

FEBRUARY 18, 2025



# House Transportation Committee

## Department of Transportation & Public Facilities

### Bike and Pedestrian Safety

Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities  
Pam Golden, P.E., State Traffic & Safety Engineer  
Shannon McCarthy, Communications Director



# ALASKANS ARE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION USERS

## WHERE DOES ALASKA RANK?

**8%** of people  walk to work

Ranked **1st** in the U.S.

**1%** of people  bike to work


Ranked **6th** in the U.S.

**9%** of people  walk and bike to work

Ranked **1st** in the U.S.

 **11%** of people walk, bike, and ride transit to work

Ranked **7th** in the U.S.

Alaska spends  **\$11.58** per capita on walk/bike projects

Ranked **1st** in the U.S.

**55%** of Alaskans are getting recommended physical activity 

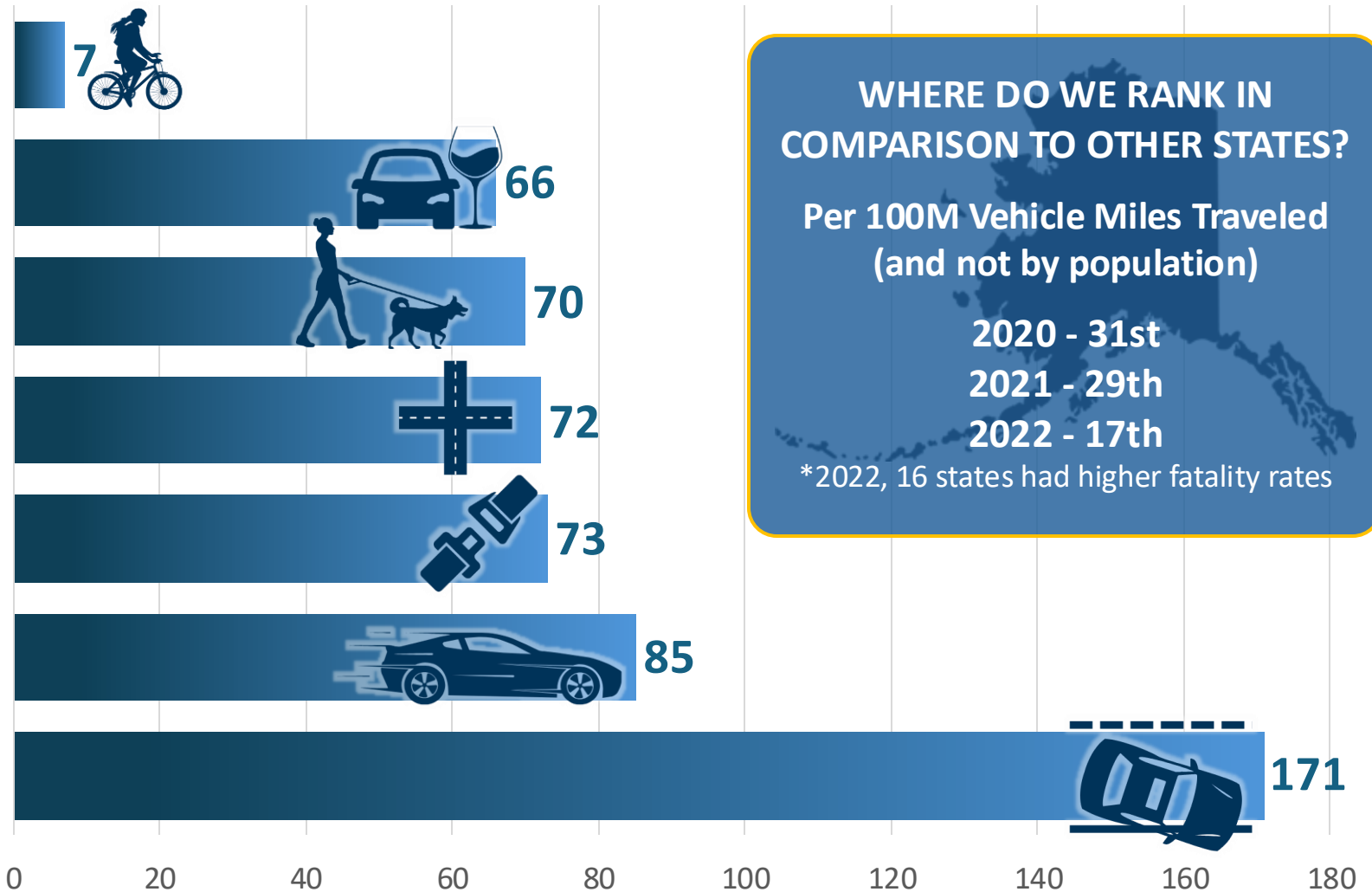
Ranked **9th** in the U.S.

*Alaska Active Transportation Rankings from Alaska DOT&PF Active Transportation Plan 2019, Page 13*



# ALASKA FATALITIES

## Different Crash Types REQUIRE Different Solutions



(Five years of fatal crash data per Fatality Analysis Reporting System, US DOT)



# PROBLEM:

## Pedestrians are Over-Represented in Alaska Fatality Counts

### National Ranking Pedestrian Fatality Rate/100,000 population

source: NHTSA Fatality Analysis Reporting System

	2020	2021	2022	2023*	2024*
# of pedestrian fatalities	13	17	13	12 ped, 0 bike	15 ped, 1 bike
Ranking	21 <sup>st</sup>	18 <sup>th</sup>	27 <sup>th</sup>		

Because of our smaller population and fewer number of overall crashes, Alaska hovers between 15-20% of pedestrians in all crash fatalities.

