

Interchange Planning Workshop Summary

Project # 0A31067 / Federal # CFHWY00909



MEETING INFORMATION

Wednesday, November 12, 2025, from 8:30 – 11:30 AM

DOWL Office, Chugach Conference Room: 5015 Business Park Boulevard, Suite 4000, Anchorage, Alaska
The meeting was available via Microsoft Teams for those who could not attend in-person.

Project Team Attendees

Galen Jones, P.E.
Doug Campbell
Nick Murray, P.E., S.E.
Steve Noble, P.E.
Sam Tyler, P.E.
Ryane Gray, P.E.
Elena Feghali
Adam Miles, P.E.
Emily Creely
Talli Vittetoe
Joe Taylor, P.E.
Brian Ray, P.E.
Jeanne Bowie, P.E., PhD, PTOE

DOT&PF Project Manager
DOT&PF Project Engineer
DOT&PF Bridge Design
DOWL Project Manager
DOWL Project Engineer
DOWL Design Engineer
DOWL Design Engineer
DOWL Traffic Engineer
DOWL Environmental
DOWL Public Involvement
Lounsbury Project Manager
Sunrise Transportation Strategies
Kinney Engineering Traffic Engineer

Workshop Attendees

Alyse Galvin
Jamie Benson
Emily Weiser
Aaron Jongenelen
Erin Baldwin-Day
Kathleen McArchie
Maureen Orr
James Starzec
Mark Eisenman
Anna Bosin, P.E.
Brian Partch
Daniel McKenna Foster
Zak Hartman
Stephen Stone

Alaska House of Representatives – District 14
Alaska Trucking Association
AMATS
AMATS
Anchorage Assembly – Midtown
Anchorage Chamber of Commerce
DOT&PF
DOT&PF
DOT&PF
DOT&PF
MOA Fire Department
MOA Planning
MOA Traffic
MOA Public Transportation

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PRESENTATION SUMMARY

Opening Remarks

Steve Noble (DOWL Project Manager) welcomed attendees and Galen Jones (Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Project Manager) provided a project overview. Galen explained:

- The project was identified as a top priority in the Midtown Congestion Relief (MCR) Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study published in 2020.
- The Tudor Road interchange project was initiated to address the aging bridge, which has had repairs due to bridge strikes. However, existing deficiencies for both vehicles and non-motorized users prompted a more comprehensive approach.
- Given the corridor's importance as a major east-west route, the team is evaluating a wider range of alternatives.

Purpose & Need

Steve shared that the interchange has a long history of above-average crash rates for vehicles and non-motorized users, making safety performance (reduced crash frequency and severity) a project need and priority. The project purpose is to modernize the interchange, improve long-term operations, and coordinate future improvements at the 36th Avenue interchange. The project limits run from Old Seward Highway to MacInnes Street on Tudor Road, and from roughly halfway to 36th Avenue to Campbell Creek on the Seward Highway.

Preliminary DOT&PF programming estimates present \$5 million for design, \$4 million for right-of-way (ROW), \$2.5 million for utilities, and \$30 million for construction. The project is programmed in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for construction in 2030. Galen shared that federal funding is secured through the environmental document, and the DOT&PF will seek additional federal funds for final design, ROW, utility relocations, and construction when eligible.

Workshop Goals

Steve explained that the workshop goal was to build a shared understanding of the project's purpose and need, evaluate interchange and network concepts, discuss constraints and implementation issues, and solicit input on the team's direction and stakeholder interests.

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Interchange Background

Brian Ray (Sunrise Transportation Strategies) highlighted key features of the current design that contribute to the documented and observed operational issues. He shared that the interchange is a compressed diamond with inefficient spacing between the ramp terminal intersections. This existing spacing makes signal coordination difficult and leads to queuing and delays. The long westbound to southbound left turn lane has offered only minor relief because queued vehicles often cannot reach the signal in one cycle. The angled ramp geometry creates relatively sharp turns for left-turning drivers and further contributes to operational inefficiencies.

