *(as defined in the plan)*	Notes
Fairbanks-North Pole Bicycle and Pedestrian MultiUse Path	Construct bicycle and pedestrian path connection between Fairbanks and North Pole by extending the proposed path from the Richardson Highway/Badger Road intersection to North Pole. Continue to allow bicyclists on Richardson Highway when complete. Because frontage road development is likely, the cost estimate for this project covers the addition of bicycle and pedestrian facilities to that project.	Fairbanks Non-Motorized Transportation Plan-Connect Fairbanks 2020	Medium	FMATS TIP Projects – bicycle and pedestrian projects
Richardson Highway: MP 353-357, Safety/Access Improvements *	Reconstruct the Richardson Highway and adjacent frontage roads, including roadside hardware, drainage improvements, intersection improvements, and utilities. Work includes construction of new frontage roads and elimination of access points onto the Richardson Highway.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019 Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019	High	Immediate Term (0-10 Years) Freight Projects Identified for Implementation According to the FMATS 2045 MTP Existing Conditions report, this project is in-process as of 2017.
North Pole, Alaska, Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project *	This project will realign the railroad track along a portion of ARRC Eielson Branch to reduce the number of at-grade road/rail crossings in the City of North Pole and enhance safety. It includes elimination of a major at-grade road/rail crossing of the Richardson Highway, a NHS roadway. The project will be accomplished by relocating the railroad from the population center of North Pole to a rural area along or near the Tanana River Levee structure. The project will extend from Richardson Highway Milepost 355 to Highway Milepost 347, popularly known as Mile 9, to the easterly portion of the City of North Pole.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019 Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019	High	Long-Term (16+ Years) Freight Projects Identified for Implementation From Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan: "Projects have been identified by ARRC, FAST Planning, the Alaska State Railroad Plan (2016), and the North Pole Comprehensive Strategic Plan."
5th Avenue – Mission Road/Richardson Highway	Investigate potential improvements to allow non-motorized users to cross the Richardson Highway at this location. This may require an overpass, which could be completed in conjunction with a future interchange at this location.	Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019		FMATS TIP Projects – bicycle and pedestrian projects FMATS 2040 MTP projects

Project *(*in multiple plans)*	Description	Plan(s)	Status or Priority *(as defined in the plan)*	Notes
Richardson Highway: North Pole Area Interchange, Phase II *		Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019 FNSB Eielson AFB Regional Growth Plan 2018	Long range	FAST Planning is currently updating the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) to planning year 2045 from 2040. The 2045 MTP Update - Needs Assessments which includes a list of planned projects from the 2040 improvements in the Salcha-Badger Road area, including these projects.
Richardson Highway: North Pole Area Interchange, Phase III *		Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019 FNSB Eielson AFB Regional Growth Plan 2018	Long Range	FAST Planning is currently updating the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) to planning year 2045 from 2040. The 2045 MTP Update - Needs Assessments which includes a list of planned projects from the 2040 improvements in the Salcha-Badger Road area, including these projects.
Richardson Highway Corridor Study: Badger Road to Eielson AFB *	Develop a shared corridor concept that meets long range transportation needs to improve safety, mobility, air quality, and freight operations.	Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019 FNSB Eielson AFB Regional Growth Plan 2018		Was "in planning" in 2015.
Richardson Highway: Access/Safety Improvements (Rozak Road – Peridot Street) *	Consolidation of intersection and driveway access onto the Richardson Highway with needed links to collector roads on both the north and south sides of the corridor. Special considerations are needed for future access to large undeveloped parcels of land to the north of the Richardson Corridor and the Alaska Railroad tracks.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019 Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019	High	Long-Term (16+ Years) Freight Projects Identified for Implementation