15%  
to  
20%



\*unofficial results



# BICYCLIST: DIFFERENT CRASH PROBLEM

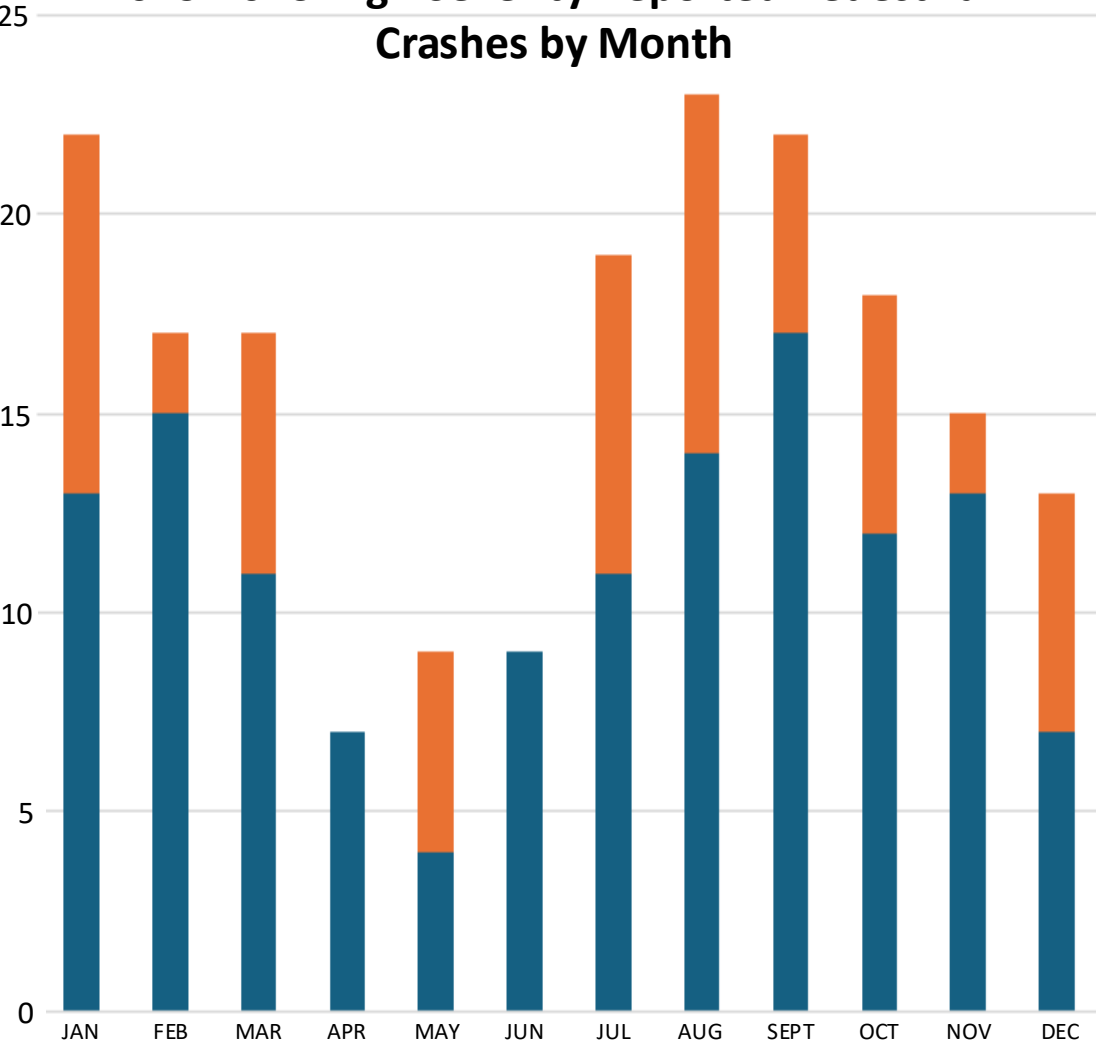
## Reported Crashes 2019-2023

- ~95 crashes/year
- 77% are in Anchorage
- 81% injury
- 2.5 in 100 of all statewide fatal crashes
- Trend: total crashes declining while fatalities are increase again
- 88% at intersections or driveways



# PEDESTRIAN CRASHES

2019-2023 High Severity Reported Pedestrian Crashes by Month



■ Suspected Serious Injury ■ Fatal Injury (Killed)

## WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT ALASKA'S PEDESTRIAN CRASHES?

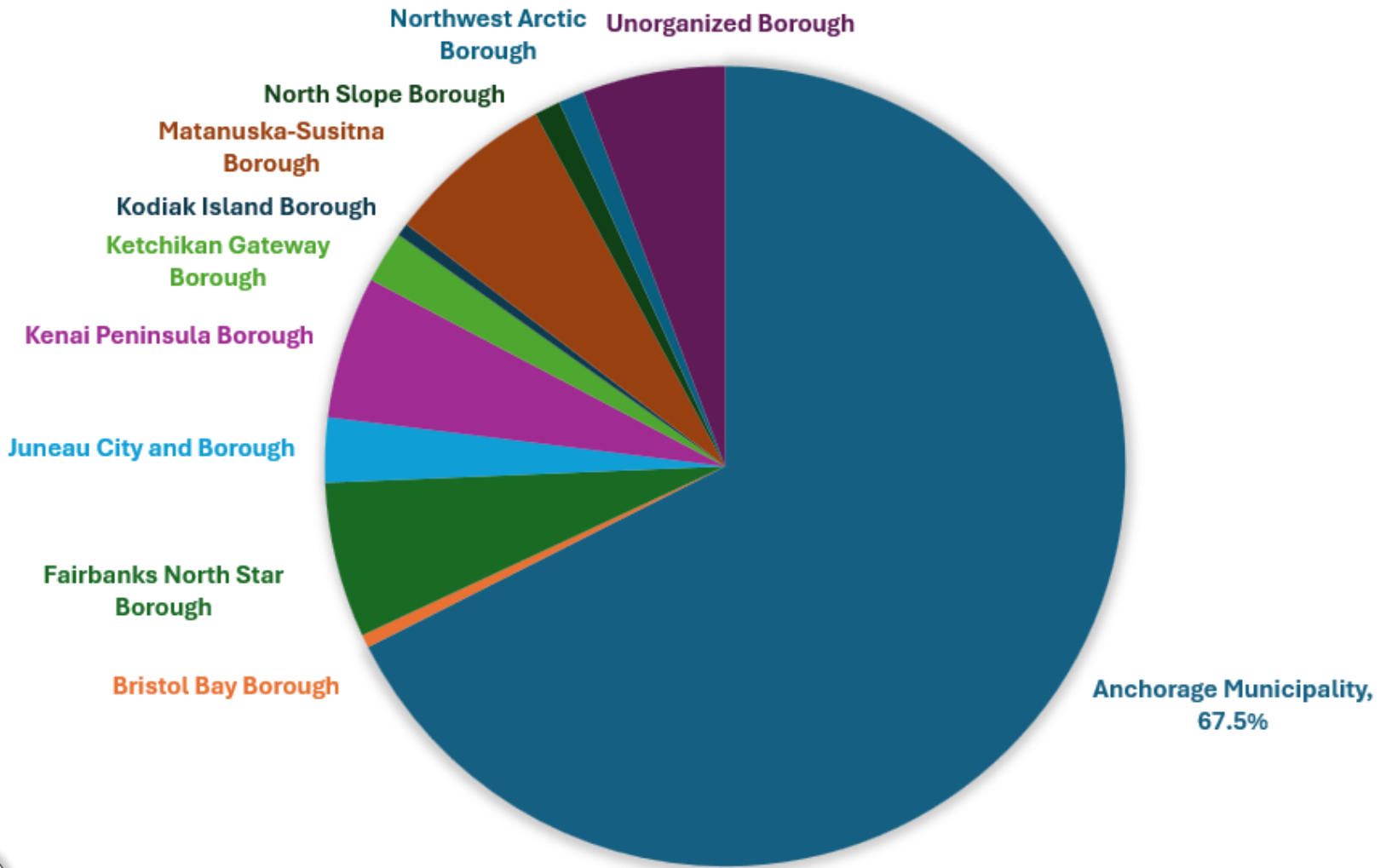
Overrepresented in Alaska's pedestrian fatalities:

- Dark / Low-light 
- Fall-Winter 
- Rain, Snow, Ice 
- 4-7 PM 
- Similar Injury Profile 



# PEDESTRIAN CRASHES

2019-2023 REPORTED FATAL AND SERIOUS INJURY PEDESTRIAN CRASHES BY BOROUGH



# FALL 2024: ANCHORAGE PEDESTRIAN FATALITIES

## What we know so far about this year's pedestrian deaths in Anchorage

Alaska Public Media | By **AKPM Staff**  
Published October 1, 2024 at 12:22 PM AKDT

## This September is the deadliest month for pedestrians in Anchorage in over a decade

By **Wesley Early**  
Published September 23, 2024 at 12:01 PM AKDT



Anchorage

## After string of pedestrian fatalities on Anchorage roads, LaFrance pushes to reinstate jaywalking offense

By Emily Goodykoontz  
Published: December 17, 2024

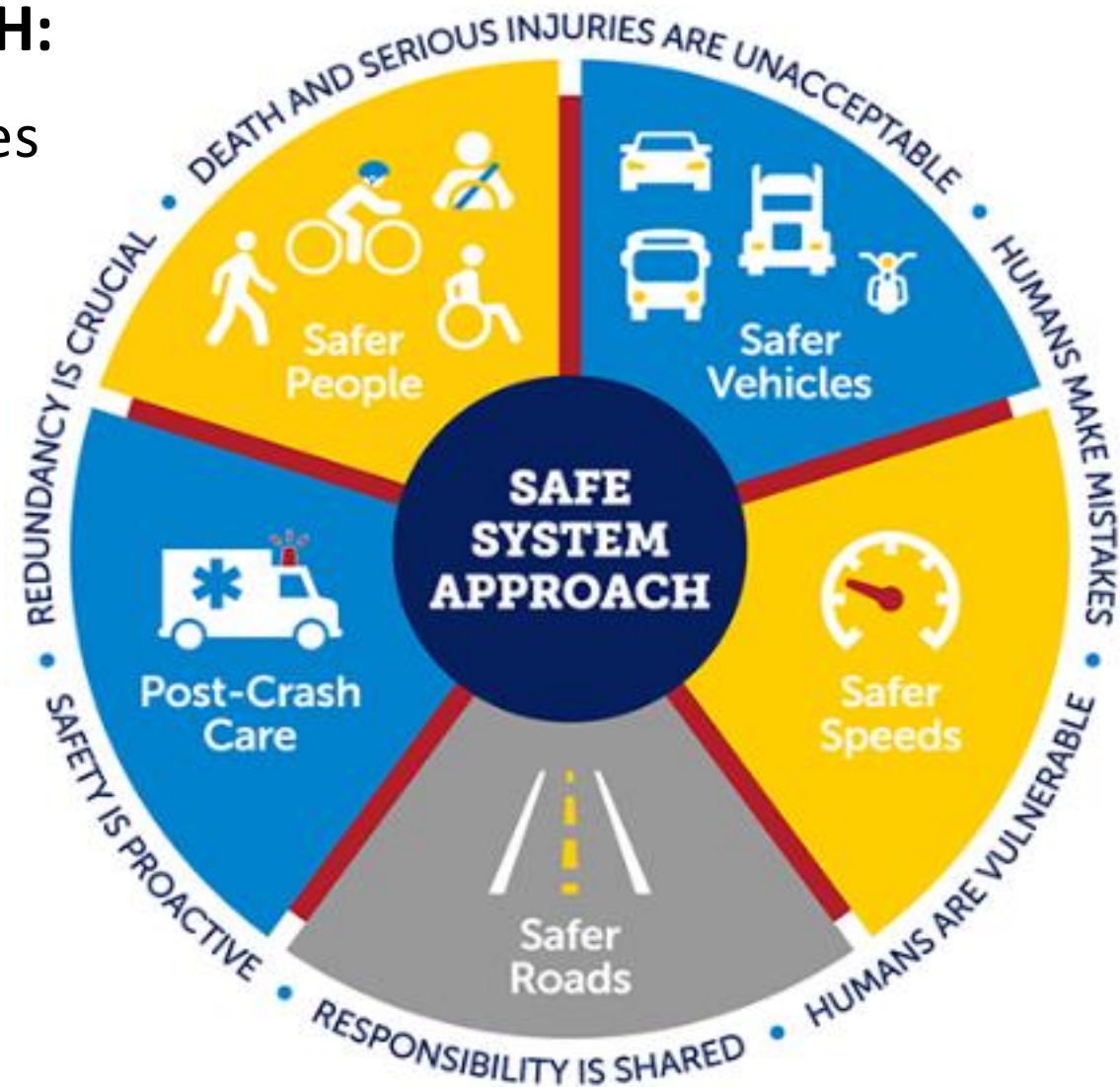




# FALL 2024: ANCHORAGE SAFE SYSTEMS APPROACH

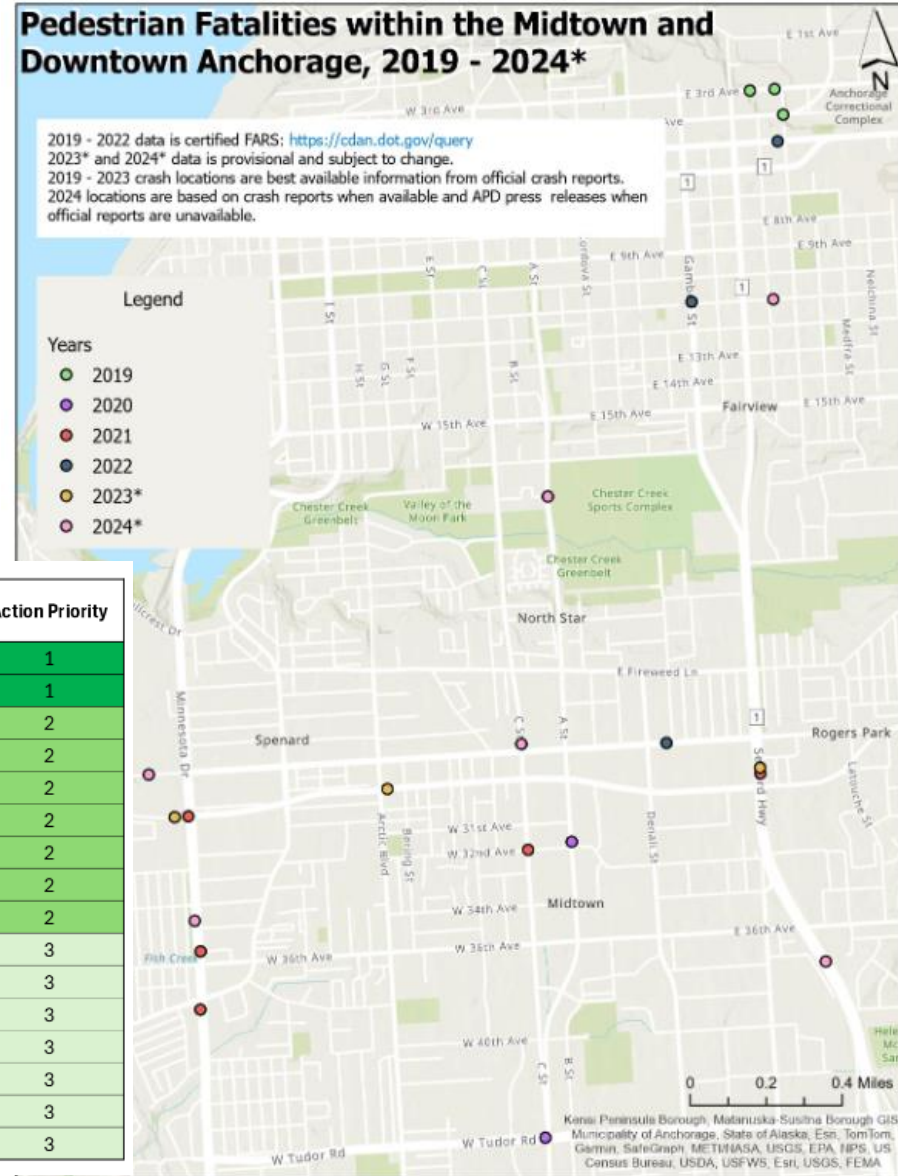
## SAFE SYSTEMS APPROACH:

- Death and Serious Injuries are Unacceptable
- Humans Make Mistakes
- Humans Are Vulnerable
- Responsibility is Shared
- Safety is Proactive
- Redundancy is Crucial



# FALL 2024-TODAY: VISION ZERO TASK FORCE

- Partnership with Anchorage Police Department, Municipality of Anchorage, DOT&PF Regional and Statewide staff
- Looked at Contributing Factors
- Effectively Reducing Speeds
  - Speed studies
  - Operational considerations
  - Public Buy In
  - Enforcement
  - Engineering = Physical the infrastructure that match expectations
- Prioritizing Actions
  - Tudor Rd, Muldoon Rd



Corridor	Action Priority
TUDOR ROAD	1
MULDOON ROAD	1
NORTHERN LIGHTS BLVD	2
15TH AVE & DEBARR ROAD	2
5TH AVENUE	2
C STREET	2
BENSON BOULEVARD	2
A STREET	2
SPENARD RD	2
OLD SEWARD HIGHWAY	3
MINNESOTA DRIVE	3
GAMBELL STREET	3
36TH AVENUE	3
BRAGAW STREET	3
MOUNTAIN VIEW DRIVE	3
INGRAST	3



