

MEMORANDUM

State of Alaska

Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Office of the Commissioner

TO: Deputy Commissioners, Regional
Directors, Administrative Services
Director, Program Development
Director, Chief Engineer, Chief
Contracts Officer

DATE: February 13, 2023

PHONE NO: 465-3900

FROM: Ryan Commissioner, P.E. 
Commissioner

SUBJECT: TransportationX
Project Designation

The Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118 Bird Creek to Rabbit Flats Project has been designated as an Alaska DOT&PF TransportationX (TrX) project, due to its classification as a high-risk, high-profile project and a Governor Safety Priority.

The TransportationX program involves new ways of working that are outcome focused, versus process focused, and emphasize community teaming, agile project management processes, and new ways of resourcing to achieve success. These efforts contribute to our vision of organizational excellence, and investment areas of Safety, State of Good Repair, Economic Vitality, Resiliency, and Sustainable Transportation.

The Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118 Bird Creek to Rabbit Flats project team will be sponsored by the Commissioner's Office, with Deputy Commissioner Keith taking the executive oversight, project ownership, and contracting officer role. Any questions related this designation or related to these actions should be referred to DC Keith. Further direction regarding changes in design status reporting and project controls will be forthcoming.

As the project owner, DC Keith will be reaching out across DOT&PF Divisions to seek out resources that can contribute to this important project. As resources are identified task assignment memos will be issued, designating roles on the project team, and staff expectations. Division Directors will be consulted regarding staff assignments.

Thank you for your contributions to this important high-risk, high-profile safety priority project.



The Seward Highway Mile 98.5-118 Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek project has been designated as an Alaska DOT&PF TransportationX (TrX) Project. Alaska TrX projects use new ways of working to demonstrate our vision of organizational excellence, and to contribute to our investment areas of Safety, State of Good Repair, Economic Vitality, Resiliency, and Sustainability in meaningful ways. These projects focus on community teaming, agile project management processes, and new ways of resourcing to achieve success. To be successful, this project requires an extra emphasis on communication and culture, with a focus on community partnerships and team building.

The Seward Highway team met on February 8th and identified the team characteristics and roles that this team would like to pursue for this project. The team charter summarizes those discussions and documents the ways of working this team will strive for.

Team Roles. In the February 8th meeting, the team met and agreed upon team roles, definitions, and assignments. Team roles and definitions are documented in the attached team roles definition document. The following assignments were agreed upon:

- **Sponsor:** Governor's Office/Ryan Anderson, Commissioner
- **Owner:** Katherine Keith, Deputy Commissioner
- **Coach:** Sean Baski and Luke Bowland
- **Project Liaison:** Chris Hughes
- **Team Supervisor:** Lauren Little
- **Scrum Masters:** Alex Sonnabend and Alison Homekingeo
- **Community Liaison:** Shannon McCarthy (DeFacto)
- **Action Team Member Leads:**
 - **Environmental:** Taylor Horne
 - **Communications:** Katherine Wood
 - **Engineering:** Edith McKee and Alex Read
 - **Procurement:** Tom Mayer and James Woods

Team Rules to live by. The team met on February 8th and outlined the characteristics of successful teams that the team should strive for. Those characteristics are the team rules that follow:

1. Leave rank and titles at the door.
2. Be respectful, remain open to new ideas and new ways of working.
3. Communicate goals often and ensure team alignment.
4. Build trust through respectful and positive feedback.
5. Foster creativity in strength-based roles.
6. Share information freely and often.
7. Take ownership in your work products and team decisions.
8. Base team decisions on sound risk analysis processes.
9. Be flexible and creative in problem solving.
10. Focus on outcomes, not processes.

Mission-Vision-Values: This team strives for the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities mission and vision: *“Modern, Resilient, and Agile: We Keep Alaska Moving,”* and agrees to abide by our core values of integrity, excellence, respect, and safety. This team agrees to call out and address behaviors that do not align with the mission, vision, or values of the department. More information on department mission vision and values can be found here: <https://in-motion-akdot.hub.arcgis.com/>

Team Decision-Making. This team agrees that all decisions that impact the scope, schedule, budget, or items in the risk register are best made by the project team. Project Liaisons are responsible for ensuring decision making is collaborative, and that the project owner is informed of decisions that impact the scope, schedule, and budget of the project. If the team disagrees on a decision, the project owner, and ultimately the project sponsor are consulted. The Scrum Master will document decisions made by the team and maintain in the project file.

Conflict Resolution. Conflict is healthy when trust is present. Conflicts are openly discussed and a path forward, using negotiation, is sought out. When team disagreements cannot be settled, the owner takes responsibility for the decision, and the team takes ownership of the decision. At the owner's discretion, decisions are elevated to the Sponsor.

