

HB

437

APRIL 21, 1988

I AM SURPRISED AAT THE HEAVY POLITICS BEING SHOWN IN ATTEMPTS TO PASS THE MITCHELL EXPRESSWAY BILL. THIS IS STILL POOR LEGISLATION AND ATTEMPTS TO PASS IT WHEN LEGISLATORS HAVE MUCH MORE IMPORTANT LEGISLATION TO CONSIDER BOARDERS ON THE LUDICROUS. LET IT DIE.

*Alaska S. Linck*

Alaska S. Linck

APR 22 1988



# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the State Transportation  
 committee name

committee on HB 437, dated 4/21/88  
 bill/subject

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Testifier

\_\_\_\_\_

Representing (Optional)

\_\_\_\_\_

Address

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone No.

# Alaska State Legislature

SENATOR KEN FANNING  
PO BOX 80929  
COLLEGE, ALASKA 99708



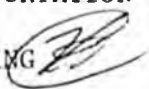
PO. BOX V—STATE CAPITOL  
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811  
(907) 465-3880

## Senate

### MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 21, 1988

TO: SENATOR LLOYD JONES  
CHAIRMAN - TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

FROM: SENATOR KEN FANNING 

RE: HB 437- ROBERT J. MITCHELL EXPRESSWAY

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I WOULD LIKE TO CLARIFY MY POSITION REGARDING HB 437, RELATING TO THE ROBERT J. MITCHELL EXPRESSWAY. SINCE MY TESTIMONY WAS RECORDED AT THE FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH LIBRARY IN MARCH , 1986 I HAVE REVIEWED A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF TESTIMONY RELATIVE TO THIS ISSUE.

I HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF RESPECT FOR ROBERT J. MITCHELL, HIS FAMILY, AND THIER CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FAIRBANKS COMMUNITY AS WELL AS THE STATE OF ALASKA. I MUST AGREE HOWEVER, THAT AT THIS TIME, CHANGING THE NAME OF THE HIGHWAY FOR SUCH A SHORT STRETCH MAY CREATE CONFUSION FOR THE TRAVELLING PUBLIC AS WELL AS MAPMAKERS DEPENDENT ON SOME SORT OF CONTINUITY WITH THE HIGHWAY NAME SYSTEM.

IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT MANY PEOPLE HAVE RAISED VALID CONCERNS WITH THIS MATTER, THE FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH HAS TAKEN NO POSITIVE ACTION AFTER TWO EXTENSIVE PUBLIC HEARINGS IN WHICH THE MAJORITY OF TESTIMONY WAS IN OPPOSITION TO RENAMING THE 4 MILES OF HIGHWAY. WITH THE INFORMATION I HAVE MONITORED OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS , I THEREFORE DO NOT SUPPORT THE PASSAGE OF HB 437.



APR 22 1988

# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Senate Transportation  
 committee name  
 committee on HB 437 , dated Apr - 21 - 88  
 bill/subject

This was a very "rigged" hearing on this bill,  
 & should in no way be considered a "legitimate" public  
 hearing - ~~request~~ <sup>SUPPORTERS</sup> of the bill were "rounded up" by the  
 FAIRBANKS LEGYIST for the bill. I suspect this was at  
 the ~~own~~ REQUEST of some of our FAIRBANKS Delegation  
 who are pushing this bill thru despite strong  
 opposition to it - ~~to~~ TO MY KNOWLEDGE  
 NO ONE EXCEPT SUPPORTERS OF THIS BILL WERE  
 AWARE OF THIS "PUBLIC HEARING" UNTIL 90 MINUTES  
 BEFORE IT SCHEDULED. I hustled down to  
 TESTIFY <sup>AGAIN</sup> BUT had to leave before doing so in  
 order to PROE READ an important document in my  
 business to hustle it to completion for a deadline.  
 So I presume our delegation will again falsely present

Signed: [Signature]  
 Testifier

[Signature]  
 Representing (Optional)

(49 TIMDENHARD Dr) POB 1992  
 Address

FAIRBANKS AK 99707  
 Phone No.

452-2624

This as  
 overrule  
 ing  
 approved  
 of  
 FAIRBANKS

LETTER OF INTENT

By-

Boyer

HB 437

It is the intent of the Legislature that signs identifying the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway should also contain in parentheses the name 'Parks Highway' below the name 'Mitchell'.

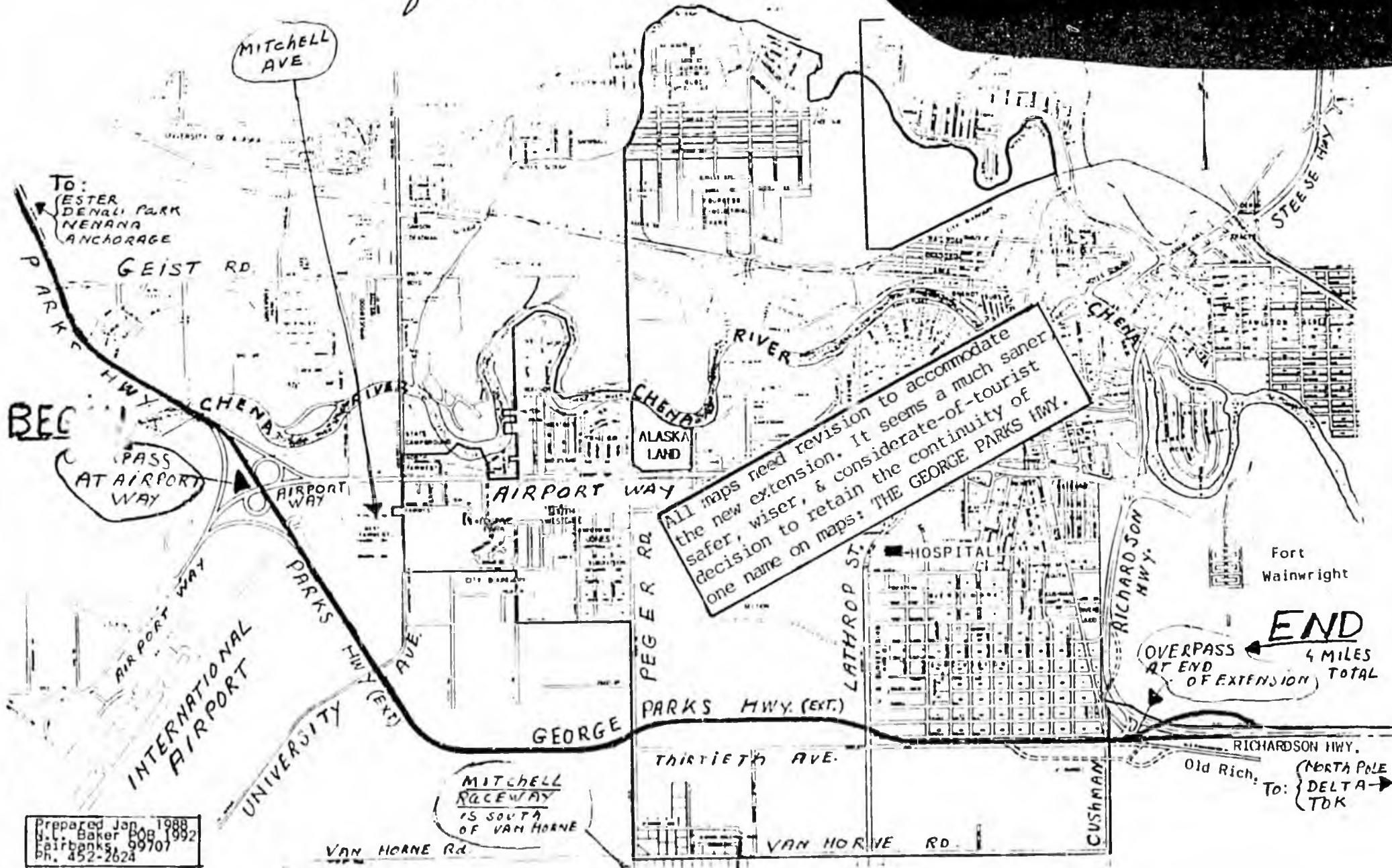
Mark Boyer

Adopted  
8-7-1983

Map shows new extension of GEORGE PARKS HWY., beginning at overpass on Airport Way to end at Richardson Hwy. A strong movement in the 1988 Legislature would call it: Robert J. Mitchell Expressway.

(See Reverse Side)

*Should we change  
The Name of the  
Last 4 miles  
of the Parks Hwy?*



Prepared Jan. 1988  
S.L. Baker BOB 1892  
Fairbanks, 99707  
PH. 452-2624

# Move on to name Mitchell Expressway

A move that met opposition two years ago is back on track to have the Alaska Legislature name the new South Fairbanks Expressway in memory of Robert J. Mitchell.

The Fairbanks City Council Monday night by unanimous consent adopted a resolution to that effect, and apparently a similar resolution is in the works for the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly's consideration Jan. 14.

What remains is legislators' commitment to introduce bills to officially change the name of the roadway under construction. Two years ago, Sen. Jack Coghill, R-Nenana, and Rep. Steve Frank, R-Fairbanks, introduced bills, but there was opposition. The bills weren't reintroduced this year, but Gary Wilken told the council Monday he's hopeful they will be introduced in 1988.

Wilken said the Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce board and transportation committee both endorse naming the expressway after Mitchell.

"For the benefit of those who didn't know Bob, he touted Fairbanks as much as anybody has. It's been said he gave (former mayor) Bill Wood lessons. He did it before there was oil, before there was state grants, before there was revenue sharing. He did it on his own. He had a can-do attitude," Wilken said.

Mitchell moved Ghemm Construction Co. to Van Horn when it was still a dirt road. Wilken said Metro Field was a vision of Mitchell's, and in the early '70s, Mitchell was a prime force in backing a railroad spur to what has become the industrial area, he added.

There was one speaker Monday who took issue with naming the expressway after Mitchell. Shirley Demientieff said she didn't know Mitchell, but there's already a raceway named for him. Her complaint is that so many public facilities are named after people, but few after Native people or for Alaska events or features. Demientieff then gave a suggested list of names.

Council member Jerry Norum told Demientieff that her point was well taken, but people need to come forward with suggested names in a timely manner. The borough has the responsibility for naming streets and its own public facilities, he said.

As for the expressway, it's a late highway, and naming it requires legislative action. Construction began this summer and will continue next season on building overpasses crossing South Cushman Street, and a new road parallel to 30th Avenue. This section eventually will link the Richardson Highway and South Cushman area via the new road with the Peger Airport Way-Parks Highway expressway. Traffic will be able to go from the Richardson to the Parks Highway without traveling on Airport Way.

