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# PALMER WASILLA HIGHWAY EASTERN TERMINUS

## Citizen's Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

October 7, 2010

Palmer City Hall

4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Next CAC – *Design Concepts-TBD*

### Guests

Mayor-Elect DeLena Johnson

Council Member Elect- Edna Devries

5 general public attendees

Mat-Su Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) Resolution 10-08 presented in May 26, 2010 and approved in July 28, 2010 has been moved to the Assembly Consent Agenda for the October 19, 2010 meeting by member Pete Houston.

### Bond Update

- What does the failure of the bonds mean for this project? *Part of the bonds were for Dogwood so it means there will be less money to build this project.*
- What if we can just build Dogwood? Would that segment alone help solve the problems? I would like to see the statistical analysis, the actual counts of just building a portion of Alternative B. It would be really useful.

### Transportation Fair

The Transportation Fair was September 16<sup>th</sup> from 4 to 8 at Raven Hall. Feedback was generally positive but there are still misconceptions about the project. Some people still believe that it is a one-way couplet.

### General

The issue of medians was discussed. A handout of an e-mail from Dave to Wende was given to the CAC members by Lorie. The e-mail summarized some concerns Lorie and Michelle shared with Dave that they felt needed to be addressed. The e-mail was dated February 17, 2010. In addition, pages 116 to 122 of the Palmer Urban Traffic Study were handed out. The basis of the conversation was that Lorie considers medians a deal breaker and if any medians are placed on the Evergreen portion of the project, the project will get stopped again. They are the same as a one way road and bad for businesses.

This issue was also discussed at the April 29<sup>th</sup> meeting. At that time it was agreed that issue is about maintaining business access. It was also noted that the decision on whether or not to install a median is safety issue governed by National Standards and the professional engineers responsible for the design.

At this time, the design is not far enough along to know if a median is required for safety or not. This may be a "fight" about a non-issue. The frustration about the lack of answers is understandable but on the other hand if the design is done before the CAC makes some decisions on design features, there will also be frustration that the team has already made decisions and is not listening. It was again stated that ADOT&PF needed to make a commitment that there would be no medians or some CAC members would go to the City Council to try to stop the project. Again, Jim stated that he will not make that commitment – it will be decided based on safety.

Other CAC members talked about how they have all made compromises for this project and felt like this was an unfair position to stop the project because of a median. It was agreed to put the median issue in the parking lot and revisit it when the Design Team came back with some actual conceptual designs for discussion.

## Design Features

The slide show of streetscapes was presented again. Concepts discussed included:

- Attached sidewalks
- Detached sidewalks
- Multi-use pathways
- Medians (landscaped, painted, colored/textured concrete and asphalt)
- Buffers (landscaped or decorative pavement/asphalt)
- Gateways
- Landscaping treatment – planters, trees
- Lighting – LED, decorative poles
- On-street parking
- Traffic Calming (chokers, neckdowns, raised intersection, raised crosswalks, visual friction, center medians)
- Pedestrian crossings (textured/colored crosswalks, countdown signals, pedestrian refuges –pork chops)

### Dogwood (west of Glenn)

- Acquire enough ROW for 4 lanes.
- Separated pathway
- Drainage swales, no curb and gutter
- Separate 2 lanes with a 16 foot center area. This area could be landscaped in the short-term and could become a center-turn lane in the future. Provide breaks in the middle for business access.
- Rumor is Walmart is interested in purchasing land along the Dogwood corridor.
- Put pathway on the south side to minimize drifting after snow removal.
- Should the center vegetated median have trees? What about between the trail and road?
- The vegetation will only be as good as the maintenance. The vegetated buffers tend to become weed patches.
- Leave existing vegetation to the extent possible
- The city has a good record of maintaining vegetation on city roads.

### Summary

- 2 travel lanes separated by a center vegetated median that provides access for turning movements into existing businesses (in the future it can become a center turn lane)
- Separated pathway on the south side
- Leave existing vegetation to the extent possible. Consider planting some trees in groupings at key locations.

### Felton

- Same as Dogwood.