Existing Conditions

Network Connections

Brian emphasized that the interchange needs to be seen within the larger transportation network given Tudor Road's role in the Anchorage network and how it is one of few crossings of the Seward Highway. Additionally, because there is a lack of developed local roadway network, Tudor Road plays a significant role in serving active transportation and transit. The continuous frontage roads from Dimond to Tudor add resiliency and redundancy for the Seward Highway. However, driveways and their proximity to the Tudor ramp terminal intersections degrade traffic operations and increase crash risk.

The local roadway network west of Seward Highway is relatively well developed compared to the network east of Seward Highway. The west side allows short local trips without using the Seward Highway. The east side has relatively limited east-west connections, and the Seward Highway frontage roads and the northbound ramp terminal intersections are used for short trips. The lack of network connectivity east of the Seward Highway contributes to congestion and reduces efficiency at the Tudor interchange.

Active Transportation

Brian emphasized that Tudor Road is a key east–west route for people walking and biking. The current non-motorized facilities at the interchange are not comfortable, and this project offers an opportunity to improve active transportation infrastructure in the interchange influence area while focusing on specific treatments at the interchange ramp terminal intersections.

Existing pedestrian and bicycle concerns include:

- Long pedestrian and bicycle crossing distances, along with poorly defined crosswalks, at the Tudor interchange, particularly at ramp terminal intersections and across Tudor Road
- No dedicated bicycle facilities
- Sections of the south Tudor pathway west of the interchange feel unsafe with respect to personal security due to dense vegetation and limited visibility

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- Narrow sidewalks with no buffer between vehicles and non-motorized travelers
- Curb ramps do not meet current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards
- Unmarked crossings at MacInnes Street and Shelikof Street increase crossing difficulty
- Isolated transit stops, rather than near- or far-side stops, that contribute to midblock crossings of Tudor Road outside designated crosswalks

Transit & Lighting

Brian highlighted the importance of pedestrian and bicycle facilities and pedestrian-scale lighting to support transit users along the Tudor corridor. Reaching bus stops often requires uncomfortable and inconvenient out-of-direction travel. Some stops are easy to access in one direction but difficult to return from on the opposite side. He also pointed out that roadway lighting is designed for vehicles and there is value in specifically considering pedestrian needs for lighting along sidewalks and at roadway crossings.

Oversized Vehicles

Brian explained that the team is evaluating how the broader roadway network and driver behavior influence interchange design. The team will assess and consider the influence of oversize/overweight vehicles during interchange design. Ramp-to-ramp connections are key features to allow oversized or overweight vehicles to bypass bridges with clearance or weight limits. These movements affect interchange form and bridge design, including required clearance and structural capacity.

Safety Performance

Steve shared crash data from 2014 through 2023 and noted that most crashes occurred along Tudor Road, with rear-end collisions being the most common on the Seward Highway. The most serious issues are on Tudor Road between MacInnes Street and Old Seward Highway, where four fatal crashes occurred in ten years, including two involving pedestrians. Another fatal pedestrian crash happened in 2024 near MacInnes Street, outside the study timeframe. More recent crash data is still being processed by State agencies and is not yet available.