UPDATE: JANUARY 1988

Senate Bill 461 & House Bill 664, introduced by Senator Coghill and Representative Steve Frank in Feb. 1986, would have named the last four miles of the PARKS HIGHWAY, the "Robert J. Mitchell Expressway". The bills almost passed both houses in April, 1986.

Now, after two years, there is preparation to introduce them again. Since this is a new session of the legislature the bills will have new numbers. The strategy of the legislators this time is to go after the large bodies, like the City Council, Borough Assembly, Chamber of Commerce, in order to make it appear that there is broad public approval. Things you read or hear may lead you to assume that the highway has already been named.

THIS IS NOT TRUE.

The highway can only be named by legislative action, and that has not yet taken place. Your legislators are voted into office by you; your input to them on this subject at the earliest possible date can help the GEORGE PARKS HWY. keep the same name from its beginning at the Glenn Highway to its end at the Richardson Highway.

Write to them, Pouch V, Juneau 99811. See Phone numbers upper right hand corner of map to send free Legislative Opinion Messages. Talk on Legislative Teleconferences. Let local officials hear your views.

Prepared Jan. 1988  
N.L. Baker P.O. Box 1992  
Fairbanks, 99707

April 9, 1986

There be signs midway Airport overpass in where the Parks Highway Robert J. Mitchell Expressway?

There is food for thought suggestion that the new section of the highway retain the name George Parks Highway. Mr. Mitchell's fine contributions to our community might be better remembered elsewhere lest his name risk being remembered unkindly, and with frequency, as the source of unnecessary but legislated confusion.

The matter is before the Senate Transportation Committee as Senate Bill 461. Apparently input and a hearing is necessary before new federally funded highways are named.

The notice in the paper prior to the hearing might have drawn more input if it had been accompanied by a map.

Sincerely,  
Nancy Lee Baker

## What's in a name? Just ask Rand McNally

For example, there's the Alaska Highway, Route 2, from the border to Delta. At that point, the Richardson Highway, on its way north from Valdez is Route 4. At Delta, some

kind of magic causes Route 4 to be transformed into Route 2 to Fairbanks. It almost seems as if Route 4, the Richardson Highway, ought to stay that way until the end of the road, at Fairbanks but that isn't how they did it.

In Fairbanks, meanwhile, the same road changes into the Steves Highway, though it is still Route 2 as far as Fox. Then it becomes Route 6 to Circle City. At that point, too, Route 2 is transformed again, this time into the Elliott Highway all the way to the Manley Hut Springs area where it ends.

Someplace out there in the Eken good area is where the Dalton Highway begins, formerly known as "The Taps Road," or "The Bad Road." Before that it was the "Hickel Highway" when it was an ice road headed for the North slope via Anaktuvuk Pass. The Dalton

Highway on this map has neither number nor name, though it is labeled both "restricted" and "under construction." It also has a town called "Big Lake" up around the North Fork not too far from Wiseman.

This map says it is "regularly updated and revised" and will keep people from getting lost. Even so, it seems to me if this is the best they can do, we ought to quit renaming pieces of already named roads and go another way.

How about honoring our famous people by naming pulloffs for them? The Walter J. Hickel Turnaround, or "The Hill Sheffield Rest Stop." With a scenic sign and a picnic table, it'd be a whole lot better than causing tourists to cuss us out as they wonder whatever happened to the road they were driving on.

One citizen strongly suggested that it be called the "Parks Highway Extension," or simply retain the name of the Parks Highway. Since the current Parks Highway ends at Airport Road with Mile 158, milepost numbering could simply continue on for the next four miles or so till the highway intersected with the Richardson near the present 30th Avenue intersection. It was suggested that this would be the least confusing to everyone.

Other reasons expressed were "Parks Highway" is what all Fairbanksans will think of it as, and with all that because that is what it actually is.

Jane Pender APRIL 14 1986

Did you know the Fairbanks area has acquired two new municipalities? One is "College," located on the Parks Highway just west of Fairbanks, with a population of 300. The other is "Aurora," located as near as I can tell between Fairbanks and the Chena Hot Springs Road. Its population is 1,000.

These interesting "facts" come from a Rand McNally road map of Alaska currently available at \$1.75 at your friendly neighborhood gas station.

"Deadhorse," is marked as a town on the same map, with a population of 163. "Prudhoe Bay" and "Beechey Point" also are marked with the traditional little circles that indicate they are towns, though the index doesn't supply population figures.

I found out all these things as a result of Nancy Baker's letter to the

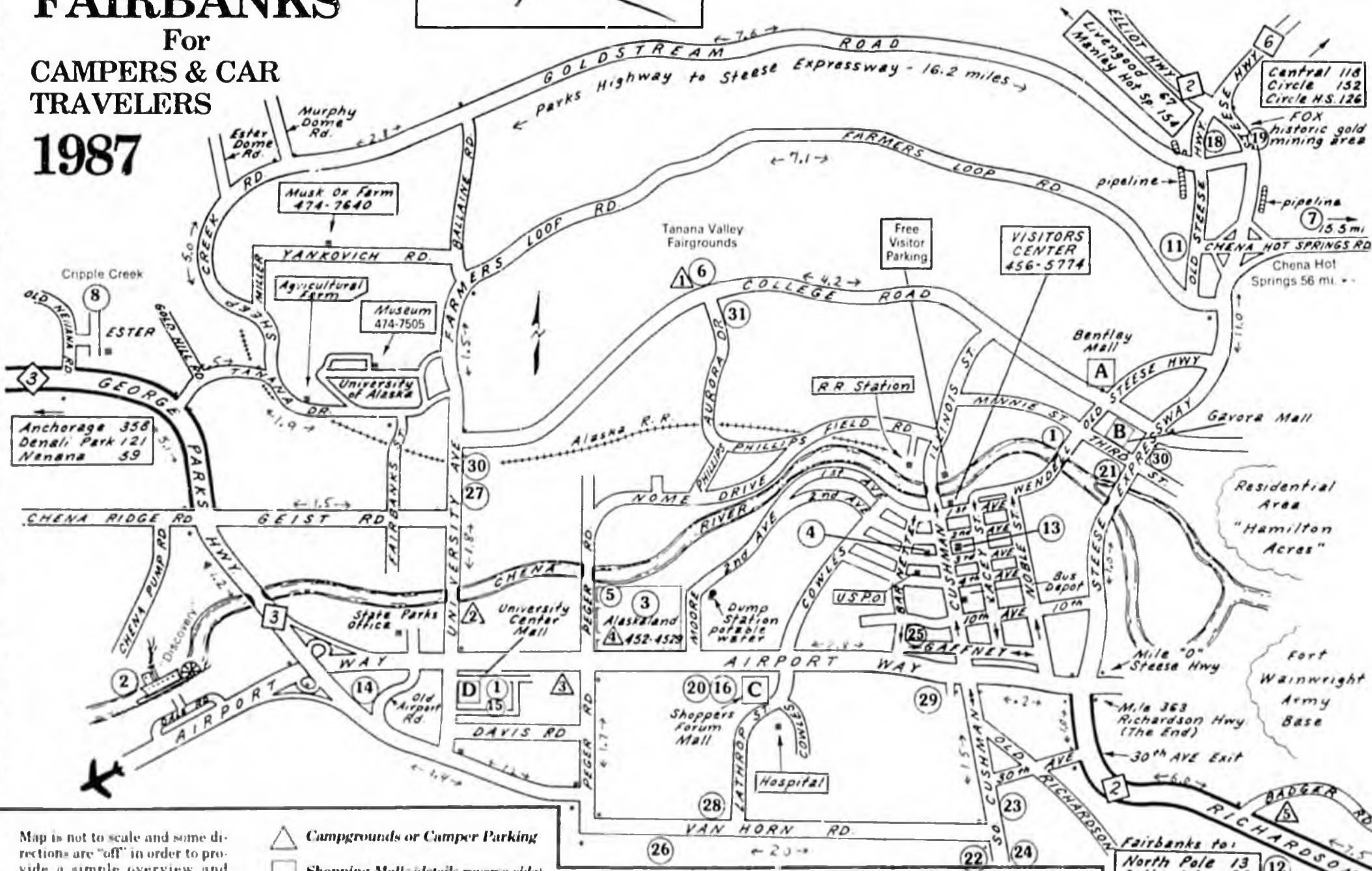
editor last week objecting to the proposed new name for the end of the Parks Highway, "The Robert J. Mitchell Expressway." She thought a new name for the final stretch of the Parks Highway could be confusing. It is true that we're loaded with names for pieces of roads.

# FAIRBANKS

For  
CAMPERS & CAR  
TRAVELERS

1987

Compliments of:  
**SUPER 8 MOTEL OF FAIRBANKS**  
1903 Airport Road  
Fairbanks, AK 99701



Map is not to scale and some directions are "off" in order to provide a simple overview and orientation aid. COMMENTS APPRECIATED. Box 1992, Fairbanks 99707.

△ Campgrounds or Camper Parking  
□ Shopping Malls (details reverse side)  
○ Points of Interest & Sponsors  
○ Match to numbers on reverse side.

SHADED AREAS: Downtown Fairbanks, North Pole, University of Alaska.

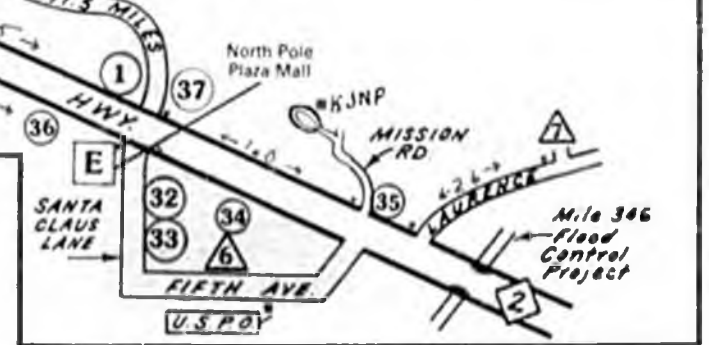
Entire Text, Map & Artwork Copyright © 1987 by N.L. Baker POB 1992, Fairbanks, AK 99707

Fairbanks to:  
North Pole 13  
Delta Jct. 98  
Tok 205  
Anchorage 440

All material below, including map refers to:  
**NORTH POLE, AK**  
Mile 349 Richardson Hwy. (#2)  
Just 13 miles SE of Fairbanks.

