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(11)

Date referred: 2/19/88

FURTHER REFERRALS:

DATE: 2/29/88 -

The Finance Committee has considered HB 437

"An Act relating to naming the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway."

RECOMMENDS:

- replace with \_\_\_\_\_  the same title
- attached amendment(s)  a new title
- do pass
- do not pass
- no recommendation
- individual recommendations
- additional referral to the \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

ADOPTS:  \_\_\_\_\_ letter of intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

- fiscal impact  same as previous fiscal note published 2/19/88
- zero fiscal note  same as previous zero fiscal note published \_\_\_\_\_
- zero with analysis

SIGNING DO PASS:

SIGNING OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

ADAMS *[Signature]*

SWACK-HAMMER *[Signature]*

BOYER *[Signature]* w/letter of intent

RIEGER *[Signature]*

FRANK *[Signature]*

POURCHOT *[Signature]* no rec

LARSON *[Signature]* No Rec.

BROWN *[Signature]* No REC.

DAVIS *[Signature]* NO REC

*[Signature]*  
Chairman's signature

STATE OF ALASKA 1988 LEGISLATIVE SESSION  
FISCAL NOTE

Bill Version: HB 437  
Publish Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**REQUEST**  
-----  
Revision Date: 2/23/88  
Title: Replace Parks Highway Signs  
with Mitchell Expressway Signs  
Sponsor: Trans. Committee  
Requestor: Cato

Agency Affected: DOT&PF  
BRU: Northern Region  
Components: \_\_\_\_\_

**EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)**

OPERATING	FY 88	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING						
CAPITAL		10.0				
REVENUE						

**FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)**

GENERAL FUND		10.0				
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL		10.0				

**POSITIONS:**

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

**ANALYSIS:** See attached analysis

Prepared by: Ron Tanner Phone: 451-2276  
Division: DOT&PF Date: 2/23/88  
Approved by Commissioner: Mark S. Hickey Date: 2/23/88  
Agency: DOT&PF

Distribution (by preparer):  
Legislative Finance  
Legislative Sponsor  
Requestor  
Office of Management and Budget  
Impacted Agency(ies)  
Senate Secretary

**RECEIVED**  
FEB 25 1988

FISCAL NOTE ATTACHMENT

(Replace Parks Highway Signs with Mitchell Expressway Signs)

ANALYSIS:

The name change of this section of highway from Parks Highway to Mitchell Expressway will require replacing the old signs with 271 square feet of new signs. The contract price for the new signs will range between \$40 to \$50 per square foot, placing the cost of the change between \$8,688 to \$10,880.

It may be necessary to replace some of the support structures, as the new signs are larger than the old, due to the increase in the number of letters in the legend.

Several of the signs are located on signal mast arms and the increased size of the sign will necessitate checking the structural adequacy of the signal poles and mast arms with new signs. If the signal poles are not adequate for the new sign legend, it may become necessary to decrease the size of the legend below what is considered acceptable in the Federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

2

HOUSE BILL NO. 437

3

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

FIFTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5

A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to naming the Robert J. Mitchell  
7 Expressway."

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

9 \* Section 1. FINDINGS. Robert J. Mitchell was a life-long Alaskan and  
10 a life-long resident of the interior, born on November 2, 1918. Robert J.  
11 Mitchell was an employee of the Alaska Road Commission during early adult-  
12 hood and was a founder of Mitchell Truck and Tractor, an early Interior  
13 transportation company. Robert J. Mitchell was also one of the founders of  
14 GHEMM, Inc., an important Alaska construction firm and was one of the first  
15 persons to develop the potential of the current south Fairbanks industrial  
16 area. Through Robert J. Mitchell's efforts, a major rail spur from  
17 Fairbanks through the south Fairbanks industrial area to the east side of  
18 the International Airport was constructed. The new South Fairbanks  
19 Expressway is routed immediately adjacent to the area that Robert J.  
20 Mitchell was so deeply involved with before passing away on February 23,  
21 1980. Robert J. Mitchell left behind a legacy of a strong family unit,  
22 friendship to all, knowledge of the value of positive thought, and un-  
23 daunting faith in the future of Fairbanks and Alaska. The legislature  
24 wishes to remember Robert J. Mitchell's positive contribution to the people  
25 of the Interior and to the development of the south Fairbanks industrial  
26 area. It is to accomplish this goal that the section of the Alaska Highway  
27 System from the new Airport Road Interchange to the Richardson Highway is  
28 to be named the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway.

