



SUMMARY

Big Lake Pedestrian Study Open House #1 Place Audit

Date | Time: May 17th, 2017 (6:00 -8:30pm) |

Location: Big Lake Recreation Center |

Project Team

Melanie Nichols, Project Manager, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF)

Van Le, AICP, Project Manager, R&M Consultants, Inc.

Taryn Oleson, Planner and Public Involvement Coordinator, R&M Consultants, Inc.

Marc Frutiger, PE, PTOE, Civil Engineer Lead, R&M Consultants, Inc.

Emily Benti, Planner and Environmental Specialist, R&M Consultants, Inc.

Meeting Summary

The meeting began at the scheduled time of 6:00 PM in the upstairs meeting room of the Big Lake Recreation Center. Members of the project team informally discussed the goals of the project and the issues and opportunities for Big Lake Road with community members. Maps were laid on tables along with comment forms and copies of the Place Audit Evaluation Form. A sign-in table with fact sheets, comment forms, and other informational handouts was arranged near the door, welcoming attendees as they arrived. Snacks were provided and an electronic comment station with a computer linked to the project website and interactive geographic comment map was available during the open house for use. Following the suggestion from the few residents in attendance, the formal presentation began at 6:30 PM, allowing more time for Big Lake residents commuting from Anchorage to join.

Van Le, Project Manager at R&M, began the presentation at 6:30 PM (presentation slides attached). She discussed the purpose of the study, the 20-year vision for Big Lake Road this process is trying to identify, the planning and public involvement process, and the methods of information gathering that will be used. Taryn then provided a demonstration of the project website and the process for leaving a comment on the interactive geographic comment map. Van continued with a discussion of land use context along the corridor and how we have identified three existing contexts, the commercial, civic, and recreational that are identified on the maps at the tables. The presentation concluded with a discussion of next steps in the process including the upcoming Agency Coordination meeting, Community Council meeting and the second Advisory Group meeting.

Van then provided instructions for the small group Place Audit exercise that would be the focus of the rest of the open house. This workshop style activity had each small group at a table evaluate Big Lake Road and rate statements about the corridor on a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree. Some groups completed an evaluation for each identified section, while others rated the corridor as a whole, making notes where a statement may have been true for one section but not another. The results of the Place Audit Evaluation are summarized below.

Attendees arrived throughout the open house and joined a table after signing in a having a brief explanation of the project and place audit activity provided by Van or Taryn. The small groups worked on the Place Audit evaluation exercise from about 7:00 PM until 8:15 PM. The meeting adjourned after the schedule time of 8:00 PM in order to provide the open house experience for those who arrived later in the evening.

Place Audit Evaluation Summary

The following colors presented in the agreement scale represent different segments of the Big Lake Road corridor: **Commercial** **Civic** **Recreational** **Entire Corridor**

Access, Linkages & Information	Disagree (1) to Agree (4)	Average (rounded to the nearest .5)
Pedestrians can walk easily to and through the area.....	3 3 1 1 1 4 south side 1 north	2
Pedestrian access is safe & convenient:		
* Sidewalks connect to adjacent areas & are continuous.....	3 1 1 1 2 1	1.5
* Crossings are well marked.....	1 1 1 1 2 1	1
* Crossing times are adequate.....	2 2 1 1 1 2.5	1.5
* Crossing distances are minimal.....	3 3 1 2 1 4	2.5
Bicycling is easy:		
* Routes are safe and convenient.....	2 2 1 2 1 1	1.5
* Routes are well marked.....	2 2 1 1 2 2.5	2
* Bike racks are available at destinations.....	1 1 1 2 2 4	2
Automobiles do not detract from the pedestrian experience.....	2 2 1 1 1 2.5 (1 for ATVs)	1.5
There is adequate directional signage, maps, and location info.....	1 1 1 1 2 4	1.5
Comfort & Image	Disagree (1) to Agree (4)	Average (rounded to the nearest .5)
From a distance Big Lake Road projects a positive image.....	3 2 1 1 1 3	2
Automobiles do not detract from the pedestrian experience.....	2 2 1 1 1 2.5	1.5
The scale of nearby buildings is comfortable for pedestrians, with choices of places to sit or use, both in sun or shade.....	1 1 1 1 1 1	1
Big Lake Road is well managed:		
* It is in a state of good repair.....	3 3 1 1 2 4	2.5
* It is neat and clean.....	2 2 1 1 3 4	2
* It feels safe.....	3 3 1 1 2 4	2.5
* It is well-lit.....	2 1 1 2 1 3	1.5
* Retail space is leased to the best uses.....	2 2 2 1 3 1	2