- ③② **NORTH COUNTRY INN** 488-4040; Santa Claus Lane downtown, next to Santa's Suds. A family restaurant. Breakfast, sandwiches, lunch & dinner specials. Mexican specialties.
- ③③ **SANTA'S SUDS** 488-9405; Santa Claus Lane next to North Country Inn. Modern coin-operated laundry. 8am-10pm daily.
- ③④ **SANTA CLAUS HOUSE** 488-2200; Richardson Hwy between both North Pole exits. Alaskan gifts, souvenirs, toys, Christmas items. Summers 8am-7pm.
- ① **SUNSHINE TRAVEL** 488-4502; Colonial Plaza, Badger Rd. Full service, specializing in Alaska local & arctic tours. M-F 8:30-5:30; Sat 9-4. See also two Fairbanks locations.
- ③⑤ **NORTH POLE VISITOR CENTER** 488-2242; Richardson Hwy. at Mission Rd. 9am-6pm. M-Sat.
- ③⑥ **CORK'S PITSTOP** 488-2800; Tesoro Gas, diesel, unleaded supreme, propane & service.
- ③⑦ **Lund's Frozen Yogurt, Church's Chicken, American Tire Warehouse, Beaver Brook Mall, Badger Rd.** near Richardson Hwy.
- E NORTH POLE PLAZA MALL** — Richardson Hwy. at Santa Claus Ln. Market Basket Supermarket with pharmacy, 11 shops including North Pole Foto, Texaco Gas, super unleaded, propane. Dump Station, water.

**KJNP 488-2216** — Drive in Mission Rd. for 1/2 mi. A Christian & family station. Visitors welcome. 100.3 FM, 1170 AM, Ch 4 TV.



**RV DUMP STATIONS**

Cripple Creek Resort	Ester
City Dump Station	2nd Ave. near Alaskaland
Russell's Texaco	Third St. at Old Steese
Russell's Tesoro	12th Ave. and Noble
Mike's Chevron	College Rd. near University Ave.
Alaska Chevron	Illinois at Minnie St.
Texaco Minute Man	Noble at Gaffney

① **TANANA VALLEY CG 456-7956**; 2 mi. College Rd. on bus rt. #10. Restrooms, showers, laundry, water, dump station, tables, fireplaces, wood for sale. Tenters welcome. \$9. No hookups.

② **CHENA RIVER STATE CG**; University Ave. 51 sites. Tables, fireplaces, water, restrooms, dump station, picnic sites, boat ramp. 5 day limit. No hookups.

③ **NORLITE CG 452-4206**; Private. Peger Rd. off Airport Rd. Restrooms, showers, laundry, dump station, full hookups, grocery.

④ **ALASKALAND 452-4529**. Parking only for self-contained vehicles. No toilets. No hookups. 5 day limit. \$5 a night. Increase expected.

⑤ **ROADS END RV PARK 488-0295**; Mi. 356 Richardson Hwy. Restrooms, showers, full hookups. Parking \$7. Hookups & showers extra.

⑥ **NORTH POLE PARK**; 5th Ave. North Pole. Nine spaces for tents only. Restrooms, water.

**OUT-OF-TOWN STATE CAMPGROUNDS.** Toilet facilities, water, picnic tables, no hookups. More information; Alaska Div. Parks, Sportsman's Way off Airport Way. Ph. 479-4114.

Lower Chatanika CG (no water)	11 mi. Elliot Hwy.	10 units
Upper Chatanika CG	39 mi. Steese Hwy.	25 units
27 Mile CG	27 mi. Chena Hot Springs Rd.	38 units
39 Mile CG	39 mi. Chena Hot Springs Rd.	18 units

⑦ **CHENA LAKES RECREATION AREA 488-1655**; Laurence Rd. at Mi. 347 Richardson Hwy. Drive in 2.6 miles to entrance. 78 campsites, 92 picnic sites on 2,000 acres. Toilets, water, dump station, no hookups. Large lake for swimming and non-motorized boats, (river for motorized). Boat rentals, concessions. \$6 overnight. \$3 day use.

**WELCOME TO FAIRBANKS!** We hope this little map has helped you anticipate your visit here and/or contributed to the enjoyment of your stay. *Please scrutinize both the map and the back side of it.* You will find it contains much information you are looking for plus other interesting tidbits. If you have found it useful please mention it to various Fairbanksans, including sponsors. This will help maintain continued support of its publication. Comments appreciated.

N.L. Baker — P.O. Box 1992 — Fairbanks, AK 99707

\*Numbers 9, 10 and 17 do not have locations on the map.

## ENHANCE YOUR ALASKAN EXPERIENCE

- ① **SUNSHINE TRAVEL 479-2238/4206;** Airport Way frontage Rd. near University Mall. ALSO corner Minnie & Old Steese Hwy. (452-8992) in white colonial building next to Burger King. Full service agency specializing in Alaska Adventure, local & arctic tours, ferry reservations. M-F 8:30am-6pm; Sat 9am-4pm (Minnie & Steese only).
- ② **RIVERBOAT DISCOVERY 479-6673;** Dale Rd. off Airport Way. Scenic four-hour river cruise aboard authentic sternwheelers. Live narration with dog sled demonstration and stop ashore at Indian river village. \$25 adults. \$17 children. Reservations advised. 8:45am & 2pm departures.
- ③ **ALASKALAND 452-4529;** Airport Way. Gold Rush Town, Big Stampede Show, Pioneer Museum, Mining Village, Square Dance Hall (456-5350), concessions, picnic area, bike & boat rental, entertainment. Shops open 11am-9pm. Free Tram Train picks up at most hotels 10 times daily.
- ④ **ALASKA PUBLIC LANDS INFORMATION CENTER 451-7352;** Courthouse Sq., Third & Cushman, lower level. Exhibits, books, movies.
- ⑤ **CHENA RIVER FLOATS & BIKE RENTALS;** Alaskaland boat dock. Enter from Peger Rd. or Alaskaland. Enjoy bike trails on 3-speeds or the Chena in inflatable canoes. 11am-8pm daily.
- ⑥ **TANANA VALLEY STATE FAIR GROUNDS 452-3750;** College Rd. FAIR, Aug. 8-16, 1987; open 11am-10pm. Commercial & competitive exhibits, midway, rodeo, entertainment, food. Adults \$4, Children \$2, Seniors \$3. Family *Sun-Fest Solstice* celebration June 13-21.
- ⑦ **CHENA HOT SPRINGS RESORT 452-7867;** 56 paved miles Chena Hot Springs Rd. Indoor pool, whirlpool bathes, rustic cabins or modern hotel rooms, lodge, camping, lots of outdoor activities. Enjoy a real Alaskan experience.

- ⑦ **PLEASANT VALLEY ANIMAL PARK 488-3967;** 22½ mi. Chena Hot Sp. Rd. Moose, bison, Canada geese & more. Roam and photograph on foot or on horse drawn wagon. Farm setting for kids. RV overnight parking, no hook-ups. Water available.
- ⑧ **CRIPPLE CREEK RESORT 479-2500.** Ester, off Parks Highway. Historic mining camp. *Malemute Saloon* where legendary "Shooting of Dan McGrew" come to life. *Bunkhouse Restaurant* features "all you can eat" crab dinner. See *Photosymphony* of Aurora Borealis, shops for browsing. *Hotel* doubles \$33. RV Parking. *Dump Station.* water. Transportation available.

- ⑨ **OUTBOUND RV RENTALS 474-0968;** Experience Alaska in the comfort of a motorhome exploring the breathtaking scenery of Alaska. We have a wide variety of motorhomes to put you within easy reach of Alaska's finest attractions.

- ⑩ **RED HAT TOURS 457-3000/479-3561;** Fairbanks sightseeing tours. The only way to really see Fairbanks. Your guides live here!!

## ALASKANA ARTS, CRAFTS, JEWELRY

- ⑪ **THE LAST RUSH TRADING POST 457-4535;** Mi. 4 Old Steese Hwy. at beginning of Chena Hot Springs Rd. Alaskan gold jewelry made on premises. Raw nuggets. Wide variety of Alaskan gifts, mining & trapping artifacts. Open 9am-7pm. Photograph picturesque log cabins!!
- ⑫ **ESKIMO MUSEUM & GIFT SHOP 488-6868;** Mi. 356 Richardson Hwy., 6 mi. S. of Fairbanks. Beautiful log structure houses large Alaskan wildlife specimens. Gift shop features ivory, a variety of Alaskana items and souvenirs.
- ⑬ **PERDUE'S JEWELRY 456-5105;** Courthouse Sq. downtown. Also *Shopper's Forum Mall* Master Goldsmith over 25 years.
- ⑭ **ARCTIC TRAVELERS GIFT SHOP 456-7080;** Corner Second Ave. & Cushman, downtown. Native crafts are the specialty, with demonstrations 7 days a week. Also Alaskan jewelry, giftware & souvenirs. 8am-10pm.
- ⑮ **GOLDEN NORTH MOTEL 479-6201;** Take Sportsman's Way off Airport Way to *Old Airport Rd.*, or exit from Parks Hwy. westbound. Cable TV, in-room coffee, shower/tub. Continental breakfast. Airport courtesy car. Park at each unit.

## LODGING

- ⑮ **KLONDIKE INN, LOUNGE & DINING HALL 479-6241;** Airport Way near University Ave. Enter from frontage rd. by Sunshine Travel or from University Ave. Large rooms with TV, phone, shower & tub, kitchens. Family units. coin laundry, ample parking each unit. Reasonable prices.
- ⑯ **SUPER 8 MOTEL 451-8888;** 1909 Airport Way, next to *Denny's* Restaurant. Color TV, shower & tub, phone, laundry facilities. Airport courtesy car. Non-smoking rooms available. Near Alaskaland, restaurants, and theater.
- ⑰ **FAIRBANKS BED AND BREAKFAST 452-4967;** POB 74573, Fairbanks, AK 99707. Single \$36. Double \$48 plus tax.

## DINING

Cocktails Available — Comfortable Casual Dress  
Always Acceptable

- ⑰ **TWO RIVERS LODGE 488-6815;** Mi. 16 Chena Hot Springs Rd. Providing finest in gourmet dining & true Alaskan hospitality since Territorial days. Featuring *Fresh Seafood* flown in daily. *Prime Rib*, tender aged *Steak*, tantalizing Appetizers, world renowned *Desserts by Stasha*. Rave reviews have appeared in world-wide publications. Wed-Sat 5-10pm; Sun 3-9pm. Reservations recommended. Open year round.
- ⑱ **TURTLE CLUB 457-3883;** Mi. 10 Steese Hwy. in historic Fox. A fine dinner house. Prime rib in 3 appetite sizes, giant prawns, lobster, BBQ ribs (Wed, Th, Sun). Salad Bar. Dinner 6-10pm Wed-Sat; 5-9 Sun. Reservations recommended. Extended Lounge hours.
- ⑲ **NORTH COUNTRY INN 457-8289;** Mi. 10½ Steese Expressway in Fox. Full dinner menu, steaks, prime rib, seafood. Music for good listening and dancing in lounge. Frivolous Foxie Follies nightly in summer. RV parking o.k. See permafrost ice cliff in back of building.