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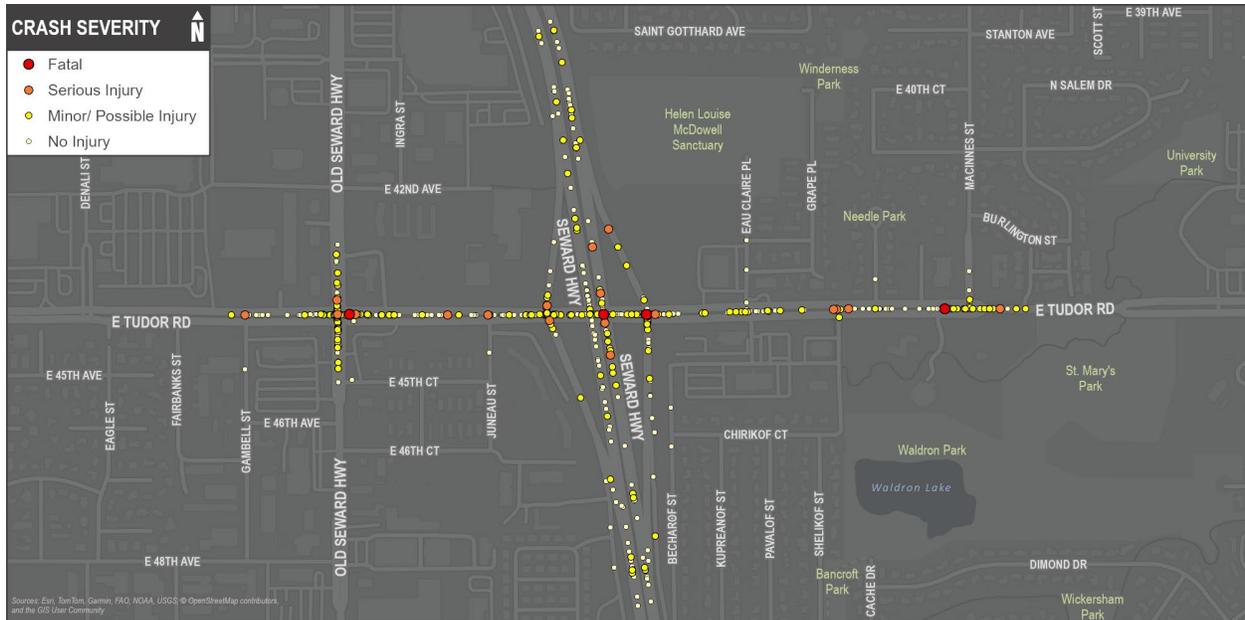


Figure 1: All Crashes (2014-2023)

Fatal and serious injury crashes are usually grouped together in safety analyses, and Tudor Road’s crash rate is much higher than expected. This reflects the corridor’s high friction from many driveways, turning movements, and mixed traffic conditions. While traffic calming measures can result in friction that slows vehicles and increases their awareness, poor (or a lack of) access control management is not a proven safety countermeasure and increases crash risk for non-motorized users due to higher frequency of conflict points where non-motorized facilities intersect with driveways. Crash rates for the Old Seward Highway and Tudor Road intersection, and the ramp terminal intersections exceeded the statewide averages.

Traffic Operations

Brian explained that while traffic operations matter, the project’s primary purpose is not to move more vehicles or plan for major traffic growth. The focus is replacing an aging bridge and improving safety and usability for all travelers. In updating the interchange form to reflect current demands, traffic operations will improve as a result of more efficient configurations.

East-West traffic on Tudor Road dominates peak hours and heavy queueing occurs near the Tudor bridge, especially in the westbound-to-southbound left-turn pocket and at the northbound exit ramp where queues can block northbound-to-westbound left-turn traffic and northbound through traffic. Roundabouts at the ramp terminals were analyzed and designs that had three-lanes circulating would be needed. Roundabouts of that size do not exhibit the safety and operational benefits of roundabouts with fewer lanes. Roundabouts are not compatible with the closely spaced signalized Old Seward Highway intersection and are not conducive to ROW constraints. Roundabouts and signalized

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intersections may be viable alternatives to consider for Shelikof Street or MacInnes Street. Anchorage Fire Station 4 is located at MacInnes Street and a traffic signal at MacInnes Street could also be evaluated for emergency vehicle preemption and supporting U-turn needs as part of configurations at Shelikof Street. The design team explained the Tudor Interchange project would analyze safety performance and mitigation strategies at MacInnes Street, but further discussions will be needed to determine if those improvements would be built under the interchange project or by a separate project that would require its own design funding.