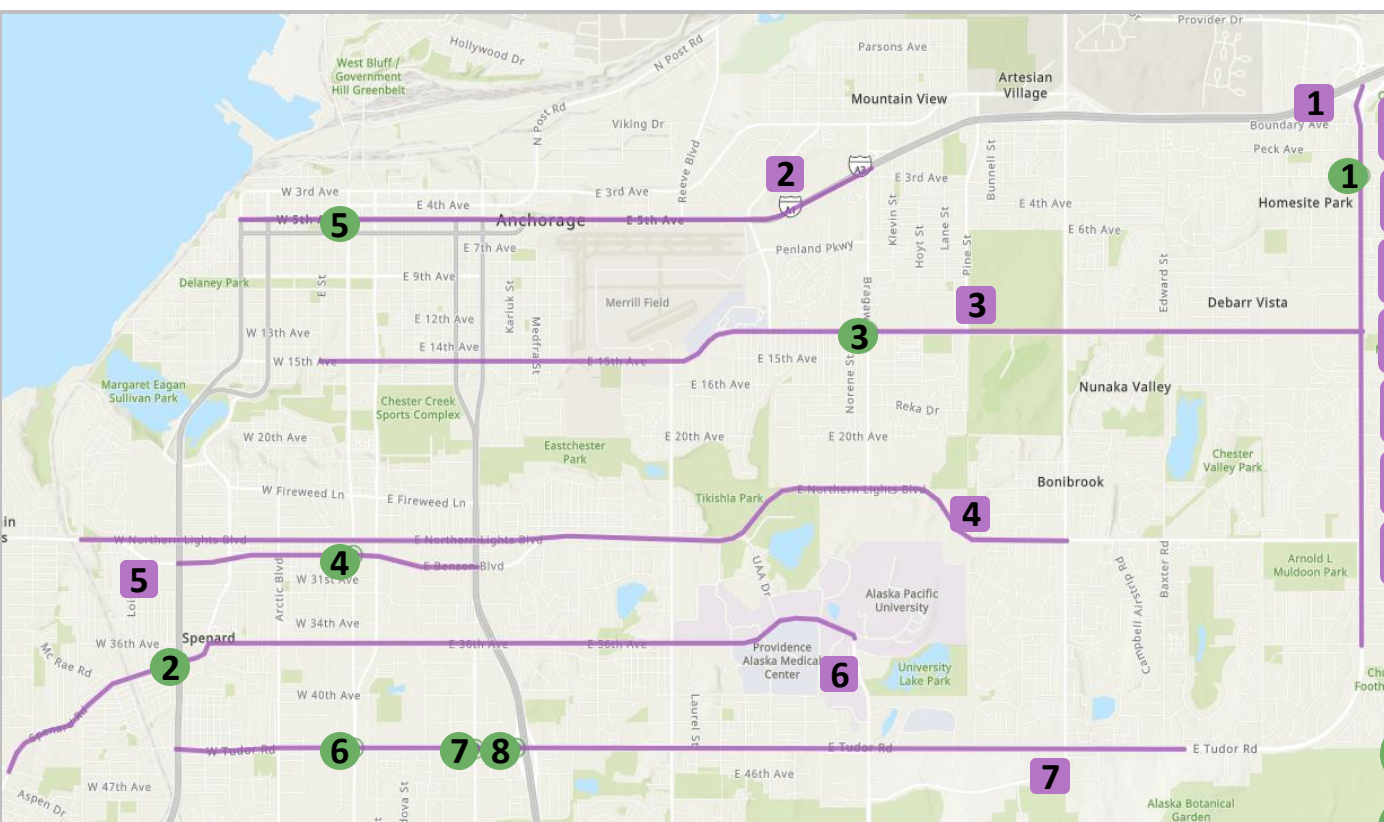
# VULNERABLE ROAD USER SAFETY ASSESSMENT – ANCHORAGE

## Corridors

- 1** Muldoon Rd
- 2** West 5<sup>th</sup> Ave / Glenn Hwy
- 3** Debarr Rd / 15<sup>th</sup> Ave
- 4** Northern Lights Blvd
- 5** Benson Blvd
- 6** Spenard / 36<sup>th</sup> Ave / Providence
- 7** Tudor Rd

## Intersections

- 1** Duben Ave & Muldoon Rd
- 2** Spenard Rd & Minnesota Dr
- 3** Debarr Rd & Bragaw St
- 4** Benson Blvd & C St
- 5** West 5<sup>th</sup> Ave & C St



**6** Tudor Rd & C Street

**7** Tudor Rd & Old Seward Hwy

**8** Tudor Rd & Homer Drive

Reference: Alaska Strategic Highway Safety Plan





# FHWA PROVEN SAFETY COUNTERMEASURES

- Bike Lanes
- Walkways (pathways, sidewalks, and wide shoulders)
- Median/Pedestrian Refuge Islands in Urban/Suburban areas
- Crosswalk Visibility Enhancements
- Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons
- Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons
- Leading Pedestrian Intervals
- Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration)



*Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon in Fairbanks*

# PROVEN SAFETY COUNTERMEASURES SAVE LIVES AND ARE UNDERUTILIZED

## Solutions with Significant Crash-reduction Potential



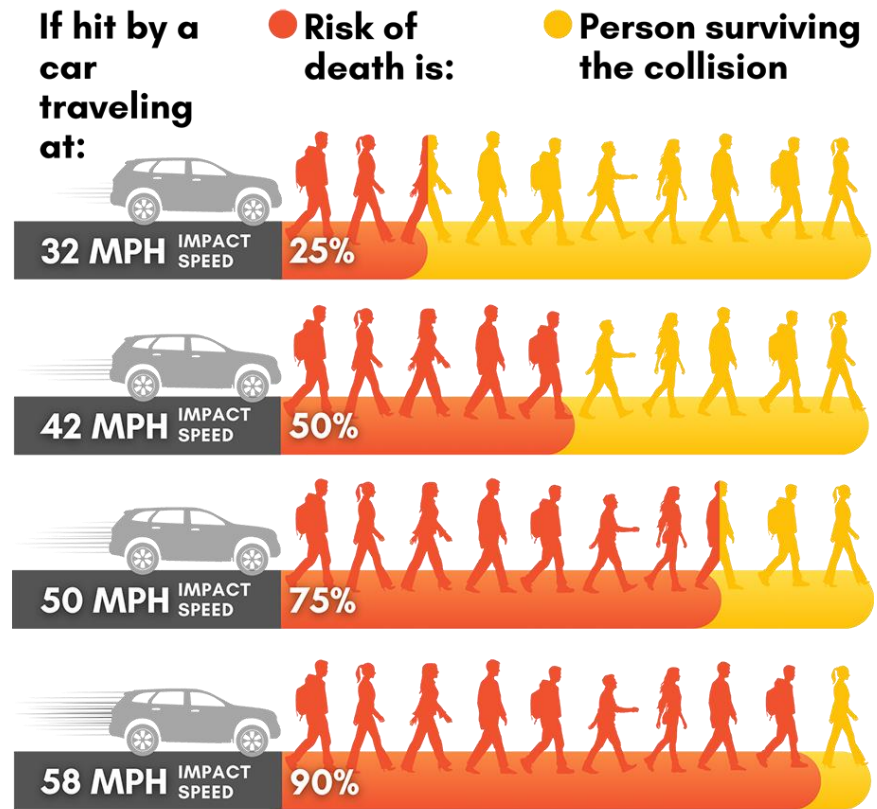
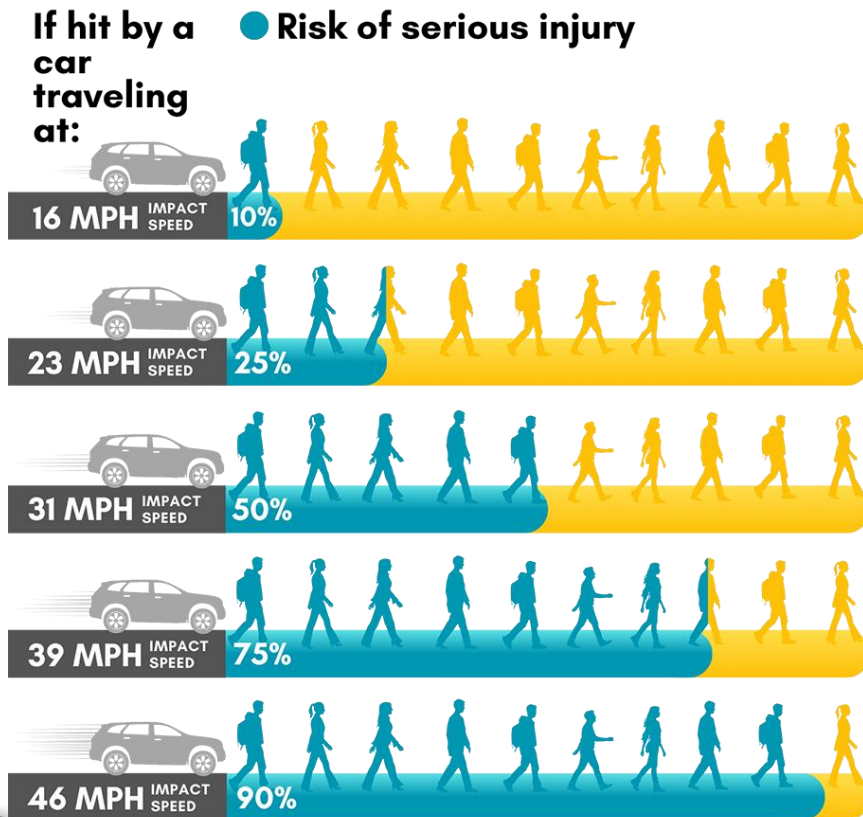
% 2021 Fatalities	Crash Type	Proven Safety Countermeasures can reduce crashes by
50%	Roadway Departures	Median Barriers: 97% Rumble Strips: 51-64%
27%	Intersections	Roundabouts: 82% Managing Corridor Access: 31%
29%	Speeding	Speed Safety Cameras: 47% Variable Speed Limits: 51%
30%	Pedestrians & Cyclists	Sidewalks: 89% Adding Bike Lanes: 49%

Source: FARS 2021 Annual Report File; FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasure: <https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures>



# SPEED LIMITS AND PHYSICS

- Speed plays a role in every crash
- Higher speed crashes are typically more severe
- Lowering speed limits without changing the context of the roadway typically results in a 2-3 mph change in operating speed, unless there is regular enforcement



According to a study by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety

According to a study by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety





# ROAD SAFETY AUDITS (RSA)

**Road Safety Audits are conducted by independent, multi-disciplinary teams**

- Identify safety concerns to road users including those that may be under different circumstances
- Identify near, mid, and long-term opportunities that eliminate or mitigate the identified safety concerns

**Three packages of Safety Audits kicking off in 2025**

- Rural and Remote School Safety Audits
- Statewide Road Safety Audits
- Vulnerable Road User Safety Audits