## OTHER GOOD EATING

- ⑳ **DENNY'S** — Farthest north Denny's in the world! Airport Rd. next to Super 8 Motel.
- ㉑ **CLAUDIO'S 451-8500;** Second St. next to Steese Expressway. Can enter from Old Steese or across from Gavora Mall. Wholesome Italian dishes, fine pastries. Lunch 11am-3pm, dinner 5-9pm. "Lower 48" prices. Closed Sunday. Delightful decor.

## AUTO & PEOPLE NEEDS

- ㉒ **FAIRBANKS MUFFLER & AUTO REPAIR 452-2511;** S. Cushman at Van Horn Rd. Complete exhaust systems, brakes, shocks, wheel alignment, trailer hitches. Large stalls and outside area for all RVs. Usually service while you wait.

- ㉓ **AUTO SERVICE COMPANY. TOYOTA-VOLVO-GOODYEAR. 456-6217;** 3285 S. Cushman. Full line *Goodyear* tires for cars, RVs, & trucks. Complete automotive service center. M-F 8am-6pm; Sat 10am-5pm. (tires only).
- ㉔ **MOBAT TIRE & AUTOMOTIVE 452-7131;** 3601 So. Cushman at Van Horn Rd. *Michelin & Dunlop* tires. Brakes, front end alignment & shocks. Can accommodate largest RVs. Competitive prices.
- ㉕ **TOTEM CHEVRON 456-4606;** Corner Gaffney & Barnette St. Atlas tires, batteries & accessories. Mechanic on duty. Good old-fashioned service or self-serve. 7am-10pm. (Sunday 8am-8pm).
- ㉖ **FAIRBANKS SMALL ENGINE 456-6202.** Van Horn between Lathrop & Peger. We service most small gas generators and sell Toro Products.
- ㉗ **UNIVERSITY AVE. CAR & TRUCK WASH;** University Ave. near College Rd., next to C&J's drive-in. Coin-operated, 24 hours a day, large paved area and bays for largest RVs.
- ㉘ **LKJ COMMUNICATIONS 452-7990;** Corner Van Horn Rd. & International Way. For all of your C.B. & radio accessory needs.
- ㉙ **ARCTIC RENT-A-CAR 451-0111;** Airport frontage Rd. between Gillam & Cushman. *Free* pickup airport. "B&B", hotels, train. Credit card or cash deposit. Active military, AARP, AAA discounts. Cars/Vans. Reasonable rates incl. map.
- ㉚ **B&C LAUNDROMAT, SHOWERS & DRY CLEANING;** *Campus Corner.* College Rd. & University Ave. Also *Engle Plaza*, Third St. & Steese Expressway. Summers: 8am-midnight.
- ㉛ **AURORA ANIMAL CLINIC 452-6055;** College Rd. near Aurora Dr. Mon-Fri 8am-11am and 2pm-5pm; Sat 10am-2pm.

## MAJOR SHOPPING MALLS

- A **BENTLEY MALL** — College Rd. & Old Steese Hwy. *Safeway*, *Pay & Save* with pharmacy (456-2151). 30 other shops, including *A Touch of Gold*, gold nugget jewelry.
- B **GAVORA MALL** — 3rd St. between Old Steese and Steese Expwy. *Market Basket*, *Pay & Save Home Center* and 7 other shops including *Fairbanks Fast Foto*.
- C **SHOPPER'S FORUM** — Airport Way & Cowles. *Market Basket Supermarket* plus 15 other shops, including *Fairbanks Fast Foto*, *Perdue's Jewelry* (also in Courthouse Sq. downtown).
- D **UNIVERSITY CENTER MALL** — Airport Way at University Ave. *Safeway*, *Pay & Save* with pharmacy (479-4289). 21 other shops.

STATE OF ALASKA 1988 LEGISLATIVE SESSION  
FISCAL NOTE

No. 1

Bill Version: HB 437  
Publish Date: HOUSE 2/19/88

**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

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.



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

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

March 25, 1986

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

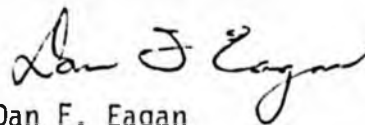
Dear Senator Cochill:

I respectfully request your consideration in naming that section of the South Fairbanks Expressway, between the Airport Road overpass and the proposed Richardson Highway overpass, the "Bob Mitchell Memorial Expressway".

Mr. Mitchell was a very fine individual and very instrumental in the development of the South Fairbanks Industrial area and its road system.

Thank you for your consideration on this request.

Very truly yours,



Dan F. Eagan  
Box 1170  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

Mar 26, 1981

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 I. Staser  
Bruce I. STASER  
1251 Hillcrest Dr.

**Mark B. Ringstad**

502 Monroe Street  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

(907) 456-5734

February 17, 1988

Teleconference  
Fairbanks, Alaska

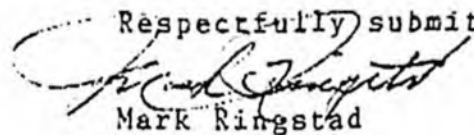
Subject: Naming of the new expressway.

I support the name "Bob Mitchell Expressway" for the new expressway.

Bob Mitchell was one of the earliest and longest freight haulers over Interior Highways.

Historically, in Alaska, highways have been named after people connected with the highways.

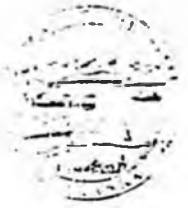
Respectfully submitted,



Mark Ringstad

# Alaska State Legislature

## Senate Transportation Committee



March 1  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Sen John B. Jack Coghill, Chairman  
Sen Dan Fischer, Vice-Chairman  
Sen Mitch Alessi  
Sen Jan Lusk  
Sen Joe Josephson

Text from Public Hearing in Fairbanks

Thursday, March 27, 1986

On House Bill 664, Senate Bill 461

12 Noon to Two P.M., Noel Wien Public Library

Senator Coghill

"Okay, we will bring our public hearing to order and its 12:10 p.m. and its the 27th of March 1986. The purpose of the hearing today is to discuss and gather opinions on House Bill 664 and Senate Bill 461, Both entitled an act relating to naming the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway. My name is Jack Coghill and I am chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee. It is my responsibility to hold the hearing. In order for us to name a road or a expressway after a person using federal funds we have to have a public hearing in the area in which it is going to effect.

I have known Bob Mitchell for as long as I can recall, I remember when he was working with the old road commission. After we all got out of the service he had already started his truck and tractor business. A lot of us boys, when we got out of the service, the first place that we went was to work with Bobby Mitchell. We were either greasing cats or working in one way or another. It was his way of keeping the home town boys going. After he expanded to the point that he had a freight service and got involved with Ghemm Company and was involved and was a tremendous supporter of the Interior of Alaska...the purpose of projecting this name forward as far as the transportation committee is concerned is that it is time that we in Alaska start naming some of our road and rights-of-ways after our old timers that are our contemporaries. We have people signing up, and as you come in we would like you to come forward and sit on one of the front seats so that we can tape you and put you in the record."

Senator Coghill read the letter from Bruce Stacer, dated March 26, 1986.

Testimony from Public Hearing  
March 27, 1986  
Page 2

Testimony Given

Francis Erickson  
1205 10th Avenue  
Fairbanks, AK 99701  
456-5358

"I am also a life long Alaskan, I have lived in Fairbanks for 64 years. I believe that this is very fine and very commendable, however, there are a lot of other pioneer truckers in this country that have not had much recognition, like Gezzy (spelling?) and Roggy (spelling?) just to name two. I think that it is about time that we get these older timers in. As far as a pioneer trucker, of course, Bobby started in 1945-46 after the war; and his partner Gerhatty, and his family, are certainly well know here. They have extended themselves over quite some expanse. Clyde is going to be the grand president of the grand igloo here in a couple of years. I think that he deserves some recognition also.

There are quite a few here, and as far as the Railroad Spur and the Mitchell race way and so on, there are other partners in that enterprise that never have received some recognition either. I don't know if you have to be deceased to receive recognition, but it kind of seems that way. I think that it is about time that we turned to some of the others here. Don't misunderstand, I was a friend of Bob Mitchell's and knew him all my life, but you people have a little more say so and when you get behind all of these things, it seems that when I read in the paper it has already been done. By the time that we get here and get to the hearing...this is the first time we heard of it. I didn't have time for...well to get background on some others that I would have named probably, because I just read it in the paper yesterday. So sometimes, I feel that we need a little more advanced warning of these hearing too."

Testimony from Public Hearing  
March 27, 1986  
Page 3

Joe Tremarello  
Box 80974  
College, AK 99753

"I am a forty year resident of the Fairbanks area and I feel that it is very appropriate, and certainly support, House Bill 664 and Senate Bill 461 as stated. Not only for Bob's contribution to the area of construction, but as a parent raising his family here and his support to my background in teaching. His support to the schools and the staff over the years has been commendable. He did a lot for youth and I feel that it would be very appropriate to name this expressway after Bob."

Ken Fanning  
Box 80292  
College, AK 99708

"I would like to concur on the previous comments. I appreciate the fact that you are considering naming something after somebody of recent generation who, in fact, has left a strong family unit that is continuing on that way. I think, personally, that it is a good idea to consider naming this road after people that are continuing to support the community."

Oliver Backlund  
No Address Given  
President of the Fairbanks Pioneers Igloo

"I support this bill, I think that there is going to be a lot of other roads that we can name a lot of other Alaska pioneers after. I think Robert Mitchell was really active in the area and a respected local businessman. I really support this bill."

Joe Balch  
7665 Salcha Road  
Salcha, AK 99714

"I like Mitchell, although that was a few years ago, to tell you the truth. I would like to see the roads named after a man that was so industrial instead of some politician. He has seen his schooling through the school of hard knocks, actually, and I think that this is an appropriate name for it."

Testimony from Public Hearing  
March 27, 1986  
Page Four

Shirley Demientieff  
1205 Kennicott  
Fairbanks, AK 99701

"I have been in Fairbanks for twenty years in all and I was born and raised in Nenana, as you know Mr. Coghill. I have no problem with naming roads after people. That does not bother me at all. I like the idea of the South Expressway, I think that it is long overdo, I think that it is something that we really needed. But my problem, Jack, is that when I first heard the name I said 'who is Robert Mitchell?' So far I heard...I don't even know if he is dead or alive...with no disrespect, I have no idea of his contributions have been. I am assuming that he is someone who is a good guy. My idea is a little bit different. I would think that...Natives make a population of 10-15% of the statewide population now and there is really nothing named after Native people in the interior...