Right-of-Way, Utilities, Environmental Compliance, Emergency Response, & Access Management

Sam Tyler (Project Engineer with DOWL) presented a ROW and land use map showing dense residential and commercial development around the interchange, then outlined major utilities in the project area. Major utilities include a 20-inch concrete water line and a 16-inch asbestos concrete sewer line owned by Anchorage Water and Wastewater Utility (AWWU), plus Alaska Communications (ACS) fiber and copper lines, all of which will need adjustments during construction. Distribution utilities from ACS, AWWU, Chugach Electric Association (CEA), Municipal Light and Power (ML&P), ENSTAR, and General Communications Incorporated (GCI) may also be affected.

The tasks required to achieve environmental compliance and assess potential impacts include:

- **Categorical Exclusion:** Anticipated Summer 2026
- **Endangered Species Act Consultation:** Not required
- **Section 106 Consultation (National Historic Preservation Act):** Fieldwork completed, Cultural Resources Report anticipated February 2026
- **Noise Analysis:** In progress
- **Hazardous Materials:** None identified
- **Wetland Delineation:** Completed, impacts to wetlands anticipated to be minor
- **Bald Eagle Nests:** None observed
- **Floodplain Considerations:** Location Hydraulic Study anticipated February 2026

The project will maintain or enhance reliable emergency response. Fire Station 4 relies on efficient travel along Tudor and access to the Seward Highway. Improvements at MacInnes Street and potential midblock crossings could further support emergency access and improve pedestrian safety.

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Interchange Brainstorming

Interchange Types

Brian explained that the current compressed diamond interchange serves existing traffic volumes but is inefficient due to spacing and signal coordination. The team will look at high capacity diamond forms that keep the general existing interchange layout while improving efficiency through optimal lane configurations, signal timing, and geometry.

High-Capacity Diamonds

Brian reviewed several high-capacity diamond interchange concepts under consideration for the Tudor interchange. Assessments of each option and their approximate footprints (Figures 2–5) were shared.

Tight Diamond Interchange

A tight diamond interchange would bring the ramp terminal intersections closer together, improving signal coordination, smoothing traffic flow, and creating shorter, safer crossings for pedestrians and cyclists. It also preserves ramp-to-ramp movements for oversized vehicles and is relatively easy to construct.