29 \* Sec. 2. AS 35.40 is amended by adding a new section to read:

1           Sec. 35.40.030. ROBERT J. MITCHELL EXPRESSWAY. The South Fair-  
2 banks Expressway between the Parks Highway and Airport Road inter-  
3 change to the Richardson Highway is named the Robert J. Mitchell  
4 Expressway.

ROBERT J. MITCHELL  
Pioneer Memorial Service

First United Methodist Church  
Fairbanks, Alaska  
February 27, 1980  
1:00 p.m.

Brother Robert J. Mitchell, known to his many friends as "Mitch" was a life-long Alaskan. He was born in Fairbanks on November 2, 1918, the son of Eliza and Charles Mitchell. His mother, Eliza Hatch Mitchell, attended school in Fairbanks and later worked in the Fairbanks Postoffice for many years. His father, Charles, was associated with Waetcher Brothers and was a member of Igloo #4, Pioneers of Alaska, Roll Call number 1597. Mitch and his sister, Dorothy Hardy, grew up in Fairbanks and attended local schools. On occasions, in reminiscing about his school days, Mitch would grin and remark "what a difficult time Benji Adler had with him in her English class." During high school he played basketball, a game in which he maintained an active interest throughout his life. After graduating from Fairbanks High School in 1936, he continued to play basketball as a member of "Sticky" Griffins Wolverines in a league that had players such as John Butrovich, Joe Franich, Bill Stroecker, Jack Wilbur and the Ringstad brothers. When queried about the success of his team, his answer was, "We played a lot of games but Johnny Butrovich's team always seemed to come out ahead."

Like many other local boys, Mitch worked for the Alaska Road Commission during high school summer vacations and later he was employed full-time in the various highway camps in the Fairbanks District. He did his job with enthusiasm and was always interested in learning more about his work from experienced fellow workers.

The result was that he developed a knowledge of heavy-duty equipment, construction and transportation that would serve him well in the years to come. His sense of detail and balance also came into focus while working with the road commission. About 1937, Bob, after receiving a paycheck, decided that he was being under paid for the period. He went to Frank Nash with his analysis and Frank took him to the time-keeper who showed "Mitch" that he was credited with all the hours that he had worked. The offsetting feature was that "Mitch" was attending too many meal sittings and that his account was being deducted for every one of them.

After service in the Army during World War II in Alaska, Canada and Montana, he returned to Fairbanks and his stories of the "Fighting 83rd" provided amusement for his associates--but often left the conclusions to their imagination.

The happiest day of Mitch's life was on January 20, 1945, when he married Mary Maureen Ludvigson, a vivacious, petite girl who had come from Barron, Wisconsin, to work for Metcalf, Hamilton Kansas City Bridge Company at Ladd Field during World War II. Bob and Mary continued to live in Fairbanks and were blessed with three children, Gregory Charles Mitchell, Janelle Lois Weaver and Judith Louise Jaspersen, all, who with their respective spouses, Jacquelyn, Tom and Jim, ~~are~~ reside in Fairbanks. Grandchildren are Joann and Douglas Weaver, Peggy Jaspersen, Roberta and Gregory Mitchell II.

After returning to Fairbanks, Mitch, with his life-time friend Clyde Geraghty, formed Mitchell Truck and Tractor, Inc.

The Company was one of the early pioneer trucking companies hauling over the Richardson Highway from Valdez. The two partners were forward looking and always searching for more efficiency that resulted in such innovative equipment as a booster engine and drive

train for hill climbing--a unit that was installed under the flat bed of a 30-foot semi-trailer.

In 1952, Bob Mitchell, together with Clyde Geraghty, Carl Heflinger, Carl Erickson and Harvey Marlin, Jr., formed GHEMM Company, Inc. This company started out in earth work and equipment rental and has grown over the years, performing general contract work throughout central, northern and western Alaska, including construction of the Alyeska pipeline-highway Yukon River Bridge - jointly with the Monson-Osberg group of Seattle, Washington. Good friend Conrad Frank joined Ghemm Company in 1959.

In 1957, Bob formed Tip Top Chevrolet, together with other longtime Fairbanks associates such as Bob Ginther and Clyde Geraghty and was President of this company. He was also a partner in Metro Company and Tria Company and was President of New State Lands, Inc.

In the early 1960's, GHEMM Company performed several difficult construction jobs jointly with Guy and Dick Rivers and also one fairly large bridge job across the Susitna River at Sunshine on the Parks Highway jointly with the Rivers Brothers and Bill Vehmier of Fairbanks.