What I would like to see is that the expressway be named after our champion dog racer. George Attla, seven time winner of the North American, eleven time winner of the Rondevue in Anchorage. He is a Huslia Hustler, he lives in North Pole, he will be using that road. That would be something that would be current, that is well known; when you ask who George Attla is, nobody is going to say 'who is George Attla?' they are going to know who he is. It would be something that I would be extremely proud of and that other people could be extremely proud of too. I just heard about this early this week but I have been able to get these names of people. This is strictly grass roots, not going anywhere other than FNA and Tanana Chiefs. Those are over a hundred names of people that feel the same way that I do about this expressway. (Ms. Demientieff brought a petition to the table and presented it to Senator Coghill) That (the petition) is in support of the name "George Attla Expressway."

Pete Eagan  
P.O. Box 1170  
Fairbanks, AK 99701  
456-4793

"My name is Pete Eagan, I was born and raised here in Fairbanks and I have known Bob Mitchell since I was a child. He was a real good friend of my family's. Later on I had the honor to have worked for Bob when I was in high school and college. I learned a great deal from Bob. He was a very fine man, well liked by everyone in town. He had a terrific sense of humor, and he was definitely from the old school, where your word was your bond. If Bob told you he would do something, he would do it. He was very involved in the whole development of the South Fairbanks, Industrial area and I think that this would be a very fitting tribute to Bob to name this new expressway after him. Thank you."

Testimony from Public Hearing  
March 27, 1986  
Page 5

Harold R. Herning  
Box 1792  
Fairbanks, AK 99701  
488-2291

"I knew Bob for 43 years up until the time of his death. I think Bob, of all the people in Fairbanks, probably is one our truest Alaskans we have ever had. He was truly Alaskan in every sense and the naming in appropriate. This is his home ground. That is his life, to develop that area and I think that it is no more than appropriate that a man of his caliber be recognized. There is nothing that can be said about Bob that is wrong. The only thing that can be said is praise as far as Bob is concerned. I thank you."

Jim Desmond  
No Address Given

"I would certainly like to testify for the bills to name the Expressway the Robert J. Mitchell. I knew Bob for years and years. A wonderful man, and inspiration to all the people that were my age when I was a teenager when we interacted with Bobby a lot. And I certainly feel that he is worthy of the honor."

Terry P. McLean  
1907 Capital  
Fairbanks, AK 99709

"Yes, Jack, I would like to testify in favor of the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway. I personally owe a great deal to Robert Mitchell and his partners in Ghemm Company. I was able to complete my education at the University of Alaska due to their summer and winter employment. Bobby Mitchell was always a friend as well as the boss. Although when he made up his mind to do something it was often difficult to get him to change his mind, he would always hear you out or listen to your suggestions and ideas. Although Air North is no longer flying it provided jobs for many many people and pilots that are today flying jets all over the United States and the World. Bobby Mitchell worked thousands of hours to building the runway at Metro Field and was always able to help people, no matter what the situation. Thousands of people have enjoyed stock car racing because Bobby Mitchell and Ghemm company allowed GFRA to build the race way across from the float pond at Metro Field. Many of the roads that were built that will intertie with the Expressway were built by Bobby Mitchell or people that he helped provide employment for. I feel that it really makes sense to honor those that have helped build the community and the character of the people living in the Fairbanks area."

Testimony from Public Hearing  
March 27, 1986  
Page 6

Mark Ringstad  
502 Monroe Street  
Fairbanks, AK 99701  
456-5734

"I knew Bob Mitchell all my life, was raised with him here in Fairbanks. Bob was in the construction industry and trucking industry all of his adult life. He was one of the prime movers for the railroad to go to the South Fairbanks area. He was one of the major developers of the entire Van Horn Road area. I think that it is most fitting and most appropriate to name that expressway after him."

Gary Wilken  
2600 Riverview Drive  
Fairbanks, AK 99701

"I carry with me some written testimony, Senator, from Bill Gordon and a letter from Pete Eagan Sr. and Dan Eagan, they are out of town and wanted to be sure that they heard today. Just a couple of things...it is difficult for me to talk about Bob Mitchell, he was such a big part of my life, Bob, as far as the South Fairbanks area, we all know, was one of the leaders in developing that area. I went to work with Bob in the early sixties when there was nothing but a dirt road and he lead us off into the muskeg and said 'this shall be a airport.' So, we know that he was one of the people that was instrumental. To name that highway after him is very fitting. I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony and look forward to bills passing. Thanks, appreciate the opportunity."

Nancy Lee Baker  
49 Timberland Drive  
Fairbanks, AK 99701

"I would like to comment, and I am going to comment before I read the bill, my idea is that the road should be called the Parks Highway Extension, because that is what it logically is. That is what people will call it naturally. One reason that I am a little concerned is that I happen to make a small map myself (in the record). To put another name on it, for map makers and for tourists it seems to me that it would be utter confusion. Logically it is the Parks Highway extension. I have a lot of respect for the person named here, but that is beside the point. I don't think that we have a right to go around confusing the public."

Testimony from Public Testimony  
March 27, 1986  
Page 7

Walley Burnett  
1901 Crosson  
Fairbanks, AK 99701

"Senator Coghill, it is nice to be here. Yesterday I talked to a couple of people and they mentioned that there was a possibility that they would be naming the South Fairbanks Expressway. Bob Mitchell was a long time Fairbanksan from a long time Fairbanks family. He was very instrumental in developing the Van Horn and Peger Road, in which this road will be passing through. If you will recall in the early days of the pipe line, Bob Mitchell was one of the main people involved in the development of the Railroad that went into the South Fairbanks area. He moved lots of gravel and made lots of roads, often with out pay. I feel that when we drive back and forth on Airport Road, Van Horn and Peger, and we do go through the expressway, we do think of our good friend Bob Mitchell. I whole heartedly would like to give my approval of putting his name into naming it the Mitchell Expressway."

Harvey Marlin  
665 10th Ave.  
Fairbanks, AK 99701

"I have lived in Fairbanks since 1929 and have know Bob Mitchell from that day forward. Not only as a classmate, but as a good and personal friend. When it came to my attention that t is expressway was to be named, perhaps anyway, in memory of Bo' Mitchell, I was very definitely impressed and I still am. I think th it is a very wise move. Bob was a gentleman that promoted for the City of Fairbanks all of his working years. As a matter of fact, he began his working career with the Alaska Road Commission. Both he and his partner began a trucking operation from Valdez to Fairbanks with the assistance of the veterans aid. There again they continued on in to the highway program, Clyde previous to that was a master mechanic to the road commission. Bob Mitchell has always been associated with the road system and has always done a great amount over and above walking the extra mile to make the roads within our community better, not always for pay, by the way. I think that this is a very wise choice and I am one thousand percent in favor of it."

Testimony from Public Hearing  
March 27, 1986  
Page 8

Con Frank  
200 Gold Dust Drive  
Fairbanks, AK 99707  
479-2828

"Well, I would like to say that I would endorse the naming of this section of highway for Robert Mitchell. I have known him almost forty years since I came to Alaska. He was one of the first people that I met when I came here. I have been a partner with him and closely associated with him for twenty years. He was a very positive person and dedicated a lot of his efforts to the development of Fairbanks, and especially the South Fairbanks area. He started out on South Cushman, he and his partner, started in there in 1948-49 and then gradually moved further south there to the Van Horn Road area. I would just like to say that I would endorse this naming."

Senator Coghill

"Thank you very much Mr. Frank, is there anyone else that would like to make a statement? If not, then our public hearing is closed. This will be transcribed and will be put into the record. It will be used in the deliberation of both the House and Senate. They may want to have more hearings. If that is the case, then this will be part of that record."

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

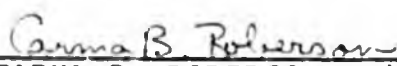
WHEREAS, the City of Fairbanks wishes to remember Robert J. Mitchell's positive contribution to the people of the interior and to the development of the South Fairbanks industrial area.

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

00902  
pb: bj



Greater Fairbanks

**Chamber**

of Commerce

First National Center

P.O. Box 7446

100 Cushman Street

(907) 452-1105

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 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

4/6/88

Editorial Opinion and Comment of

FAIRBANKS

# 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.

## Mitchell Expressway

Mitchell Expressway: It has a nice ring.

The Mitchell Expressway is what the highway connecting the Parks Highway with the Richardson Highway through South Fairbanks is likely to be called. The city council has given its approval to the name and a similar resolution will go before the borough assembly Jan. 14, for action by the Legislature next session.

The chief complaint against the proposal is that Mitchell already has a raceway after him and not enough roads and public facilities are named after Natives or Alaskan events or features.

That's a good argument. We should take care in the names we bestow. We should be sensitive to all considerations when we go about naming things.

It is unfortunate, for instance, that Fairbanks has never named anything after Howard Rock. The great Eskimo publisher founded the Tundra Times and published it here during much of his time as publisher. No one had more impact on attitudes that shaped the Alaska Native Claims Act than he. Perhaps his name would be appropriate for the community activities center.

Aside from that, we don't see any problem with naming the Parks-Richardson connector the Mitchell Expressway. Robert J. Mitchell was one of the first industrialists to set up in South Fairbanks and had a lot to do with the development of Metro Field and a rail spur through South Fairbanks to the east side of the International Airport. He was a life-long resident of the Interior and died in 1980 at the age of 61.

The Mitchell Expressway, if that is what it is, is a good addition to the area's network of roads. Fast transportation is necessary if an industrial area is to develop in South Fairbanks. The expressway makes it much easier for trucks coming up the highways to get to their destination, and will take pressure off Airport Way and other roads with heavy local traffic.

Fairbanks is lucky to have the industrial area, rather than have its industry spread out around town. There is room to grow out where Mitchell set up his construction business. In time, it is likely that the expressway will be as busy as Airport Way or College Road. It seems appropriate that such a road should be named for a South Fairbanks industrialist.

# Christmas sea

Today is the 12th day of Christmas, Jan. 6, 1988. Almost all the colorful decoration lights that kept the city aglow in its crystal robe of snow and frost from mid-December through the holiday season are gone. Stowed away for the year ahead, tossed in the trash can in some cases, or turned off and left hanging on trees, fences, eaves, around windows, or whatever.

There is a touch of sadness in seeing many of the bright lights taken down the very next day after Dec. 25. Some among us didn't even keep the symbols of good cheer going through New Year's Eve festivities. As if with the traditional exchange of gifts, the fire had gone out.

Disappointing! For the deeper meaning and spirit of the season is so very much more. The joy of the yuletide is not to be measured by the alight rise or fall in volume of



Views expressed here do not represent those of the Daily News-Miner.

retail sales, but by w minds and hearts of th for a time at least take from their own conc lives of others.