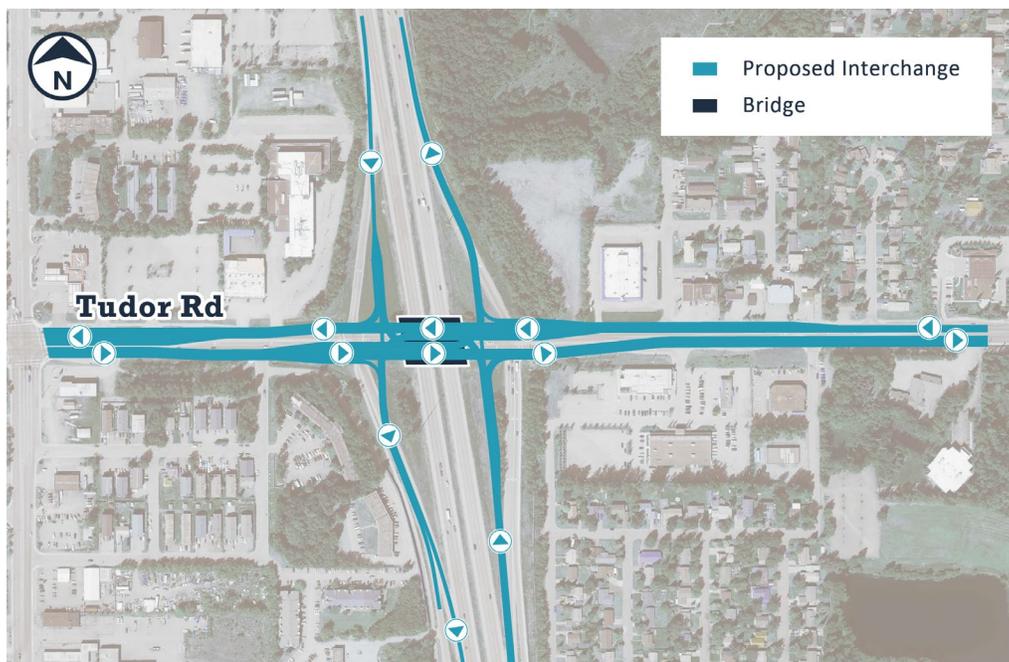


Figure 2: Tight Diamond Interchange Concept

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Single Point Interchange

A single point interchange consolidates movements into one central signal at the bridge, which can improve overall vehicle flow. However, this design does not readily accommodate ramp-to-ramp movements, is more challenging to construct, and results in pedestrian crossings with higher vehicle speeds, more roadways to cross, and are less perceptible to drivers.

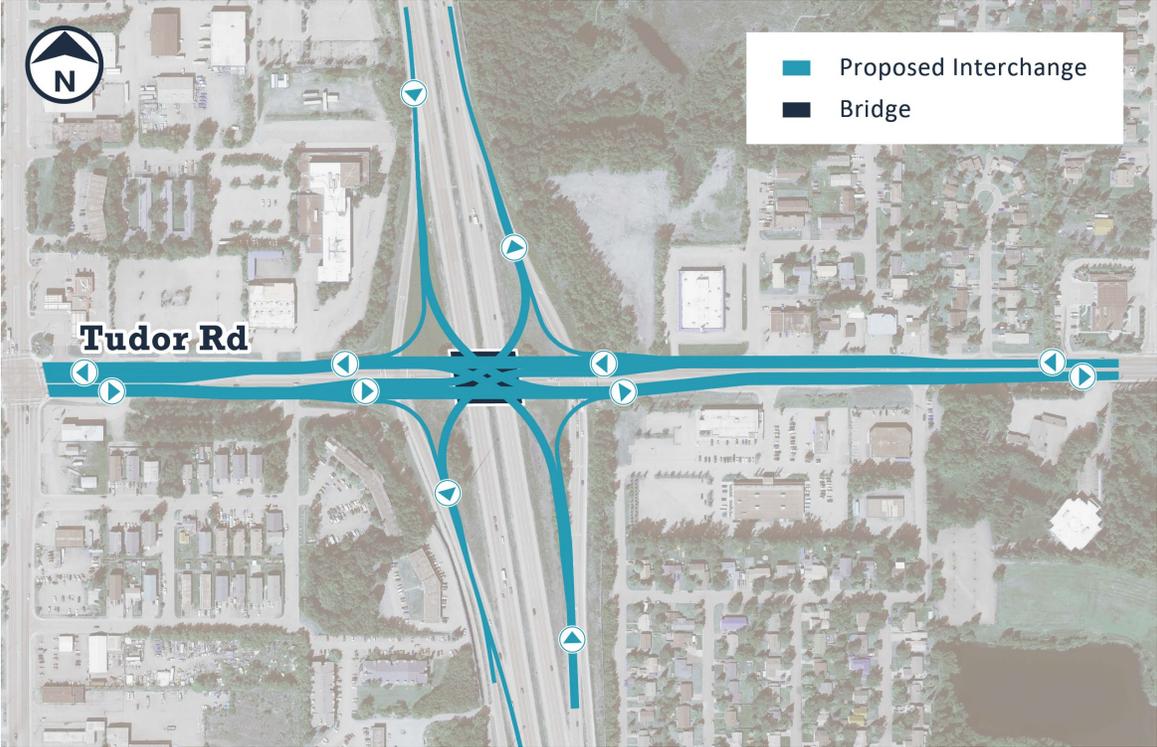


Figure 3: Single Point Interchange Concept

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Diverging Diamond Interchange

The diverging diamond interchange is popular for vehicle efficiency, but it requires a larger footprint and introduces wider, more complex crossings for pedestrians and cyclists. It can provide occasional ramp-to-ramp movements by temporarily removing bollards, but does not consistently serve oversized vehicles.