One of the original Mitchell Truck and Tractor employees, Willis Lundberg, is still with GHEMM Co., Inc. Bob and Willie always worked together through thick and thin to make things come out for the company.

Bob Mitchell was an enthusiastic Fairbanks booster with an outgoing personality that gave an air of welcome and confidence to those with whom he came in contact. He was instrumental in the development of many beautiful residential subdivisions and the industrial area of South Fairbanks and Metro Field including its

airport and the rail spur to the International Airport. Mitchell Truck and Tractor participated in the development of Mitchell Subdivision, Lemeta, Aurora and Westgate. Later, GHEMM Company, Inc. was involved with New State Lands in Fairwest and Edanella.

"Mitch" was especially proud of Metro Airport and the Railroad Spur to the International Airport. His associates often joked that when a tanker train went by or a Herc or other large airplane landed, Mitch was probably out there standing at attention in salute.

During these years, Bob was an instrument rated pilot and would fly personnel and needed parts and equipment to the projects to help keep the jobs on schedule.

Mitch was always dedicated to leading young people and from him many fortunate young men and women learned skills in the operation of equipment and most of all, the value of hard work, a positive approach to all endeavors and attention to detail. The young people who worked for him were very concerned about performing their job correctly as he had directed but all too frequently when he would be away from the scene, some unfortunate event would happen, such as a tractor getting stuck. They would try with feverish desperation to correct the problem but invariably he would return before recovery had been made, would quickly survey the problem, then simply climb on the tractor and walk it out or do some sort of thing "so apparently simple" to overcome the problem. Many of these young people are here now and will be carrying on for the good of the community and future generations.

Bob was a special person who was enthusiastic and energetic in all of his activities. More often than not he could be found on a tractor at 4:30 - 5:00 a.m. catching up on work that needed

to be done to assure continuity of projects. Also, he was a man of action and has been known to stimulate activities of others by throwing a full bucket of ice water on a partner enjoying a leisure shower. You can imagine the results.

His excellent personality and sense of humor were catching and, as a result, he was highly respected by his fellowman in all walks of life and those who came in contact with him were that much better off because of the association.

Mitch's philosophy of life can be summarized to a degree by the following thoughts.

1. There is far more time and money lost by indecision than by wrong decision and his success proved the point.
2. No matter how difficult or adverse a problem, treat it as an opportunity.
3. When the going gets tough, the tough get going.

Brother Robert J. Mitchell, Roll Call Number 2194, joined Igloo #4, Pioneers of Alaska on October 2, 1951. He passed away in Palm Springs, California on February 23, 1980 while in the company of his friend and partner of long standing, Clyde Geraghty. He is survived by his widow, Mary, who resides at the family home at 665 - 10th Avenue, Fairbanks and his children and grandchildren. His sister, Dorothy, preceded him in death.

The outstanding contributions that Brother Robert J. Mitchell has made to family, friends and colleagues will be long remembered. Fairbanks and Alaska are that much richer for his having come this way and pioneered on various fronts for the benefit of society in the true tradition of Alaskan Pioneers.

Daily News-Miner, Fairbanks, Alaska, Friday, Feb. 29, 1980

Editorial Opinion and Comment of



# Daily News - Miner

"Independent in All Things . . . Neutral in None"

Other opinions expressed on this page do not necessarily reflect those of the Daily News-Miner.

## The Mitchell touch

One doesn't have to look far to see the marks Robert J. Mitchell left on Fairbanks, and we'll all miss his brand of full-speed-ahead promotion for a long time.

Bob Mitchell was born here in 1918 and devoted his whole life to his belief that Fairbanks has a big place in Alaska's future. He had a contagious enthusiasm for the future of the Interior, and he never avoided the hard work necessary to make his efforts pay off.

All of Mr. Mitchell's work was important to him, but perhaps his biggest dream was the development of industrial property south of Fairbanks. He's the man who convinced other businessmen to finance and donate the materials and labor necessary to build the rail spur to Fairbanks International Airport. It might have been done eventually, but his efforts got it in time to serve through the trans-Alaska pipeline years and provide low-cost jet fuel shipping from the North Pole Refinery now.

He and his partners also invested their own labor and encouragement in Metro Field and some of the industries that have grown up around it after this industrial air park opened. This was Mr. Mitchell's way—he never waited for things to happen; he made them happen.

That's the way things were ever since he came back from his World War II hitch to get married and form Mitchell Truck and Tractor, a pioneer name in Richardson Highway transportation. He was also president of Tip-Top Chevrolet, one of the founders of Ghemm Co., a partner in Metro Company and Tria Company and president of New State Lands Inc. Both his family and his businesses are still here, and still thriving.