The good feeling a surfaces. Hope for a l row burgeons at the ve of winter when daylig few and temperature side. The good feel others, about oneself s is so fine a thing we s



# \$600 billion

WASHINGTON—The \$600 billion catchall appropriations bill President Reagan signed over the holidays serves as yet another shameful example of Congress's inability to curb the deficit.

Indeed, by enacting this pork-laden bill, lawmakers were thumbing their noses at America's taxpayers. While bureaucratically du-



De Lo

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.

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Herb  
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Cith  
Rohn  
Will  
Gary

evaluation of the inmates' at group. Huston said inmates said the parole heavy emphasis on that "it 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. He said that he was sent to receive the counseling. Others testified that commended psychiatric none has been received and he has been in prison about the counseling. They are not allowed to final report given to the for the parole counselor s to prepare a defense are not taped, and in- they believe the parole a greatest emphasis to solor's report alone. n occasion lectured in- hearings, reportedly on as a good example. ates for alcohol use, and records, inmates said. They are not learning and don't stand much of a g a job upon release. they are reluctant to try over to write a letter ve a job. If they have to employer they were denied

chance would I have it e second time?" an in- m still fighting my case he whole focus of the ison that," he said. tes said they are unable o, that public defenders ne prison to assist them. inmates have a parole a job lined up, a place to s upon release, that o get credit from the rged. stances judges have at sentencing that the sed after serving a third. but the parole board parole after the time is d. said his residence was parole officer and police rch warrant, that his re confiscated and that give a speedy arraigh-

### n Box Boy

arged with disorderly 0 blunk of Lacey Street 0nce said

ham, 18, of 1127 Park 1 the theft of a tape akers valued at \$170 0day

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. Lyons 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. 29, 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 III.

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 school 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 Tri-



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, 1924 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 Meyeres, 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 Schottfeldt.

# ATTENTION

All Members of the

## CULINARY UNION LOCAL 879

### NEXT REGULAR MEETING





## Name confusion

March 29, 1986  
P.O. Box 1992  
Fairbanks, AK 99707

To the Editor:

Your article on March 29 regarding the hearing at Noel Wien Library on naming the new highway connecting the Parks Highway with the Richardson did not mention there were other views expressed than naming it after the late Robert J. Mitchell.

One citizen strongly suggested that it be called the "Parks Highway Extension," or simply retain the name of the Parks Highway. Since the current Parks Highway ends at Airport Road with Mile 358, milepost numbering could simply continue on for the next four miles or so till the highway intersected with the Richardson near the present 30th Avenue intersection. It was suggested that this would be the least confusing to everyone.

Other reasons expressed were: "Parks Highway" is what all Fairbanksans will think of it as, and will call it, because that is what it actually is.

**Jane  
Fender**

Did you know the Fairbanks area has acquired two new municipalities? One is "College," located on the Parks Highway just west of Fairbanks, with a population of 3,000. The other is "Aurora," located, as near as I can tell, between Fairbanks and the Chena Hot Springs Road. Its population is 1,100.

These interesting "facts" come from a Rand McNally road map of Alaska currently available at \$1.75 at your friendly neighborhood gas station.

"Deadhorse," is marked as a town on the same map, with a population of 163. "Prudhoe Bay" and "Beechey Point" also are marked with the traditional little circles that indicate they are towns, though the index doesn't supply population figures.

I found out all these things as a result of Nancy Baker's letter to the editor last week objecting to the proposed new name for the end of the Parks Highway, "The Robert J. Mitchell Expressway." She thought a new name for the final stretch of the Parks Highway could be confusing. It is true that we're loaded with names for pieces of roads.

It would cause confusion to both map-makers and map-readers to change the name of this new section. It would be one-tenth of an inch long on a state map. It would be 2 1/2 inches in length, for instance, in the "Fairbanks and Vicinity" map in Milepost. It would require one inch or so to write the name "Robert J. Mitchell Expressway," and just an inch or so to the left of that would appear the words "George Parks Hwy." It is obviously one continuous stretch of highway. Why two names? Very confusing to visitors and even "locals."

Verbal instructions could also be very confusing. For instance in directing someone from North Pole to Ester one might say, "Turn left on the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway and drive about 11 miles." "But I was told Ester is on the Parks Highway. How do I get to that?" "Just keep going—they change the name four miles down the way."

Would there be signs midway across the Airport overpass indicating where the Parks Highway begins and Robert J. Mitchell Expressway ends?

Perhaps there is food for thought in the suggestion that the new section of the highway retain the name of George Parks Highway. Mr. Mitchell's fine contributions to our community might be better remembered elsewhere lest his name risk being remembered unkindly and with frequency, as the source of unnecessary but legislated confusion.

The matter is before the Senate Transportation Committee as Senate Bill 461. Apparently input and a hearing is necessary before new federally funded highways are named.

The notice in the paper prior to the hearing might have drawn more input if it had been accompanied by a map.

Sincerely,

Nancy Lee Baker

## What's in a name? Just ask Rand McNally

For example, there's the Alaska Highway, Route 2, from the border to Delta. At that point, the Richardson Highway, on its way north from Valdez is Route 4. At Delta, some

kind of magic causes Route 4 to be transformed into Route 2 to Fairbanks. It almost seems as if Route 4, the Richardson Highway, ought to stay that way until the end of the road, at Fairbanks but that isn't how they did it.

In Fairbanks, meanwhile, the same road changes into the Steese Highway, though it is still Route 2 as far as Fox. Then it becomes Route 6 to Circle City. At that point, too, Route 2 is transformed again, this time into the Elliott Highway all the way to the Manley Hot Springs area where it ends.

Someplace out there in the Livenood area is where the Dalton Highway begins, formerly known as "The Taps Road," or "The Haul Road." Before that it was the "Hickel Highway" when it was an ice road headed for the North Slope via Anaktuvuk Pass. The Dalton

Highway on this map has neither number nor name, though it is labeled both "restricted" and "under construction." It also has a town called "Big Lake" up around the North Fork not too far from Wiseman.

This map says it is "regularly updated and revised" and will keep people from getting lost. Even so, it seems to me if this is the best they can do, we ought to quit renaming pieces of already-named roads and go another way.

How about honoring our famous people by naming pulloffs for them—"The Walter J. Hickel Turnaround," or "The Bill Sheffield Rest Stop?" With a scenic sign and a picnic table, it'd be a whole lot better than causing tourists to cuss us out as they wonder whatever happened to the road they were driving on.

## Confusing idea

April 14, 1986  
607 Bentley Drive  
Fairbanks, AK 99701

To the Editor:

Naming the Parks Highway extension "The Robert J. Mitchell Expressway" would be too confusing. Let's name the southeast lane the "Egan, Bartlett, Begich, Gruening Memorial Expressway"; the northwest lane, the "Alfred E. Newman Bypass"; and the intersection at Peger, "Horner's Corner." This would help in making directions more specific. Or we could call that section of the Parks Highway, the Parks Highway, which it is.

Margot Washburn

## Yield sign needed

April 14, 1986  
P.O. Box 80901  
Fairbanks, AK 99701

To the Editor:

I am writing to bring public attention to a highly dangerous highway situation which has been brought to the attention of the Department of Transportation but about which they do not seem to be particularly concerned. I am referring to the lack of a yield sign on the northbound on-ramp on the Parks Highway at the new overpass where westbound traffic leaving Airport Way enters the northbound lane of the Parks.

This is a particularly dangerous point to merge traffic. The Parks Highway is a two-lane road and the on-ramp is designed as a high speed entrance ramp, joining the Parks Highway at a sharp angle which makes it difficult for the entering driver to see the Parks traffic he merges with at high speed. A hundred yards beyond the on-ramp entrance the Parks crosses a narrow two-lane bridge. The situation is further complicated by the fact that trees partly obstruct the view of traffic on the Parks and the only way for the merging driver to see the northbound traffic on the Parks at the on-ramp entrance is to physically turn around and look back over his left shoulder, a rather dangerous maneuver while accelerating to enter traffic.

*THIS IS THE SAME PLACE  
WHERE THE NAME CHANGE  
FROM PARKS HWY TO  
ROBERT E. MITCHELL EX-  
PRESSWAY WOULD OCCUR,  
AND A SIGN SHOULD  
PROBABLY BE ERRECTED  
TO ANNOUNCE SAME*

*RESULT: MORE Confusion!!*

*Confused MOTORISTS CAN CAUSE ACCIDENTS.*

*AT THIS POINT PEOPLE (ESPECIALLY NON-LOCAL  
RESIDENTS) WOULD WONDER HOW THEY GOT ON A  
NEW HIGHWAY, WHEN THEY THOUGHT THEY WERE  
ON THE PARKS HIGHWAY.*

Several weeks ago my wife was driving northbound on the overpass as a another vehicle merged from her right off this on-ramp. Both vehicles were traveling at approximately the same speed. The merging vehicle did not yield and she found herself forced between this vehicle and oncoming traffic on the bridge. She had to rapidly brake to fall behind the merging vehicle to avoid a three-car accident on the bridge. I work as a volunteer medic with a local ambulance service and recently found myself in the same situation. I was driving an ambulance northbound on the Parks and a vehicle came onto the Parks from this on-ramp. Due to the restricted visibility to my right from the body of the ambulance I could not see the merging traffic coming off this on-ramp and found myself and another vehicle squeezed together in a single lane as we approached the Parks bridge with oncoming traffic.

Upon calling the Department of Transportation to request that a yield sign be placed on this on-ramp we were told that it was designed as a high speed on-ramp and that entering traffic on the Parks was not required to yield to traffic already on the highway. This is absurd. It might work on multiple lane California freeways where the right-hand lane is the slow lane for entering traffic but at this particular location it's only a matter of time before it results in an accident with resulting injuries or loss of life. A yield sign seems to me to be a small expense when measured against a potential lawsuit and I would think the Highway Department would be a little more concerned.

Sincerely,  
Robert C. Betts  
Paramedic Intern

APR 13 1988

HB 437

Highway Name *Daily NEWS*  
Jan. 7, 1988  
P.O. Box 80805  
Fairbanks, AK 99708

To the editor:  
Regarding naming of a portion of the Parks Highway that passes through Fairbanks enroute to a hookup with the Richardson Highway:

A group is pushing to name it the Mitchell Expressway. Bob Mitchell was a friend and a good person. There is already a racetrack named for him in the same area. There are many worthy people in the Fairbanks area for whom nothing has been named. Please think about this.

Personally, I think just calling it Parks Avenue or Parks Expressway, as it passes through town, would distinguish it from the highway, but still indicate some relationship, so that strangers, tourists, etc. would have some continuity when they are driving from Valdez, or Anchorage, or the lower 48.