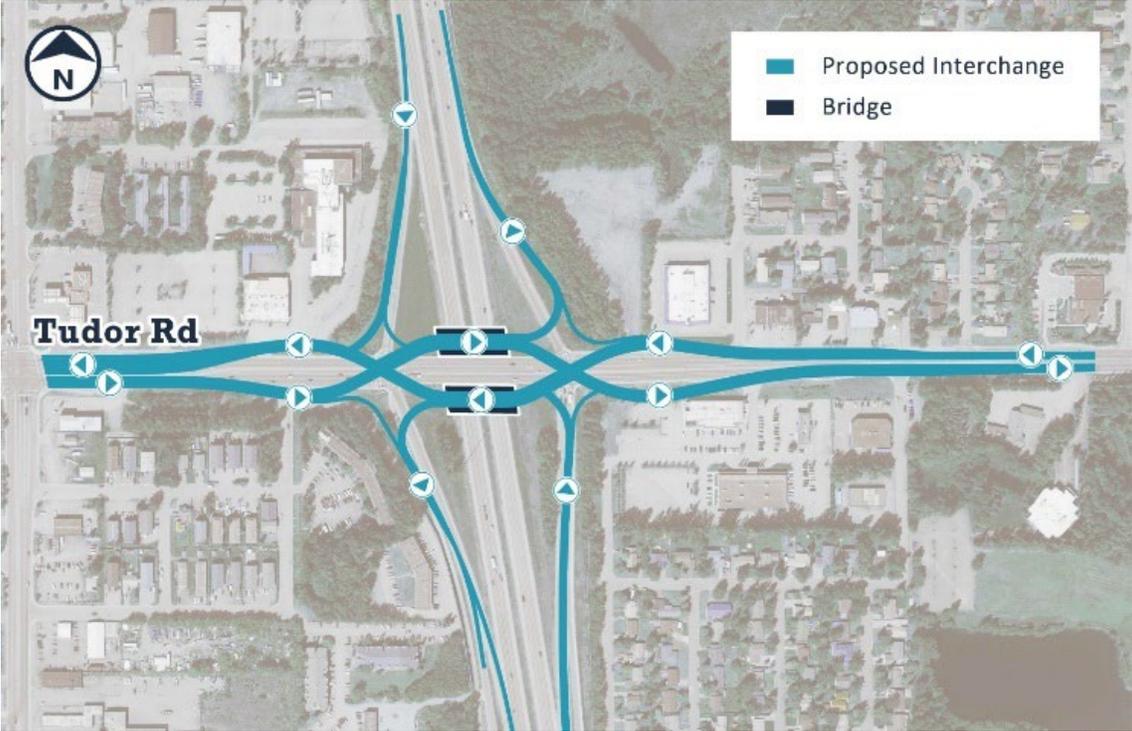


Figure 4: Diverging Diamond Interchange Alternative

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Displaced Left-Turn Interchange

The displaced left-turn interchange uses upstream traffic signals to shift left-turning traffic to the outside of opposing lanes for more efficient signal timing while removing left turn conflicts compared to conventional diamond interchange left turns. While it supports efficient ramp-to-ramp movements, it requires four signals, has a large footprint, and is difficult for pedestrians. With limited space near Old Seward Highway, MacInnes Street, and Shelikof Street, it would not fit well in this corridor.