But perhaps Mr. Mitchell's greatest contribution was the lasting spirit he left here through his work and inspiration for young people in Fairbanks. He was as devoted to our community as he was to the business world, and because of that we'll never forget Bob Mitchell and the special touch he had in making our town a better place to live.

Norn  
John  
Greg  
Morr  
Jimm  
Delbe  
Haro  
Keith  
Arden  
Glen  
Geor  
Jame  
Willis  
Dary  
Jerry  
Frank  
Hans  
Gerald  
J Bew  
Walte  
Dale  
Virgil  
Quent  
Kenn  
Raym  
Willia  
Charl  
Vern  
Leona  
Gary  
Leona  
Kenn  
Trum  
Edwa  
Donal  
Dann  
Garth  
Richa  
Fred  
Fran  
Lamo  
Herbe  
Patric  
Darry  
Jame  
Andy  
Brigg  
Kenn  
Betty  
Georg  
Edwa  
Edwa  
Fred  
Sandr  
Larry  
Herbe  
Edwa  
Cliff  
Rodne  
Willia  
Gary  
Ovid

ation of the inmates' sup. Huston said... emphasis on that... seems to give no credit participation in the AA

said the meetings are a... consist of tape recor... A program, he said, is... people on the street who... alcohol, not for inmates... access anyway... fied that he was sent to... to receive the counseling... red. Others testified that... recommended psychiatric... none has been received... aid he has been in prison... about the counseling... d they are not allowed to... tional report given to the... nor the parole counselor's... r to prepare a defense... s are not taped, and in... they believe the parole... re greatest emphasis to... selor's report alone... n occasion lectured in... ile hearings, reportedly... son as a good example... ates for alcohol use, and... r records, inmates said... l they are not learning... and don't stand much of a... g a job upon release... they are reluctant to try... noyer to write a letter... ve a job. If they have to... ployer they were denied

if chance would I have if... se second time?" an in... m still fighting my case... The whole focus of the... nson that," he said... ites said they are unable... p, that public defenders... the prison to assist them... inmates have a parole... a job lined up, a place to... as upon release, that... to get credit from the... rged... instances, judges have... ad sentencing that the... sed after serving a third... e, but the parole board... f parole after the time is... id.

said his residence was... parole officer and police... rch warrant, that his... re confiscated and that... eive a speedy arraigh-

**n Box Boy**

urged with disorderly... 00 blank of Lacey Street... ollice said

ham, 18, of 1127 Park... l the theft of a tape... akers valued at \$170... nday

2 Mile Freeman Road... e padlock was broken... a small TV was taken.

k rite set

seen in a bar, drinking and moving from his residence without notifying his parole officer. He said the last point was not true

Still another inmate, in for selling marijuana, said he has refused to go before the parole board and will instead serve his full three years rather than play games with a parole hearing

"I had Rev. Ivons say that I'm an insult to come up for parole," one inmate said

"This is my first adult offense," one man testified, but the board dwelled on

thought the board should have professional members, and several said yes

Inmates also said they would like to have halfway houses to help them re-integrate into society

"We have a lot of people in here for three and four years because they got drunk or left their areas of residence without the parole board's permission. It costs the state \$26,000 a year to keep a man in here--over a drunk? It's pretty serious," one inmate said

**Robert Mitchell rite Wednesday**

A memorial service for Robert J. Mitchell, president of Tip-Top Chevrolet and one of the founders of Ghemm Co., will be Wednesday at 1 p.m. at the United Methodist Church, 915 Second Ave

The service will be conducted jointly by the church and the Pioneers of Alaska

Mitchell, 61, died Saturday while vacationing in Palm Desert, Calif.

He was born in Fairbanks Nov. 2, 1918, to Eliza and Charles Mitchell and had lived here all his life

Mitchell attended grade school and high school in Fairbanks, graduating in 1936. He was active in basketball and played with "Sticky" Griffins Wolverines in the same league as John Butrovich, Joe Franich, Bill Stroecker, Jack Wilbur and the Ringstad brothers.

After serving in the U.S. Army during World War II in Alaska, Canada and Montana, he formed Mitchell Truck and Tractor Inc. with Clyde Geraghty

He married Mary Maureen Ludwigson on Jan. 20, 1945. Their three children, Gregory Charles Mitchell, Janelle Lois Weaver and Judith Louise Jaspersen, live in Fairbanks.