I strongly favor Parks Avenue, or Parks Expressway but if you must name it for a person, why not choose someone who has done something for roads—there are lots of them who have worked for D.O.T., designers, engineers, administrators, etc. The Steese Highway was named after a Road Commission man, as was the Elliott Highway. How about using the name of Woody Johannsen for a new highway somewhere in the Interior. He is a Cordova-born Alaskan, who was graduated from UAF in civil engineering, taught at the U, before becoming head of the Fairbanks D.O.T., and staying with it until his retirement. He still lives in Fairbanks. He is a worthy person.

I don't think that little segment passing through Fairbanks needs a change of name and still am pushing for Parks Avenue, or Expressway, but in the future, do think of naming some Interior road after Woody Johannsen.

Sincerely,  
Helen L. Atkinson

LETTER FROM  
A CIVIL ENGINEER  
(ALSO AN EX-  
CITY ENGINEER)

TELECONVERENCE WITH TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE OF HOUSE:

FEB 17 1988:

A tape of this teleconverence sent to you

THE RESULTS were overwhelmingly AGAINST naming of Mitchell Expressway.

BY THE "VOTE": Seven were against  
Six were for.

Those who testified in favor included: A relative of Representative Steve Frank, who is son of Con Frank, partner in Ghemm Co. of which Mr. Mitchell was also a partner; Gary Wilkin, lobbyist for HB 437 for Steve Frank; Two ex-employees of Ghemm Co. who remember Mr. Mitchell as "like a second father".

IN ADDITION OUR LEGISLATORS occupied about the first fifteen minutes testifying in favor of the naming, which make it appear that the overall testimony was in favor. It was my impression that our legislators were there to LISTEN.

THOSE WHO TESTIFIED AGAINST INCLUDED: Two avowed friends of Mr. Mitchell, who nevertheless felt it was wrong to change the name of the Parks Hwy. as proposed. (These were both women. I know of at least three men who feel that way but are not able to separate loyalty to the man from the public interest concern in this case---say they "can't come out an publicly say it!"); a map-maker who was quick to spot the potential problem when the name changing issue first came up in 1986; a civic-minded employee of MUS; an owner of a large building supply company in Fairbanks; an ex-legislator.

NONE OF THESE PEOPLE TESTIFYING AGAINST KNEW THE OTHERS WERE COMING. SOME DID NOT EVEN KNOW EACH OTHER. They were all concerned about the larger public interest issue of changing the name of a section of an established highway as proposed. They were concerned enough, upon reading Gary Wilkin's ad inviting those in favor to appear at the legislative office, to phone and find out when the testimony could be given, and to alter their day's plans in order to get there and give testimony.

THERE IS JUDGEMENT NEEDED IN THIS DECISION, rather than just responding to the pressures or "votes" of either side. The opposition not only speaks louder but better.

## Move on to name Mitchell Expressway

A move that met opposition two years ago is back on track to have the Alaska Legislature name the new South Fairbanks Expressway in memory of Robert J. Mitchell.

The Fairbanks City Council Monday night by unanimous consent adopted a resolution to that effect, and apparently a similar resolution is in the works for the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly's consideration Jan. 14.

What remains is legislators' commitment to introduce bills to officially change the name of the roadway under construction. Two years ago, Sen. Jack Coghill, R-Nenana, and Rep. Steve Frank, R-Fairbanks, introduced bills, but there was opposition. The bills we-

ren't reintroduced this year, but Gary Wilken told the council Monday he's hopeful they will be introduced in 1988.

Wilken said the Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce board and transportation committee both endorse naming the expressway after Mitchell.

"For the benefit of those who didn't know Bob, he touted Fairbanks as much as anybody has. It's been said he gave (former mayor) Bill Wood lessons. He did it before there was oil, before there was state grants, before there was revenue sharing. He did it on his own. He had a can-do attitude," Wilken said.

Mitchell moved Ghemm Construction Co. to Van Horn when it was still a dirt road, Wilken said. Metro Field was a vision of Mitchell's, and in the early '70s, Mitchell was a prime force in backing a railroad spur to what has become the industrial area, he added.

There was one speaker Monday who took issue with naming the expressway after Mitchell. Shirley Demientieff said she didn't know Mitchell, but there's already a raceway named for him. Her complaint is that so many public facilities are named after people, but few after Native people or for Alaska events or features. Demientieff then gave a suggested list of names.

Council member Jerry Norum told Demientieff that her point was well-taken, but people need to come forward with suggested names in a timely manner. The borough has the responsibility for naming streets and its own public facilities, he said.

As for the expressway, it's a state highway, and naming it requires legislative action. Construction began this summer and will continue next season on building overpasses crossing South Cushman Street, and a new road parallel to 30th Avenue. This section eventually will link the Richardson Highway and South Cushman area via the new road with the Peger-Airport Way-Parks Highway expressway. Traffic will be able to go from the Richardson to the Parks Highway without traveling on Airport Way.

# 3-26<sup>86</sup> Hearing set on

NEWS MINER  
MARCH 26-1986

## new highway name

A public hearing will be held at the Noel Wien Library Thursday from noon till 2 p.m. on a bill to name the new stretch of highway from Airport Road to the Richardson Highway the "Robert J. Mitchell Expressway."

The bill was introduced in the Senate by the Transportation Committee and in the House by Reps. Steve Frank, Mike Davis, Mike Miller, John Ringstad and Dick Schultz.

Mitchell was born in Fairbanks in 1918 and was an employee of the Alaska Road Commission and a founder of Mitchell Truck and Tractor, an early Interior Transportation company.

Through his efforts, a major rail spur was built through the south Fairbanks industrial area to the east side of the international airport. The new South Fairbanks Expressway is routed immediately adjacent to the area.

THIS WAS INADEQUATE  
NOTICE BURIED ON INSIDE PAGE  
BEFORE PUBLIC WAS AWARE OF  
WHAT HIGHWAY WAS IN QUESTION.  
SHOULD HAVE BEEN ACCOMPANIED  
BY A MAP, TO SHOW THAT  
IT WAS IN ESSENCE AN  
EXTENSION OF THE PARKS HWY

A NEW PUBLIC HEARING  
IS IN ORDER NOW THAT  
PUBLIC IS AWARE, AND  
A MAP SHOULD ACCOMPANY  
THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF  
PUBLIC HEARING.

3-27<sup>86</sup> 8-Daily News-Miner, Fairbanks, Alaska

## 86 Naming of Mitchell

### highway urged

Several area residents spoke Thursday in favor of naming the new South Fairbanks Expressway after the late Robert J. Mitchell.

Mitchell, who helped develop the south Fairbanks industrial area, was remembered by Joe Balch of Salina as a man who got most of his

learning in the "school of hard knocks."

Joe Tremarello, who long has been active in sports and teaching, said the proposal was "very appropriate" because Mitchell did a lot for local schools and young people.

Mitchell died in 1980 at the age of

61. He had been an employee of the Alaska Road Commission and later founded Mitchell Truck and Tractor, an early transportation company.

Mitchell also was one of the founders of GHEMM Inc., a construction company, and he built many roads in this area. Mitchell played a large role in getting a railroad spur built to the airport.

Nenana Sen. Jack Coghill, who conducted the hearing, said he recalled that after World War II Mitchell put many former servicemen to work "greasing cats" or doing other work at his place in Garden Island.

If the legislative proposal is adopted, the road from the Parks Highway to the Richardson Highway would be named the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway.

Only the western part of the expressway, from the Parks Highway to Peger Road, has been built so far.

THIS IS POOR REPORTING  
THERE WERE SEVERAL  
PEOPLE (AT LEAST 3)  
WHO SPOKE IN OPPOSITION  
TO THIS, AND PRESENTED  
SOME VERY GOOD  
REASONS FOR THEIR  
OPPOSITION.

THE TAPE MADE BY  
SENATOR COGHILL  
SHOULD BE REVIEWED  
BY THOSE MAKING  
DECISIONS.

## 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

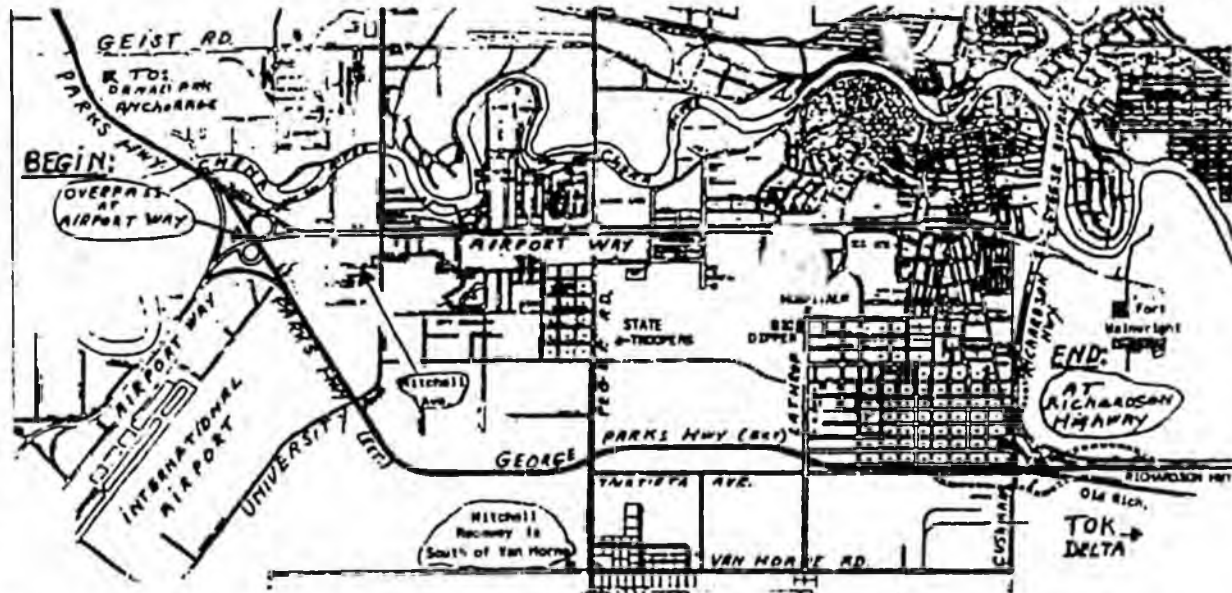
at speeds in excess of 50 mph is not an inconsequential thing to be taken lightly. It deserves serious "second thoughts." Some of them follow:

**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 grassroots 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

HB 437

MITCHELL EXPRESSWAY; FAIRBANKS

This ad appeared in the Fairbanks Daily News Miner Feb. 15 and 16 1988, for a meeting that was to be held on the 17th.

Note:

There is no telephone number given for the Legislative office. It is difficult to find it in the telephone book.

It does not give the time of day at which the hearing will take place.

It does not give the address of the Legislative office, which moved to a different location just one week prior to the ad.