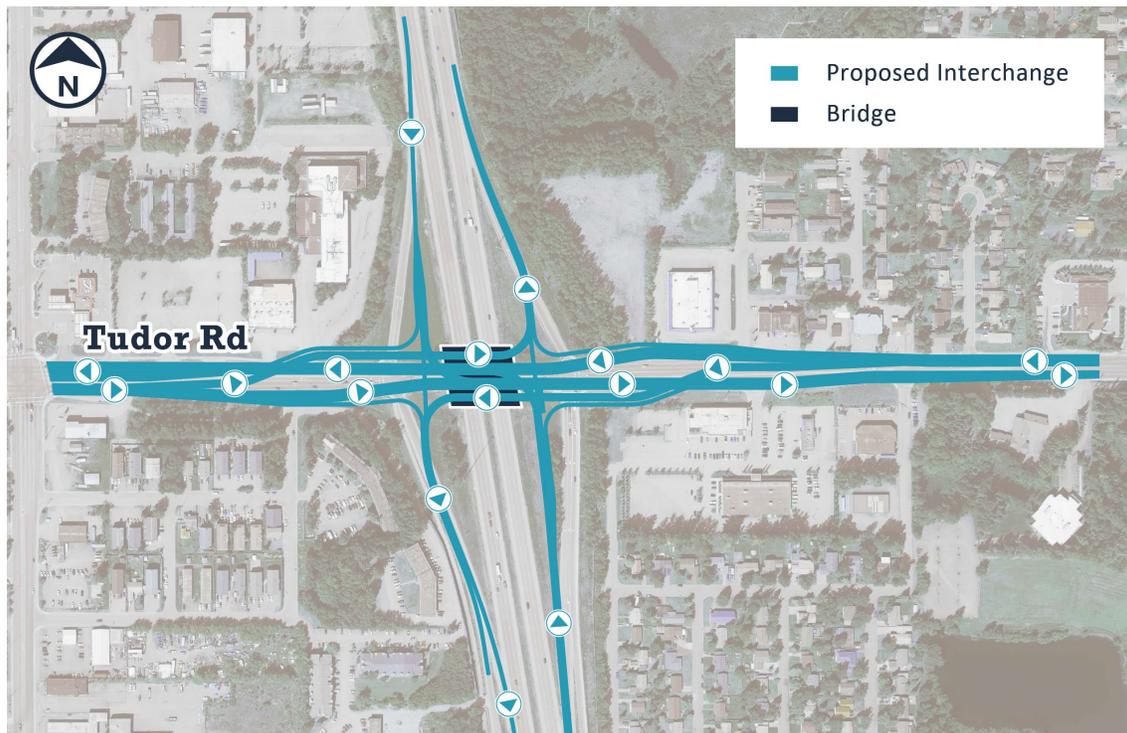


Figure 5: Displaced Left Interchange Alternative

Compatibility Assessment

Brian explained the structured ranking system (Figure 6) to compare interchange alternatives by considering key criteria that included:

- Meeting capacity needs
- Minimizing footprint
- Improving active transportation comfort
- Accommodating ramp-to-ramp movements
- Staying compatible with the proposed 36th Avenue interchange design (in-progress)

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- Addressing constructability such as bridge size and maintaining traffic on Tudor Road during construction

The assessment results provide a means of understanding how an interchange alternative addresses priority criteria and provides a comparison between alternatives. These planning assessments help the team screen and prioritize alternatives leading to our recommendations for more detailed engineering and environmental evaluations.

		Diamond Forms			
		Tight Diamond	Single Point	Diverging Diamond	Displaced Left
Considerations	Capacity	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal
	Footprint	Optimal	Optimal	Poor	Poor
	Active Transportation Suitability	Optimal	Fair	Fair	Fair
	Allows ramp-to-ramp Movements	Optimal	Poor	Poor	Optimal
	Compatible with 36th Ave Interchange	Optimal	Poor	Poor	Optimal
	Constructability	Fair	Poor	Optimal	Fair

● Optimal
 ● Fair
 ● Poor

Figure 6: Compatibility Assessment

Screening Alternatives

Brian emphasized that no decisions have been made, but the tight diamond interchange is emerging as the preferred option for further study.