The Mitchells' grandchildren are Joann and Douglas Weaver, Peggy Jaspersen, Roberta Mitchell and Gregory Mitchell II

Mitchell Truck and Tractor was one of the early trucking companies hauling over the Richardson Highway from Valdez

It built such innovative equipment as a booster engine and drive train for climbing hills that was installed under the flatbed of a 30 foot semi-trailer

In 1952 Mitchell formed Ghemm Co. with Geraghty, Carl Hellinger, Carl Erickson and Harvey Marlin Jr.

Ghemm began in earth work and equipment rental and expanded over the years to perform general contract work throughout Alaska. In a joint effort with a Seattle company, Ghemm built the Yukon River Bridge

In 1957 Mitchell founded Tip-Top Chevrolet along with other longtime Fairbanks residents. He was also a partner in Metro Company and Tria



**ROBERT MITCHELL**

Company and was president of New State Lands Inc

He was instrumental in developing several subdivisions and the industrial area south of Fairbanks

"Mitch," as he was known to his friends, was dedicated to leading young people and instilling in them the value of hard work and a positive approach to life.

The family asks that memorials be given to the Alaska Special Olympics, 1024 Kellum St., or to the United Methodist Church

Honorary pallbearers are Peter Eagan, Randy Frank, Steve Frank, Mike Geraghty, Steve Geraghty, Robbie Gunther, Bill Gordon, Harvey Marlin III, Gary Norrgard, Gary Wilken, Carl Erickson, Con Frank, Clyde Geraghty, Harvey Marlin Jr., Bob Bellisworth, Jack Cook, Jim Dieringer, Dan Eagan, Bob Gunther, Bud Meyers, Francis O'Connor, Ralph Paden, Mark Ringstad, Jack Wilbur, Clyde Hovik, Gene Rogge, Gene Miller, Harry Porter, Cliff Burglin, Wally Burnett, Tom Miklautsch and Leo Scholtfeldt

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**ATTENTION**  
All Members of the  
**CULINARY UNION LOCAL 879**  
**NEXT REGULAR MEETING**



Greater Fairbanks

**Chamber**

of Commerce

First National Center  
100 Cushman Street

(907) 452-1105

P.O. Box 74446  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

RESOLUTION 1 - 1287

A RESOLUTION NAMING THE ROBERT J. MITCHELL EXPRESSWAY

WHEREAS, Robert J. Mitchell was a life-long Alaskan and a life-long resident of the interior, born on November 2, 1918 and;

WHEREAS, Mr. Mitchell was an employee of the Alaska Road Commission during early adulthood and, was a founder of Mitchell Truck and Tractor an early Interior Alaska transportation company and,

WHEREAS, Robert J. Mitchell was one of the founders of GHEMM, Inc., and was one of the first persons to develop the potential of the current South Fairbanks industrial area and;

WHEREAS, Through Robert J. Mitchell's efforts, a major rail spur from Fairbanks through the South Fairbanks industrial area to the east side of the international Airport was constructed and;

WHEREAS, The new South Fairbanks Expressway is routed immediately adjacent to the area that Robert J. Mitchell was so deeply involved with before passing away on February 23, 1980 and;

WHEREAS, Robert J. Mitchell left behind a legacy of strong family unit, friendship to all, knowledge of the value of positive thought, and undaunting faith in the future of Fairbanks and Alaska and;

WHEREAS, The Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce wishes to to remember Robert J. Mitchell's positive contribution to the people of the interior and to the development of the South Fairbanks industrial area,

NOW BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED: that the section of the Alaska Highway System from the new Airport Road Interchange to the Richardson Highway is to be named the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway.

DATED THIS 21st DAY OF December 1987.

BY Mike Kelly  
Mike Kelly, Chairman

BY W.R. Cox  
W.R. Cox, President & C.E.O.

# **SOUTH FAIRBANKS BUSINESS ASSOCIATION**

P.O. Box 60389  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99706  
(907) 456-7986

## **A RESOLUTION NAMING THE ROBERT J. MITCHELL EXPRESSWAY**

**WHEREAS:** Robert J. Mitchell was a life-long resident of the Interior, born on November 2, 1918 and,

**WHEREAS:** Mr. Mitchell was an employee of the Alaska Road Commission during early adulthood, and was a founder of Mitchell Truck and Tractor, an early Interior Alaska transportation company.