It is not a public notice, but rather an ad directed at those supporting the issue.

In spite of the above, seven individuals appeared to give testimony against renaming that portion of the highway. Except for two of them who came together, none of the others knew the others were coming. Two people were totally unknown to me, and they did not know any of the other people there. These seven individuals saw the ad in the paper and were concerned enough to look up the number of the Legislative office to find out the time and place of the testimony and appear to testify.

The six persons who testified in favor all received personal advanced notice from Gary Wilken, who said he personally paid for the ad.

2-15-88

## 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.

*An editorial in The Daily News-Miner  
February 29, 1980*

If you support the naming in honor of Bob Mitchell of the new highway from the Airport Road Interchange to the Richardson Highway Interchange, public testimony will be taken on this issue on Wednesday, February 17. The location will be at the Legislative Information Office, Denali Bank Building. If you are unable to attend, written testimony or public opinion messages are encouraged to be sent to Ms. Betty Cato, Chairperson, House Transportation Committee, Juneau, Alaska.

452-4448

Ad paid for by Gary Wilken and Friends of Bob Mitchell,  
1851 Fox Avenue, Fairbanks, Alaska.

MAR 7 1988

Fairbanks, Alaska  
February 29, 1988

Dear Legislator

Attached is a copy of an informal speech made by me on February 17 at a Legislative Teleconference regarding naming the north portion of the Parks Highway for a local man, Robert Mitchell. I hope you will take the time to read my remarks given to the Transportation Committee on that date.

The idea for the Mitchell name was started some years back when it became apparent that the Department of Transportation was to build a connecting road from the Parks to the Richardson. Simultaneous bills were introduced in 1986--HB664 by Frank, Davis, Ringstad and Shultz and SB461 by the Transportation Committee. Since there was no one on SB461 committee from the Fairbanks area, I assume it was engineered by Senator Coghill of Nenana.

However in the intervening two years, there has been second thoughts about the wisdom of naming portions of our major highways for local citizens: Roads, trails and streets--yes, but small sections of trunk highways, no. There were a number of pioneering transportation men who gave much aid to the farmers, miners and industrial businesses in bygone years such as Frank Nash, Gene Rogge, Woodrow Johansen, John Pala, Roy Lund, Robert Sheldon, Billy Root and Maurice O'Leary to name a few. They all deserve some form of recognition. No doubt there are many others throughout our state who were, and are, deserving of place names. There are many types of places to be named--trails, roadways, small streams, harbors and campgrounds--Alaska has a wealth of developing areas.

Perhaps it is time to select a "naming" committee under the Dept. of Transportation who would gather, publicize and allow enough time for public input and approval. The Alaska Historical Commission might be another good source for research. To label a small stretch of major highway for a person without serious thought is no particular honor to the person so-named.

I urge you to reject HB497 or any similar senate bill until further thought can be made on honorary namings.

Sincerely,



Alaska S. Linck  
Former Territorial Legislator

/1  
Encl: 1

constituent letter

Good Afternoon:

I'm here today to recommend that you continue the Parks Highway name to the point where it connects with the Richardson Highway south of Fairbanks. There are several reasons for my request:

First: As a driver of many years, it is far simpler to have clear directions on a highway, rather than having name changes in small increments. If asked, I'm sure the Highway Patrol would agree that simplicity in road directions is desirable.

Secondly: Fairbanks tourism has advertised our town as the "Golden Heart". What better advertisement could there be than a golden heart on the tourist maps showing the convergence of the Richardson, Parks and Steese Highways?

Third: Savings could be effected if there were not multiple changes of highway signs plus extra map designations which would be necessary for clear direction. Many of the Parks Highway signs are already up in the area between the International Airport and the end of the new highway.

Fourth: The naming of the highways honored three very great men--Wiles P. Richardson, James Gordon Steese and Governor George Parks--all famous engineers and prominent men. To interject the name of a lesser person as part of the Parks Highway would be to dilute the original honor of the naming.

Which brings me to the reason for this particular hearing today which came via a notice placed in the Newsminer last night and the night before. This ad promoted the Mitchell Expressway which, incidentally, could not be an "expressway" due to its length and frequent off-ramps. It quoted an 8-year Newsminer editorial which advocated the naming of a portion of the Parks highway for Bob Mitchell, a popular young man who died some years back.

At that time there were three routes considered: one on Van Horn Road where the GHEMM Construction Company (of which Bob was a partner) was located; one on Thirtieth Avenue; and another on Twenty Third Avenue. Bob already had a racetrack and city street named for him which seemed sufficient. However as the GHEMM company owned the "Metro Airfield" what better honor than to rename this well-known airstrip the "Mitchell Airfield"? I have the greatest respect for Bob, his parents, and present family but I believe that to name a portion of a major highway for him would be wrong.

Let's keep it simple with the Richardson, Parks and Steese Highways! I urge you to defeat HB437

FAIRBANKS ACTIVITY RE:

HB 437 MITCHELL EXPRESSWAY

HISTORY-----FACTS

MAR 17 1988

FIRST INTRODUCED as SB 461 and HB 664 in 14th Legislature by Transportation (Rep. Frank in House).

March 26, 1986. Small notice in local newspaper re: public hearing re: naming Mitchell Expressway

March 27 or 28, 1986. Hearing held, conducted by Sen. Coghill. Testimony in favor from friends and some testimony in favor of other names, and some against changing the name from the Parks to any other name in order to avoid confusion to the public, to map makers, to map readers etc.

MARCH 29, 1986. Article in local paper with heading "Naming of Mitchell Highway urged".

December 8, 1986. FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL voted unanimously that the PARKS HIGHWAY would retain that same name till it connected with the Richardson Highway. It was brought to their attention that a name change had been proposed by the legislature. They agreed that any name change would be confusing.

DEC. 21, 1987. After persuasive presentation by Gary Wilkins FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL unanimously endorsed resolution to endorse naming the new portion of the Parks, the Mitchell Expressway (Res. 2918)

Dec 21, 1987. With only 5 members present (of a 21 member committee) the Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce endorsed resolution to support Mitchell Name for highway. After he obtained a unanimous vote from that committee he presented it to the board and introduced a motion to adopt it. Since it is the custom of the board to automatically pass what committees approve, it passed the board unanimously.

Jan. 14, 1988. Borough Resolution 88003 was to endorse Mitchell name. Three citizens presented opposing testimony. Due to length of agenda meeting adjourned till Jan 21.

*Senator Jones*

*I Thank you, and most Fairbanks AKS would also, for giving a serious thought to the facts + signature a "NO PASS" in your committee,*

*IF the public has not given you much NEGATIVE INPUT IT IS BECAUSE they THINK IT IS SO DUMB & WRONG that IT WOULD NOT get ANYWHERE IN THE LEGISLATURE IT HAS GOTTEN TO YOUR COMMITTEE THRU OUR Delegation NOT LISTENING TO their STUDENTS.*

*Resolution 2831, AS NIMEN 880 128-86*

*Negative Constituent*

Jan. 21, 1988. BOROUGH ASSEMBLY tabled resolution by vote of 9-1 in view of previous public testimony and other unfavorable input various members had received.

Jan. 28, 1988. BOROUGH ASSEMBLY voted 5 yeas and 5 nos on removing resolution from the table. One member changed his vote to yes to bring it back up for discussion. Presiding officer said Betty Cato interested in having public testimony through teleconference, and offered an amendment to the effect "Said legislation to be enacted following a favorable public hearing with citizens of the North Star Borough". It was expressed that we had already had overwhelming public testimony in the form of public hearing, and how was a determination to be made ---by votes?? Motion failed but motion to postpone to call of the chair passed with one objection. (Postponement anticipated a possible teleconference).

Feb 1 1988 Guest column appeared in Daily News Miner with reference to renaming of Parks extension.

Feb 15 and 16. 1988. Paid advertisement (by Gary Wilkin) appeared in Daily News Miner (see attachment) inviting those who supported naming of Mitchell Expressway to give public testimony Feb 17. It did not state the time, or even say it was a teleconference. It did not give phone number of Legislative office.

Feb 17, 1988. Teleconference at 1:30 p.m with House Transportation Committee. This received no public announcement. However seven independent individuals saw the advertisement, inquired as to the time, appeared to give testimony in favor of keeping name Parks on the highway. Included in the opposers to the name change were avowed friends of Mr. Mitchell who did not think it appropriate to name

that portion of the highway after him. Overall the hearing was distinctly not favorable to passage of HB 437. Reasons were distinctly in the public interest and extremely well expressed. There six people testifying in favor of the Mitchell name. These included a sister-in-law of Steve Frank, sponsor of the original bill, who also testified in behalf of her husband, and several employees of the Ghemm Company, including Gary Wilkins who remembered Robert Mitchell as like "a second father."

IF JUDGMENT AS TO WHICH SIDE "WON" the hearing were to be by the method of "counting votes", there were seven against and six in favor of naming for Mitchell. However it is the reasoning behind the objections that should carry the weight.

By either the "reasoning" method or the "tally" method those opposing the renaming of Parks Hwy. appear to have come out ahead.

March 10, 1988. Resolution to name Mitchell expressway comes before Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly for fourth time. After brief discussion it is defeated by 5-5 vote. One member reconsiders, the issue will come up again March 24.

AND SO IT RESTS AS OF MARCH 15, 1988

**OBSERVATIONS:**

1. The vote of a mere five persons present at the Transportation Committee of the Chamber of Commerce was responsible for a "unanimous" approval by the Chamber.
2. After considering the issue at four meetings North Star Borough Assembly is far from approval.
3. There is no approval from "Unified Fairbanks" according to president Chuck Reese of that group.
4. All public hearings have predominantly opposed the bill.

HB 427 MITCHELL EXPRESSWAY

PROPOSES to change name of last 4 miles of the PARKS HIGHWAY.

If there were no signs at the point where this bill intends to change its name to Mitchell, the west-bound traveler will assume, and has every right to, that he is on the Parks Highway. The highway is identical in width, direction, type etc. to the portion on which he has just been traveling. There is no intersection and no change of any kind to warrant calling it a different name.

TO BE SUDDENLY accosted with a sign stating you are on a different highway would be confusing to anyone for the first time. A large portion of the highway travelers will always be approaching it for the first time because they are visitors we have lured here with tax dollars to spend their tourist dollars. We owe them more consideration than to deliberately introduce a new source of confusion (confusion on a fast highway can lead to accidents, especially in large poor visibility rigs) where enough confusion already exists from past, sometimes unavoidable poor decisions or happenstance.

In 1985 DOT enlisted help of MILEPOST traveling editors (of which I was one) to help eliminate confusing signage situations on Alaska Highways. Now there is a chance to avoid creating a new bad situation.