Amenities are operable, well located and consistent in design:		
* Signs.....	2 2 1 2 2 2.5	2
* Waste receptacles.....	1 1 1 1 3 2	1.5
* Lighting fixtures.....	1 1 1 2 2 3	1.5
* Seating.....	1 1 1 2 2 1	1
Big Lake Road is not dominated by groups or individuals who threaten others.....	3 3 3 1 1 2	2
Uses & Activities	Disagree (1) to Agree (4)	Average (rounded to the nearest .5)
Big Lake Road is busy at times other than rush hour.....	4 4 4 3 3 3	3.5
People are using the spaces in and around Big Lake Road for many types of activities.....	4 4 4 3 2 3	3.5
There are several "choices" of things to do and it is easy to go from one activity to another.....	4 2 3 2 3 1 2 3 2	2.5
Uses are easily visible and inviting for pedestrians.....	1 1 1 2 3 2.5	2
Continuity of street-level uses makes for a pleasant walking environment.....	3 3 1 1 NA	2
The ground floors of adjacent buildings are active & welcoming.....	2 2 1 2 NA	2
Spaces for a range of activities are provided, including:		
* Shopping.....	3 2 2 3 3 2	2.5
* Dining.....	3 1 1 2 2 2	2
* Playing.....	3 3 1 2 3 2	2.5
*Recreation	3 3 3 2 3 2	2.5
* Community events and exhibits.....	3 3 3 3 3 2	3
Sociability	Disagree (1) to Agree (4)	Average (rounded to the nearest .5)
There is evidence of volunteerism and stewardship of Big Lake Road.....	3 2 1 3 3 3	2.5
There are places to gather/ there is evidence of people in groups.....	3 3 2 3 2 3	2.5
Strangers make eye contact; people smile and display friendliness.....	3 3 1 3 3 4	3
There is a mix of age, genders and ethnic groups which generally reflects the community at large.....	4 4 4 4 3 4	4
People bring their friends and relatives to Big lake Road or they point to key elements with pride.....	4 4 4 3 3 3	3.5

Place Audit Evaluation Comments

What do you like best about Big Lake Road and who could help implement some of your proposed improvements?

- The Recreation Center is the best thing and the Lions Club are implementers for the community
- The trails and the pathway
- Not a bad rural road – gets me from A to B

List things you would do to improve Big Lake Road that could be done right away and wouldn't cost a lot:

- Be able to walk to the rec center and mall
- Evaluate speed limit to see if 45 is the appropriate speed
- Pathways should have stop signs at intersections
 - Signage at business driveways so cars stop ahead of pathway
 - Signs should be well-lit
 - Signage for “No motorized vehicles” on pathway
- Education (ATV, pedestrian/bike and vehicle education)
- Shoulders added on Hollywood
- Connect side streets to Big Lake Road
 - Extend pathway to make a loop to the 4 corners (S. Susitna, Lake Marion, near the road)
 - Extend the pathway to the Church
- Clearing/cleanup and improvement of pathway
 - Landscape (tree roots) to the south of the school ruins the pavement
 - Ditch along bike path is full of weeds
 - Bike path walk is not ‘exciting or pleasant’
 - No benches, viewpoints or landscaping – need to add benches along the pathway
 - More cleanups
- Move Tesoro driveway to roundabout
- Delineators for driveways (reflective tabs)

What changes to Big Lake Road would you make in the long term to have the biggest impact?

- Improve maintenance year-round
- Remove ATV traffic from the pedestrian/bike paths
- Gravel (more formalized) trail for ATVs on the Big Lake Road side opposite of the bike path
- Welcome sign at the roundabout
- Improved pathway at roundabout and on Big Lake Road
- Add pedestrian facility across the bridge
- Walkway along both sides of Hollywood Road
 - Shallower, better maintained shoulders and ditches (everywhere) to bring the pedestrian facility more level with the roadways
- Summer maintenance is inadequate
- Add connectivity from the creek to Echo Lake Drive
- Lack of crossing at Fish Creek – if it were improved the audit scores for the recreation segment would improve
 - Fish viewing platform at bridge to see fish/river (where people actually go now to view fish)
- Speed limit reduction and traffic calming

Attachments

- [Sign In](#)
- [Aerial Map](#)
- [Place Audit Form](#)
- [Comment Form](#)