**WHEREAS:** Robert J. Mitchell was one of the founders of GHEMM, Inc. an important Alaska construction firm and was one of the first persons to develop the potential of the current South Fairbanks industrial area and,

**WHEREAS:** Through Robert J. Mitchell's efforts, a major rail spur from Fairbanks through the South Fairbanks industrial area to the east side of the International Airport was constructed and,

**WHEREAS:** The new South Fairbanks Expressway is routed immediately adjacent to the area that Robert J. Mitchell was so deeply involved with before passing away on February 23, 1980 and,

**WHEREAS:** Robert J. Mitchell left behind a legacy of strong family unit, friendship to all, knowledge of the value of positive thought, and undaunting faith in the future of Fairbanks and Alaska and,

**WHEREAS:** The South Fairbanks Business Association wishes to remember Robert J. Mitchell's positive contribution to the people of the Interior and to the development of the South Fairbanks industrial area,

**NOW BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED:** that the section of the Alaska Highway System from the new Airport Road Interchange to the Richardson Highway is to be named the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway.

This resolution was adopted at a regular meeting of the South Fairbanks Business Association December 18, 1987.

  
Charles P. Rees, 1st Vice President

CPR: cab: SFBA2: form: P3

Introduced by: Mayor and Council  
Date: December 21, 1987

RESOLUTION NO. 2918

A RESOLUTION TO MEMORIALIZE AND NAME THE  
ROBERT J. MITCHELL EXPRESSWAY.

WHEREAS, Robert J. Mitchell, a life-long Alaskan and resident of the interior, was in early adulthood an employee of the Alaska Road Commission and a founder of Mitchell Truck and Tractor, an early interior Alaska transportation company; and

WHEREAS, Mitchell was one of the founders of GHEMM, Inc., an important Alaska construction firm, and was one of the first persons to develop the potential of the current South Fairbanks industrial area; and

WHEREAS, through Mitchell's efforts a rail spur was constructed from Fairbanks through the South Fairbanks industrial area to the east side of the international airport; and

WHEREAS, the new South Fairbanks Expressway is immediately adjacent to the area developed by Mitchell and with which he was deeply involved before passing away on February 23, 1980; and

WHEREAS, Mitchell left behind a legacy of the strong family unit, friendship to all, knowledge of the value of positive thought and undaunted faith in the future of Fairbanks and Alaska; and

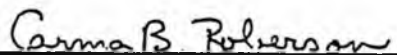
WHEREAS, the City of Fairbanks wishes to remember Robert J. Mitchell's positive contribution to the people of the interior and to the development of the South Fairbanks industrial area.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FAIRBANKS, ALASKA, that the section of the Alaska Highway System from the new Airport Road Interchange to the Richardson Highway is to be named the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway.

PASSED and APPROVED this 21st day of December, 1987.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
BILL WALLEY, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
CARMA B. ROBERSON, City Clerk

0090Z  
pb: bj

March 26, 1986

Senator Jack Coghill  
Alaska State Legislature  
Pouch V (MS 3100)  
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Coghill:

It has come to my attention that there is a bill or resolution before the legislature regarding the naming of the new South Fairbanks Expressway. As proposed, this expressway between the Airport Road overpass and the proposed Richardson Highway overpass would be named the "Bob Mitchell Memorial Expressway."

I knew Bob since I was a child, and later on had the great fortune of working for him during my high school and college years: I learned a great deal about life and the value of good hard work during this time. Bob was a very fine man, and was heavily involved in the development of this South Fairbanks industrial area, rail spur, and road system.

I think that the naming of this expressway after Bob would be a very fitting tribute to a fine, highly-regarded individual. I would welcome and appreciate your support in this matter.

Sincerely,

PETE EAGAN

Pete Eagan  
Box 1170  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

Mar 26, 1986

To Whom It May Concern:

As a life-long Alaskan, I strongly recommend that the 30<sup>th</sup> Ave By-Pass be named ~~the~~ in honor of, and in memory of, Robert J. Mitchell. Bobby Mitchell was also a life-long Alaskan. Even more importantly, he was truly a pioneer in the development of transportation, in particular, the highway system in and around Fairbanks. I knew him personally since 1937. He was a life-long resident of Fairbanks. After WWII, he used his GI loan to buy a caterpillar. Before the war (WWII) he worked on with the Alaska Highway Commission. He developed a trucking operation with Clyde Geraghty that serviced Valdez and Fairbanks. He was one of the founding partners in GHEMM Construction Co. and built many roads and bridges throughout Alaska. Bobby Mitchell devoted all 63 years of his life and his boundless energy and optimism to ~~the~~ his unshakable belief in the future of Fairbanks. He deserves to be remembered.