Project *(*in multiple plans)*	Description	Plan(s)	Status or Priority *(as defined in the plan)*	Notes
	Consolidation of intersection and driveway access onto the Richardson Highway with needed links to collector roads on both the north and south sides of the corridor. Special considerations are needed for future access to large undeveloped parcels of land o the north of the Richardson Corridor and the Alaska Railroad tracks.	Metropolitan Transportation Plan – 2045 in Motion	Long Range (2035-2045)	Non-FAST Planning
Richardson Highway (NP) Alternate Route: Peridot Street – Laurance Road *	Designate and construct improvements to parallel routes on the north and south sides of the Richardson Highway through North Pole.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019 Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019 FNSB Eielson AFB Regional Growth Plan 2018	Medium	Medium-Term (11–15 Years) Freight Projects Identified for Implementation
Old Richardson Highway Interchange*	Construct a grade-separated interchange at the intersection of Richardson Highway and Old Richardson Highway. May include additional access to Fort Wainwright.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019	Medium	Immediate Term (0-10 Years) Freight Projects Identified for Implementation
	Construct interchange to replace intersection of the Richardson Highway and the Old Richardson Highway at North Pole, near Richardson Highway MP 351.	Metropolitan Transportation Plan – 2045 in Motion	Short Range (2023-2027)	Non-FAST Planning Projects
Richardson Highway: 3-Mile/Old Richardson Interchange	Construction of a grade-separated crossing at the Richardson Highway/Old Richardson Crossover. Alternates would include either a partial overpass (outbound Richardson Highway) or a full diamond interchange.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019	Medium	Long-Term (16+ Years) Freight Projects Identified for Implementation

Project *(*in multiple plans)*	Description	Plan(s)	Status or Priority *(as defined in the plan)*	Notes
Richardson Highway: North Pole Area Interchange Phase II *	Construction of another Richardson Corridor grade-separated crossing in the North Pole area. Ongoing monitoring of community and traffic growth and changing travel patterns are important in selecting one of the alternate locations, which include Peridot Street, Laurance Road, and Mission Road (most likely only an underpass).	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019 Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019	Low	Long-Term (16+ Years) Freight Projects Identified for Implementation
Richardson Highway MP 337 Eielson AFB Intersection Improvements	Intersection improvements at the southern access of the Eielson AFB at MP 337 of the Richardson Highway to accommodate additional freight volumes in support of the addition of two F-35A aircraft squadrons.	Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019	On 2016 – 2019 STIP	
Richardson Highway MP 248-263 Passing Lanes (Delta to Fairbanks)	Project facilitates safety and passing movements.	Alaska Moves 2050 – Freight Investment Plan 2023	Not currently on STIP (see note)	"The primary purpose of this listing is for documentation and future reference in the event additional federal dollars become available in the future."
Northern Rail Extension *	The ARRC proposes to construct and operate a new rail line in the area between North Pole and Delta Junction.	Alaska State Rail Plan 2016		Long Term. Mentioned in passing as a possible long-term project in several plans.
Richardson Highway MP 266 – 341 Passing Lanes (Delta Junction to Eielson AFB)	Construct passing lanes at various locations (yet to be determined) between MP 266 and MP 341 on the Richardson Highway to improve safety. Including intersection improvements at MP 337 (southern access of Eielson AFB) to accommodate freight volumes in support of the addition of two F-35A aircraft squadrons.	Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019	On 2016 – 2019 STIP	
Weigh-In-Motion (WIM) Program	Design and installation of WIM equipment sites at MP 358 of the Richardson Highway (at the existing weigh station).	Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan 2019	On 2016 – 2019 STIP	