Information Sharing. The team agrees to make information easily available to all team members and agrees to use cloud sharing such as one drive/sharepoint, and wiki platforms such as Confluence. The goal of information sharing is to increase the speed of team decision making, through collaborative understanding of issues affecting efforts. The Scrum Master serves as the primary contact for information sharing efforts, and the team agrees to provide the Scrum Master with all available information for incorporation into the project files and wikis. The team agrees to recognize and discuss if a work product is deliberative and develop protocols to address.

Communications. Respectful communications are critical to successful team outcomes. The team agrees to leverage technology to communicate broadly, and to ensure one on one communications are summarized for the team in follow up meetings or documented in shared meeting notes. The team agrees to meet with intentionality, and to ensure meetings are structured, with purpose, and have agendas. The Scrum Master role takes on the responsibility of ensuring meetings are coordinated and equipment/rooms are available for a successful meeting.

Attached: TrX Team Roles, TrX Seward Highway Project Canvas; TrX Risk Assessment

Approval. We commit to the principles, roles, and responsibilities detailed in the Team Charter.

Ryan Anderson Sponsor	
Katherine Keith Owner	
Sean Baski Coach	
Luke Bowland Coach	
Chris Hughes Project Liaison	
Lauren Little Team Supervisor	
Alex Sonnabend Liaison	
Alison Homekingkeo Scrum Master	
Shannon McCarthy Community Liaison	
Edith Mckee Engineering	
Alex Read Engineering	
Taylor Horne Environmental	
Katherine Wood Communications	
Tom Mayer Procurement	
James Wood Procurement	

TrX Project Canvas

SEWARD HIGHWAY MP 98.5-118 BIRD FLATS TO RABBIT CREEK



Project	Seward Highway MP 98.5 to 118 Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek	Project Sponsor	Commissioner's Office
Federal Project #	0A31034	Program #	Z566310000
Project Context & Background	<p>The Seward Highway has a long history of vehicle crashes that result in serious injuries and fatalities. Due to the safety concerns, the Seward Highway was designated a Highway Safety Corridor in 2006.</p> <p>Since 2006, Anchorage area traffic travelling the Seward Highway to destinations such as Girdwood, Seward, and the Kenai Peninsula has increased, with 2021 Annual Average Daily Traffic between 7,000 and 10,000 vehicles. Seasonal traffic peaks in the summer further exemplify the problem, with daily traffic exceeding 15,000 vehicles per day in the months of June, July, and August on this primarily 2 lane highway.</p> <p>In December, 2021, Governor Dunleavy included a proposal in the fiscal year 2023 budget expand the Seward Highway to a four lane divided highway. He instructed the Alaska Department of Transportation to proceed with this project immediately, and the project was subsequently approved by the Legislature as part of the 2023 Capital Budget, and approved by the Federal Highway Administration in STIP Amendment #4.</p>		
Project Scope	<p>To expand the Seward Highway to a four-lane divided highway, and decommission the safety corridor designation. The project will incorporate bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and evaluate innovative ways to expand the highway with minimal impact to the railroad and Turnagain Arm, that includes tunneling.</p> <p>Background: A previous project that was working to address a segment of the highway was initiated in 2004. After a lack of progress, the project has been rescoped to address the entire corridor as this project.</p>		
Budget	Design funds are programmed in the STIP: \$3,500,050 in FFY22; \$16,517,518 in FFY 23. The overall construction cost is estimated at \$677,510,050.		
Target(s)	Construction of the first segment in 2025. Ideally this first segment would target high crash areas along the highway corridor with a focus on safety. Providing a facility that accommodates non-motorized users is a priority from legislators, as well as road users.		

TrX Team Composition and Roles

SEWARD HIGHWAY MP 98.5-118 BIRD FLATS TO RABBIT CREEK



Sponsor: A “champion” to the effort who understands the Administration’s vision for transportation in Alaska. The sponsor ensures alignment with administration goals and has the power to terminate or re-align efforts if necessary. Sponsors establish the team and provide high level support. Sponsors have direct communications with owners and can communicate challenges quickly to agency and administration officials. They may attend public and agency meetings to communicate vision and goals from a broader perspective. Sponsors serve as the ultimate decision maker in conflict resolution.