Bruce F. Staser  
1351 Hillcrest Dr.  
- 99701

# Let's call the extension the Parks Highway

By NANCY LEE BAKER

The four-mile extension of the George Parks Highway will end by joining the Richardson Highway near the old 30th Street exit. The work is scheduled for completion in September 1988.

A move to call this four-mile section the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway began in February 1986, when Sen. Jack Coghill and Rep. Steve Frank initiated Senate Bill 461 and an identical House bill. They got through most committees but not to both floors due to pressures of the closing days.

The same legislators are in the process of introducing the bills again this year. Since there was some opposition from individuals two years ago (which did not keep them from trying to hustle the bills through in 1986), the approach this year appears to be to go directly to large bodies such as the city council, borough assembly, Chamber of Commerce and its transportation committee for their public endorsement. These endorsements are intended to convey the broad approval of Fairbanksans for this move.

In "talking around," however, I find almost no individual support for the resolutions these bodies endorsed, except from some personal friends of the late Robert Mitchell. The consensus was to maintain the same name.

It is understandable that at "first thought" it might seem like a good idea to name a new piece of road after a friend, but the result of suddenly changing the name of a highway that thousands of people will have been traveling on for 358 miles

## Guest Opinion

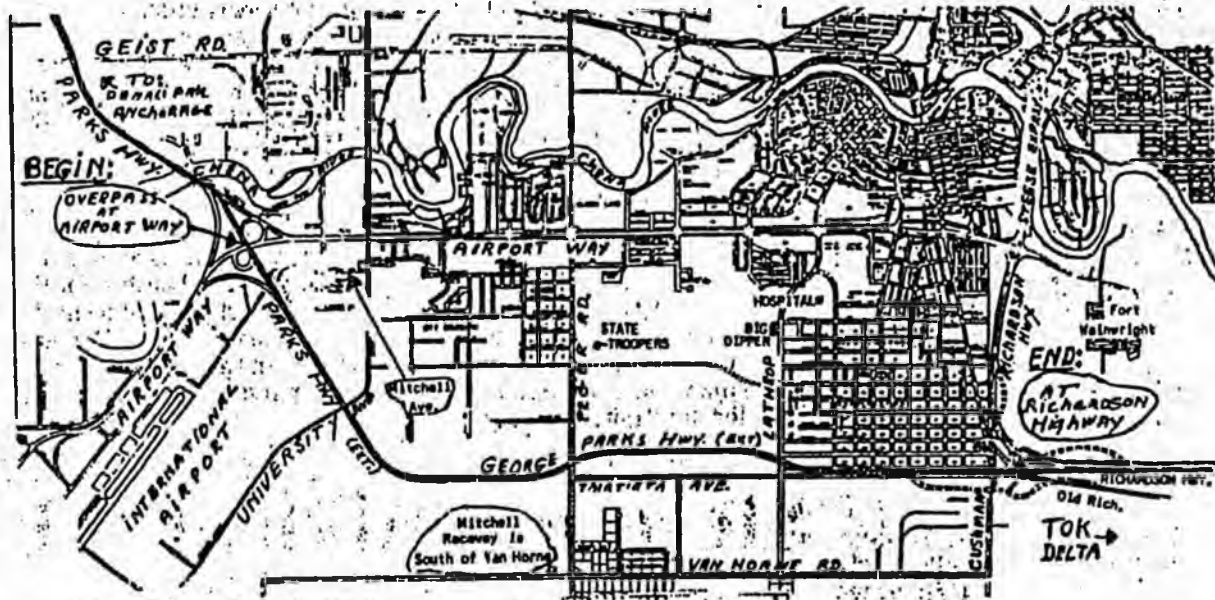
at speeds in excess of 50 mph is not an inconsequential thing to be taken lightly. It deserves serious "second thoughts." Some of them follow:

Confusion: The bottom line is, calling the last four miles anything but the Parks Highway would be confusing. It is one continuous highway, doesn't turn, get wider, narrower, or change in any way. A sign proclaiming you are all of a sudden on a different highway spells instant confusion to a visitor to our area. This could precipitate slowing down, changing lanes, conversations with the "co-pilot" about how we got "off course." Any one of these reactions are a basis for possible accidents.

We are a tourist dependent economy. We spend hundreds of thousands of dollars attracting visitors. Shouldn't we be more considerate of them? Many of them are older citizens, with slower reactions in some cases, and driving less maneuverable vehicles with the poor visibility that RV's often offer.

A different name could offer problems and expense to mapmakers, as well as map readers who see a different name (if there is room to print it) on what appears to be obviously the same highway.