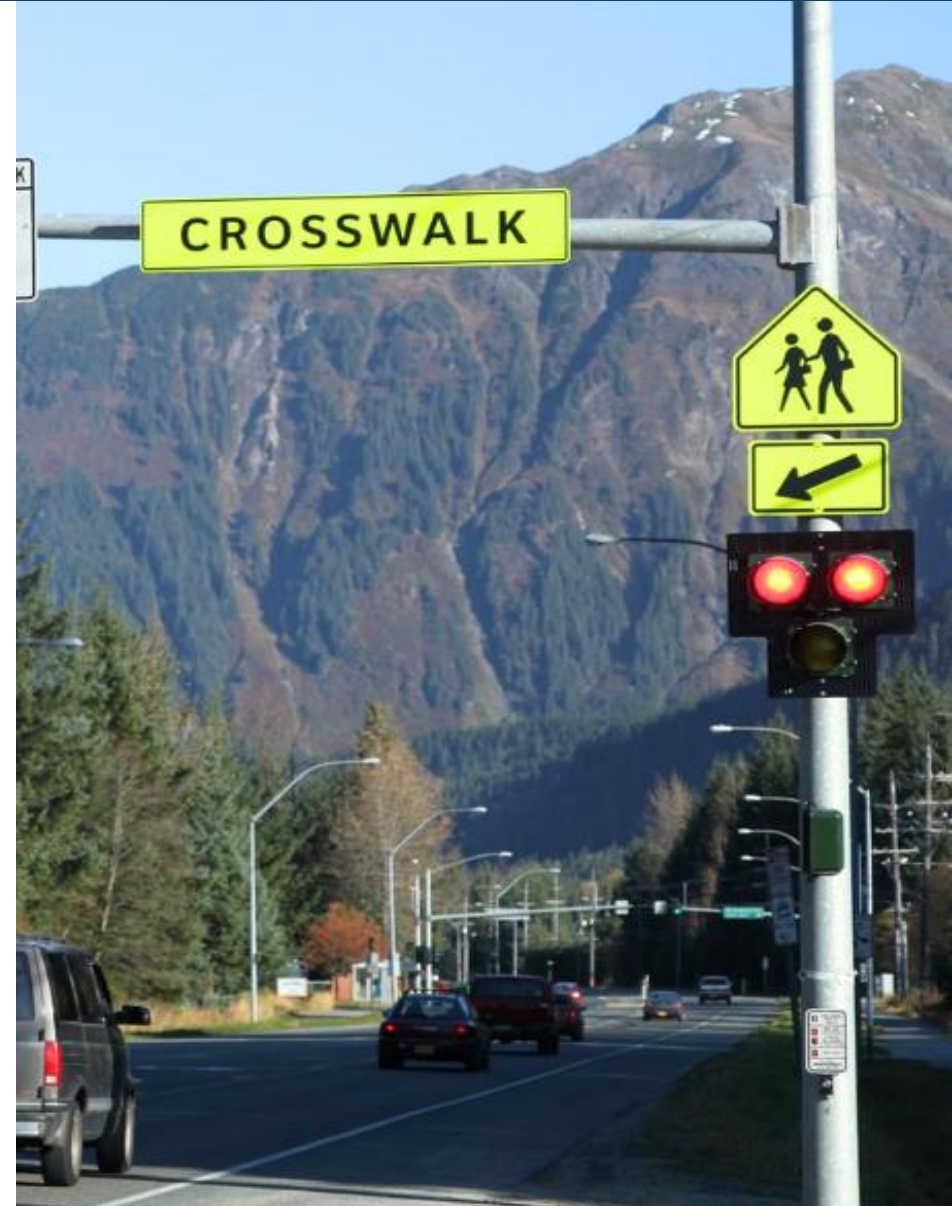


*2015 Badger Rd RSA Team*



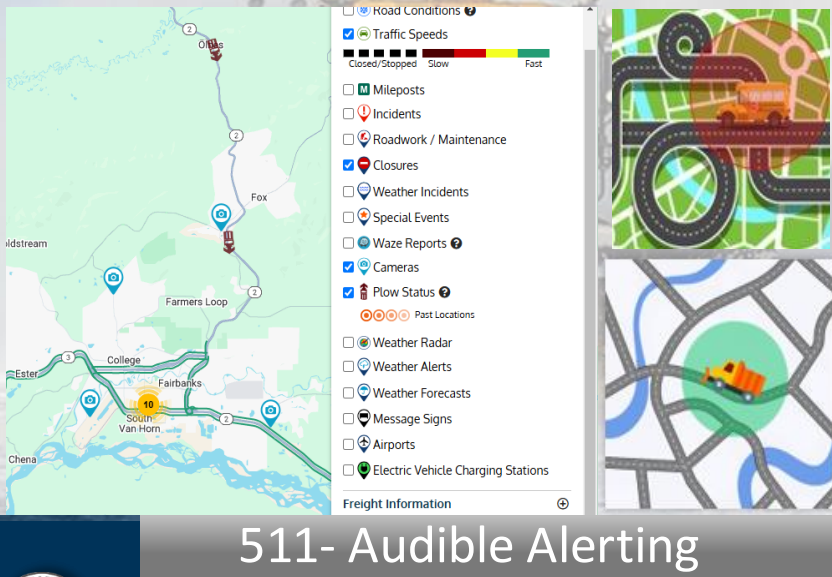
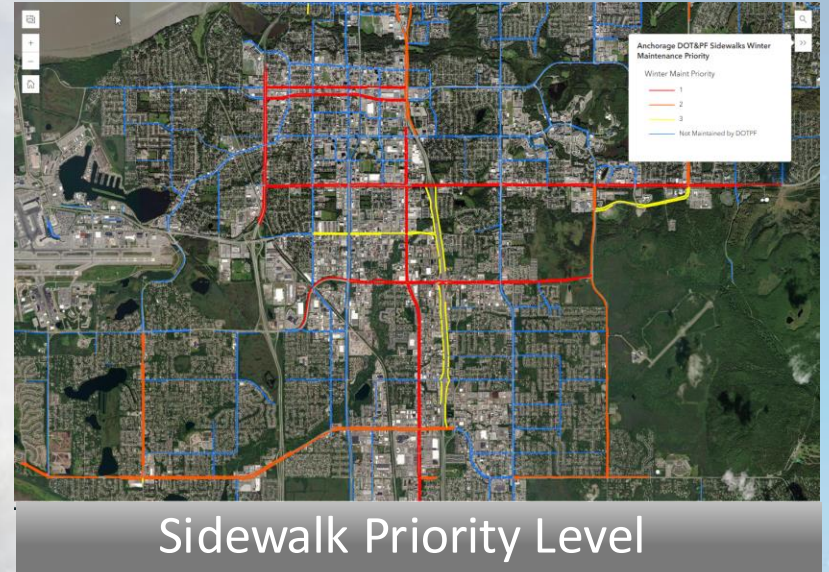
# NEW WAYS OF WORKING TO SUPPORT SAFETY

- Complete Streets Policy Under Development
- Alaska Traffic Manual – Update Alaska’s With New National Manual
- Updating Speed Limit Policy
- Urban Safety Corridor Selection Criteria
- Highway Preconstruction Manual
- Adding Accessible Pedestrian Signal Technology (Leading Pedestrian Signals)
- Focus on Cruise Ship Communities/Cruise Ship Docks – Safety Measures for Significant Influx of Pedestrians (Sitka, Hoonah)





# SYSTEMWIDE SAFETY INITIATIVES THAT SUPPORT SAFETY



# PARTNERS IN SAFETY

- Sometimes, the biggest barrier towards funding safety projects is a lack of supporting data
- Partners in Safety established to:
  - Engage with all transportation users
  - Capture local knowledge
  - Collect data on community safety concerns to identify and support future safety projects
- September 2024 - Pilot event
- Visiting more communities in 2025

ALASKA DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC FACILITIES

# JUNEAU!

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU ABOUT ROAD SAFETY!