Project *(*in multiple plans)*	Description	Plan(s)	Status or Priority *(as defined in the plan)*	Notes
Bridges on the Richardson Highway	Address bridges on the Richardson Highway that are height and/or weight restricted	Alaska Moves 2050 – Freight Investment Plan 2023	Not currently on STIP (see note)	"The primary purpose of this listing is for documentation and future reference in the event additional federal dollars become available in the future."
Fairbanks Rail Extension to Delta Junction and Ft Greely	Extend rail connectivity to Delta Junction and Ft. Greely. Connecting to Delta Junction facilitates freight movement related to natural resource extraction/mining (Kinross Mine Tetlin to Fort Knox Ore Transport). Connecting to Ft. Greely provides a connection for military movements.	Alaska Moves 2050 – Freight Investment Plan 2023	Not currently on STIP (see note)	"The primary purpose of this listing is for documentation and future reference in the event additional federal dollars become available in the future."
Robertson, Gerstle, and Johnson River Bridge Replacements (Alaska Highway)	Replace all three highway bridges to new standards. Includes reconstruction, drainage improvements, roadside hardware, and utilities.	Alaska Moves 2050 – Freight Investment Plan 2023	Not currently on STIP (see note)	"The primary purpose of this listing is for documentation and future reference in the event additional federal dollars become available in the future."
Alaska Highway Passing Lanes MP 1221 - 1422	Construct passing lanes on the Alaska Highway (to promote safety) - note, project has two stages of work. Project addresses freight and safety issues.	Alaska Moves 2050 – Freight Investment Plan 2023	Not currently on STIP (see note)	"The primary purpose of this listing is for documentation and future reference in the event additional federal dollars become available in the future."
Incorporate Freight Zones into FNSB Comprehensive Plan	Incorporate freight zones into comprehensive plan.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019	High	Freight Policies Identified for Implementation
Regional Freight Summit	FAC to hold annual freight summit to discuss freight issues.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019	Medium	Freight Policies Identified for Implementation
Identify locations with conflicts between freight, transit, and pedestrians/ bicyclists	Identify potential freight conflict locations with transit, bicycles and pedestrians and use engineering, maintenance, scheduling, enforcement, and education strategies to minimize these conflicts.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019	Medium	Freight Policies Identified for Implementation

Project *(*in multiple plans)*	Description	Plan(s)	Status or Priority *(as defined in the plan)*	Notes
Support Commercial vehicle enforcement efforts	Support commercial vehicle enforcement. Efforts can include assisting with educating law enforcement on how to identify unsafe vehicles; communicating to trucking companies about applicable rules, regulations, and reporting requirements; providing tools, equipment and/or staff as needed by MSCVE; and communicating to state leadership about the importance of enforcement activities	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019	Medium	Freight Policies Identified for Implementation
Truck Route Map / Signage / Design Standards	Formalize an official truck route in the region with appropriate signage, guidance and requirements, and mapping. Include preparation of formal standards including pavement conditions, signage, turning radii, corridor signalization, weight restrictions, trailer access, interaction with bicycle/pedestrian facilities, maintenance (wear and tear), lighting, etc.; create maps of the designated routes in an appropriate format.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019	Low	Freight Policies Identified for Implementation
Truck Route Signage	Install truck route signage on all truck routes.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019	Low	Immediate Term (0-10 Years) Freight Projects Identified for Implementation
Promote/Incentivize Lower Emission Freight Modes and Technologies	Encourage lower emission modes and technologies to improve air quality.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019	Low	Freight Policies Identified for Implementation
Evaluate removal of weight restrictions during project development	Develop a policy that requires DOT&PF to evaluate the removal of seasonal weight restrictions on freight routes during project development.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019	Low	Freight Policies Identified for Implementation
Truck data collection	Work with DOT&PF to identify and collect truck data. Data may include truck counts, truck weights, truck speeds, and commercial vehicle credentials checking/screening.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019	Low	Freight Policies Identified for Implementation

Project *(*in multiple plans)*	Description	Plan(s)	Status or Priority *(as defined in the plan)*	Notes
Identify Government/Private Sector Connections / Communications	Identify opportunities to strengthen connections between government and the private sector (trucking companies – shippers, carriers). These connections can be formalized through cooperative or interagency agreements.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019	Low	Freight Policies Identified for Implementation
Public Education Efforts	Expand educational efforts to advise motorists and non-motorized users regarding safety issues associated with freight movement.	FMATS Freight Mobility Plan 2019	Low	Freight Policies Identified for Implementation
Fund weigh stations for 24-hour operations	Research/perform a study to identify funding mechanisms to keep weigh stations open for 24 hours.	Alaska Moves 2050 – Freight Investment Plan 2023	Not on STIP (see note)	"The primary purpose of this listing is for documentation and future reference in the event additional federal dollars become available in the future."
Grade-separation of All NHS At-grade Rail Crossings		Alaska State Rail Plan 2016		Long Term
Grade-Separation of Significant Non-NHS at-grade Crossings		Alaska State Rail Plan 2016		Long Term
Extending Transportation Facilities to Provide Surface Access to Resource Development Opportunities		Alaska State Rail Plan 2016		Long Term