Where would the highway signs be placed to tell drivers they are now on a different highway? Driving to the airport from town, a



Map shows the route of the Parks Highway extension through South Fairbanks.

Map courtesy of Nancy Lee Baker

motorists would see a sign announcing the exit to "Highway 3, Parks Highway." A few hundred feet later on a sign would say "Highway 3," with a different name.

Think seriously (until it becomes funny and you start laughing) of various possible confusions in giving directions about how to get "from here to there" when it requires getting on or off the new portion of road should it have a different name.

It is worth noting that the engineer who designed the highway is also "seriously concerned about the confusion that would result if the name of the new portion were to be anything other than the Parks Highway."

Cost: It will cost at least \$10,000 to

remove the dozen or more signs that are already up at University, Peger, and Lathrop intersections and replace them with another name. If the new name has many more letters they will have to be made smaller in order to fit the signs. The \$10,000 could probably be better used for maintenance! Signs at University Avenue have been there for two years. It would be nice if they had squatter's rights!

In answer to my "confusion concerns," some legislators said the public would get used to it. The visitors will not get used to it, and why should the local people have to go through the process? There are better ways to commemorate people than to confuse the public.

Another consideration, in view of the recent attempt to avoid duplicate street names in town, there is a Mitchell Avenue, named after the same Mitchell. It runs off University Avenue, next to Erickson Avenue, also named after a partner in the Ghemm Co. of which Mitchell was a partner.

The new portion of the highway can only be named by legislative action. This has not happened yet, but it is in the brewing stage. Let's hope some legislator, with grass roots encouragement, will speak up and propose a bill to name it the Parks Highway.

Nancy Lee Baker is a 37-year resident with an interest in mapmaking.



Interior  
Business Products, Inc.

3180 Peger Road  
P.O. Box 74690, Fairbanks, AK 99707  
907 456-1104

March 25, 1986.

To Whom It May Concern:

As a property owner and life-long resident of Alaska, I wholeheartedly support the naming of the "30th Avenue Bypass", the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway.

Bob Mitchell has made a lasting impact on the development of our community. More specifically, Bob contributed to much of the growth in South Fairbanks and the area south of Van Horn Road. His very business located along Cushman Street, along with his development of Metro Industrial Airport, inspired many others to follow. Without his dedication and early belief in Fairbanks' future the need for this bypass would probably be many years yet in the future.

It would be most fitting to name this highway in honor of one of Alaska's pioneers who gave so much of his time to his community. Please designate the "30th Avenue Bypass" the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway.

Sincerely,

Bill Gordon  
Vice President

lr/BG



488-6676

# THE GRANGE

AMERICA'S FAMILY COMMUNITY FRATERNITY

Two Rivers Grange No. 3

February 2, 1988  
6128 Chena Hot Springs Road  
Fairbanks, Ak., 99712

Representative Steve Frank  
Pouch V  
Juneau, Alaska, 99811

Dear Representative Frank:

Members of the Two Rivers Grange #3 urge you to reconsider your plans to introduce legislation to name the Parks Highway extension the "Robert Mitchell Highway". Our objection is to the confusion this will create especially for tourists. Many of us have traveled into cities where streets on one side of the road are one name and a different name on the other side. Fairbanks doesn't need that sort of confusion. We urge you to propose a bill to name the extension the "Parks Highway".

Yours truly,

Two Rivers Grange #3

Alice H. McKee, Sec.

488-2629

Evolyn Melville  
2526 Outside Blvd.  
North Pole, Alaska 99705

February 1, 1988

Senator John (Jack) Coghill,  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

Dear Jack,

At our Chamber lunch meeting last week, we were given some information regarding a bill you are co-sponsoring--to rename a portion of the George C. Parks Memorial Highway, for Robert Mitchell.

Now you know as well as I, that highways, roads, streets and by-ways in Alaska are not all that easy to follow because of lack of signing or poor signing. (the Lower '48 is not much better in many places). Why further confuse our dear folks, visitors and residents alike, by changing the name of a highway right in the middle of things.

I have no quarrel with naming something after Bobby Mitchell. He was a GOOD ball player, worked hard at his chosen profession, and I have known him ever since I can remember. However, there are a couple of memorials to him already: a street named Mitchell Place, and the Mitchell Raceway off Van Horn Road.

We want to encourage visitors and Alaskans to visit us in the Interior, and not drive them crazy with highways that have no name continuity.

Surely you and Steve can think of something else much less disconcerting if you wish to further memorialize Bobby Mitchell. Please reconsider and withdraw this bill.

Thanks for taking the time to read this letter.

cc. Steve Frank