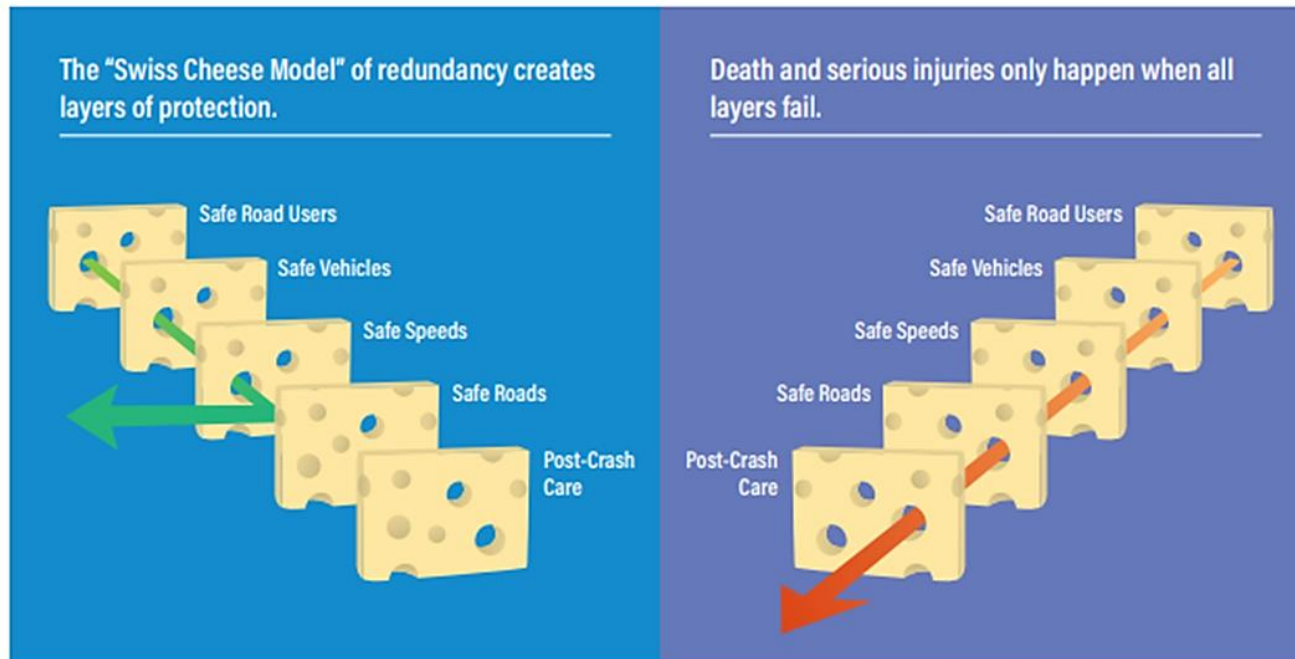
## OPEN HOUSE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27  
4:30-6:30 PM.

UAS REC CENTER, 11120 GLACIER HWY

# STRATEGIC HIGHWAY SAFETY PLAN (SHSP)

- Every state is required to have a SHSP
- Alaska's current SHSP is based on the Safe Systems Approach
- Includes Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment
- Highway Safety Office and Highway Safety Improvement Program projects must align with SHSP to be eligible for funding



Source: Washington Traffic Safety Commission, 2021





# HIGHWAY SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

- Data driven and projects focus on improving the roadway
- Program purpose: achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads



*Danby Wembley Roundabout, Fairbanks*



*Steese Hwy Enhanced Curve Delineation*



# ALASKA HIGHWAY SAFETY OFFICE

- Data driven solutions
- Focus on driving behaviors
- Competitive National Highway Traffic Safety Administration grants
- Grants are reimbursable grants and focused on behaviors
  - High visibility enforcement (drug, alcohol, speeding)
  - VRU awareness programs
  - Media campaigns
  - Bike Safe programs
- Alaska safe roadway behaviors symposium: September 2024
  - 100 attendees from law enforcement, MPOs, EMS, passenger safety groups, tribes, and other traffic safety stakeholders
  - Trainings: Drug Recognition, Traffic Incident Management, Car Seat Checks



APD's Impaired Driving Enforcement Unit (IDEU) made 542 traffic stops in May, writing 396 citations and making 132 OUI arrests.

Please watch your speed, drive responsibly, and Report Every Dangerous Driver Immediately (REDDI).



👍👎 165

82 comments 33 shares



# ANCHORAGE PILOT PROJECT = PROTECTED BIKE LANES

- Phase 1 = Pine & McCarrey Streets
- Phase 2 = A St./6<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- Temporary Materials
- Utilized by approximately 100-150 users during weekdays
- Reduced speeds slightly on A St./6<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- Did not increase crashes
- Next?
  - No immediate plan for A St./6th Ave.
  - Discussing Lane Drops
  - 2026-2027 Winter Protected Bike Lanes



# ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Improve safety, accessibility for users

Increase agency-user coordination and progress measures

Promote and support healthy lifestyles

Develop an efficient active transportation network and infrastructure to encourage walking and bicycling



Active Transportation Long Range Plan





# THANK YOU

**Pam Golden, P.E.  
State Traffic and Safety Engineer**

**Shannon McCarthy  
Communications Director**

**Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities  
[DOT.Commissioner@alaska.gov](mailto:DOT.Commissioner@alaska.gov)**