Next Steps & Closing Remarks

Brian thanked participant and said the team will advance the tight diamond for detailed study to evaluate constructability, safety performance, active transportation, and access management. Steve also thanked attendees, reminded everyone about the December 10 open house at the Loussac Library, and said the team will reconnect in the spring to show how this feedback has shaped the next phase of design.

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Attendee Comments & Questions

The following sections summarize comments and questions from attendees during the meeting.

Non-Motorized Transportation

- Request for clearer explanation of how pedestrian and bicycle movements would change under the project.
- Asked that planned non-motorized improvements be highlighted to help the public understand the project's benefits.
- Highlighted Tudor Road as a major barrier to north-south neighborhood travel, noting very limited safe crossings, and urged the team to prioritize improving non-motorized connectivity.
- Raised serious concerns about pedestrian safety at MacInnes Street, noting that even under controlled conditions the five lane, 45 mph crossing felt unsafe.
- Requested updated pedestrian data, noting increased foot traffic from new housing and shelters and concerns about users unfamiliar with urban crossings.
- Noted that traffic modeling often prioritizes vehicles and asked the team to ensure multimodal experience remains central.

Design

- Noted that raising the bridge may reduce the need for ramp-to-ramp movements for oversized vehicles and asked how that influences design.
- Suggested improving neighborhood street connections rather than expanding the interchange to address delays and difficult turns at Shelikof and MacInnes Streets.
- Asked whether loop ramps or roundabouts are being ruled out solely because of space constraints.
- Asked why the tight diamond ranks highest for active transportation when all options require crossing entrance and exit ramps.
- Recalled that half-width bridge construction was ruled out at Dowling and noted that a DDI allows the new bridge(s) to be built while keeping the old one in service.
- Raised concerns about visibility for the right turn from the Seward Highway onto Tudor Road and how potential grade changes could worsen an already unsafe condition.

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- Asked whether a tight diamond normally includes a right-turn slip lane.
- Asked whether the team had considered flipping the interchange, so Tudor goes under and the Seward Highway goes over to avoid raising the bridge.

Funding

- Asked whether the project will rely on existing NHPP or STBG funding or if the team plans to pursue additional discretionary grant funding.
- Asked whether constructability evaluations also include cost.

Environmental

- Clarification on protections for parks, recreation areas, and cultural resources, noting that Section 4(f) requires its own impact analysis even when a project uses a NEPA categorical exclusion.

Traffic

- Request for quantification of westbound-to-southbound left-turn delays.
- Asked how the project could affect access and safety at MacInnes Street, noting existing crossing difficulties and concerns that interchange improvements might worsen conditions.
- Shared concerns that improving traffic flow at the Tudor interchange could remove existing natural gaps at MacInnes Street, increase speeds, and increase crashes, suggesting that measures like a signal may be needed.
- Asked whether the high number of crashes at the Tudor interchange is unusual compared to the rest of the system.
- Asked whether the industry's shift away from adding capacity is related to induced demand and the tendency for added lanes to fill with traffic.

Transit

- Asked about transit ridership along Tudor Road.
- Asked whether lighting plans consider long-term maintenance needs, including access for repairs, replacements, and snow management, in addition to visibility and safety benefits.

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- Asked if the transit stop near MacInnes Street will be considered when analyzing that intersection.

Emergency Response

- Asked how emergency response needs will be maintained during construction given the proximity of Fire Station 4.

General

- Stressed the need for strong coordination between DOT&PF and MOA, noting that municipal street improvements (like better neighborhood circulation or new connections) could significantly influence interchange needs and function.
- Questions on whether continuous frontage roads, such as Brayton Drive, are still appropriate in an urban context as the highway transitions from rural to city conditions.
- Asked how posted speed limits are determined and whether the public votes on them or participates through a hearing process.
- Raised safety concerns about MacInnes Street, citing LOS F operations, past fatal crashes, emergency access needs, and questioned why improvements may not occur until 2030.