Owner: Adopts a leadership position and communicates the vision, ensures team alignment to goals, drives overall progress, maximizes the value of the products that the team creates and ensures there is buy-in from stakeholders. Leaders motivate, inspire, lead change, and align teams to common purposes and goals. The owner serves as the contracting officer and oversees contracting actions and progress. The owner is the decision maker when the team cannot come to a consensus and elevates decisions to the project sponsor when appropriate. They are accountable for the scope, schedule, budget, and deliverables for the efforts, and for keeping the sponsor informed of progress.

Coach: An experienced team leader who helps the Owner by communicating the vision, goals, processes, and details of work items to the team. The Coach serves as a mentor and provides support and assistance on teaming processes and helps with challenges. Together the Coach and Project Liaison ensures that the team charter is followed and manage the day-to-day operations of the team and deliverables.

Project Liaison: Effective at overseeing, planning, and reviewing deliverables from the team, the Project Liaison is responsible for working with the team on producing work. They are responsible for management tasks such as planning and budgeting, resource identification and allocation, and problem solving. They work with the Scrum Master and Action Team Members to consistently produce short term results.

Community Liaison: Assists the team in creating and maintaining positive relationships between different organizations, community members, and stakeholders. The Community liaison is an experienced team leader who helps the team by communicating the vision, goals, and process. Ideally the Community Liaison is a person with ties to the community where the work is happening and provides a local perspective on an effort.

Team Supervisor: Supports team resources by providing direction on timesheets, travel approvals, supervision conflicts, team performance issues, and human resources conflicts that affect the team. In consultation with the owner, the team supervisor can remove team members or otherwise facilitate discipline as appropriate.

Scrum Master: Responsible for managing the exchange of information between team members to enable the team to communicate and self-organize to make changes quickly. They maintain the backlog of tasks, task tracking boards, and hold the team accountable. They also serve to ensure meetings are organized and structured, and meeting information is shared consistently across the team. They assist the owner in tracking changes to scope, schedule, budget. The Scrum Master maintains the project files and ensures accessibility to all team members.

Action Team Member: Multi-disciplinary, hands-on roles consisting of varying job roles and skills; they can be referred to as subject matter experts (SMEs). Action Team Members are cross-functional and offer diverse perspectives. They are supported by the Coach and Project Liaison, they self-organize, are empowered to make decisions, and work together in team environment. Action Team Members are responsible for many activities and produce deliverables.

TrX High-Risk/High-Profile Assessment

SEWARD HIGHWAY MP 98.5-118 BIRD FLATS TO RABBIT CREEK



The TrX High-Risk/High-Profile Assessment documents the reasoning behind a TrX designation. These assessments evaluate projects or efforts based on the DOT&PF vision of improving our service and infrastructure by investing in safety, state of good repair, economic vitality, resiliency, sustainability, and organizational excellence.

The Seward Highway Milepost 98.5 to 118 Bird Flats to Rabbit Creek Project scored a 7 out of 7 in both the infrastructure investment and organizational excellence categories.

Infrastructure Investment Area Assessment	Scoring Yes/No	Organizational Excellence Assessment	Scoring Yes/No
high-profile $\geq 4/7$		high-risk $\geq 4/7$	
Safety <i>"Is safety impacted by the situation?"</i>	Yes	Communication. <i>Is there a negative relationship with the community? Are internal goals and vision mis-aligned?</i>	Yes
State-of-Good-Repair <i>"Does the situation pose a threat to infrastructure?"</i>	Yes	Culture <i>Is employee morale low or do employees feel overwhelmed? Are individuals feeling a lack of empowerment and engagement?</i>	Yes
Economic Vitality <i>"Does the situation hurt or restrict economic development?"</i>	Yes	Information <i>Does data lack integrity, is it siloed, can knowledge be shared more effectively?</i>	Yes
Resiliency <i>"Does the situation put transportation at risk of not rebounding?"</i>	Yes	Innovation <i>Is innovation stifled? Is the proposed process or efforts 'always been done this way?'</i>	Yes
Sustainability <i>Does the situation pose a risk to the environment or public health??</i>	Yes	Resources: Partnerships & Teaming <i>Are resource allocations being restricted due to respective divisional constraints? Have staff or contractor ideas to address resource constraints been stifled?</i>	Yes
Mobility and Access <i>Does the situation reduce access, is it inequitable, or does it reduce connections between communities?</i>	Yes	Project Delivery <i>Is the project behind schedule, over budget, or scope been significantly altered? Is it a "Legacy Project"? Are preconstruction costs over 30% of construction costs?</i>	Yes
Special Interest <i>Does the situation have high interest from the public, Governor's Office, or other critical stakeholders?</i>	Yes	Workforce <i>Are staffing resources insufficient to deliver the project? Are staff insufficiently trained?</i>	Yes
High-Profile Total	7/7	High-Risk Total	7/7