### What are the city standards for streets?

- Residential - 24 foot wide with no pedestrian facility or on-street parking required.
- Commercial – 40 feet wide with curb and gutter and two sidewalks
- Industrial - ?

Draft Landscaping standards for the City of Palmer were distributed. The standards were developed by a Citizen's Advisory Committee. These can be reviewed by the CAC to help guide landscaping. Detailed landscaping will be discussed later in the design process.

### Palmer Wasilla Highway (west of the Glenn)

- We have been talking about cars, foot and bike traffic but not 4-wheelers. *No need to discuss 4-wheelers, they are not allowed within the Palmer city limits.*
- Sidewalk south side from Glenn to Felton, then cross to bike path on the north.
- How much ROW is there? Can pedestrian facilities be added? *This section will already require the purchase of ROW to accommodate 5 lanes.*

- There needs to be a safe crossing of Felton for schools. A light?
- No on-street bike lanes, users should be directed to the path. This is a high speed road and the path is safer.
- Need safe, convenient crossings of the PWH.
- Street lighting – yes, LED the neat black Palmer lights

#### Evergreen (east of Glenn)

- A beautiful gateway
- Neat black street lamps. *Wider sidewalks would likely be necessary to accommodate lamps and still be ADA compliant. For example a wheelchair has to be able to navigate around the lamp.*
- Match Glenn Highway landscaping concept being developed by LDN/USKH
- The road improvements have to be squeezed in, leaving little room for pretty.
- Lose a sidewalk or buy ROW – it will be a trade-off.
- Add colored, textured concrete
- Ask adjacent property owners to allow plantings on private property and then be responsible for maintaining it. The Purple Moose has an example of landscaping enhancements along this section.
- Hanging baskets
- Some sort of a gateway – a sign, plantings...
- Overhead power lines are ugly. Burying those would go a long ways to improve the look of Evergreen.
- Left hand turn into Fred Meyer and Chevron should be removed.
- 2 lanes going west to Wasilla was proposed by part of the CAC
- Has to be pedestrian friendly
- Narrow lanes to get wider sidewalks.

#### Cobb Street

- Narrow the roadway at Cobb.
- A raised intersection with colored concrete would be desirable here.
- Keep small town flashing red at Cobb and Evergreen. No traffic signal. The flashing red is part of the small town feel.

#### Right-of-Way

- If we lose Chevron, it could be a very nice gateway. *There is an assumption that if additional ROW is needed it will all come from the north side (Chevron). This is not necessarily true. The State has a responsibility to purchase the least expensive ROW and acquiring a gas station property has additional costs associated with potential contamination and clean up costs. There is a good chance the ROW could come from the south side or be split. ROW negotiations are done confidentially and by someone besides the ADOT Project Manager, Jim in this case.*

#### Springer

- Traffic signal at Springer.
- Shoulder and guardrail or curb and gutter and guard rail
- No parking on the street
- Path and sidewalk – anticipate that pedestrians will walk /ride bikes to the Fair and frontage road
- This is all new ROW.

#### Industrial

- This is a truck route and pedestrian activity should be minimized.
- Just extend the existing road and match City of Palmer standards for an industrial roadway.
- Junior High students walk to Hidden Hills subdivision through the industrial zone.

## Evergreen additional discussion

Some CAC members have expressed Evergreen be narrowed to the extent practicable. Others would like to see it at 5 lanes.

- What is the minimum LOS for Evergreen/Cobb? *From ADOT&PF perspective, it is a city street and there is no minimum LOS as long as the Glenn Highway/Evergreen intersection maintains a LOS of C or better.*
- For safety 5 lanes are needed in the winter.
- A suicide lane in the center would help the left turns into Fred Meyer. They are a problem now.
- Fix Fred Meyer driveway.
- Narrow lanes
- Show 2 lanes in and 2 lanes out. Restrict access to Fred Meyer driveway as right turn in and right turn out only using pork chops.
- Keep it like it is today – a slow moving gateway.
- Want slower traffic.

## Action Item Summary

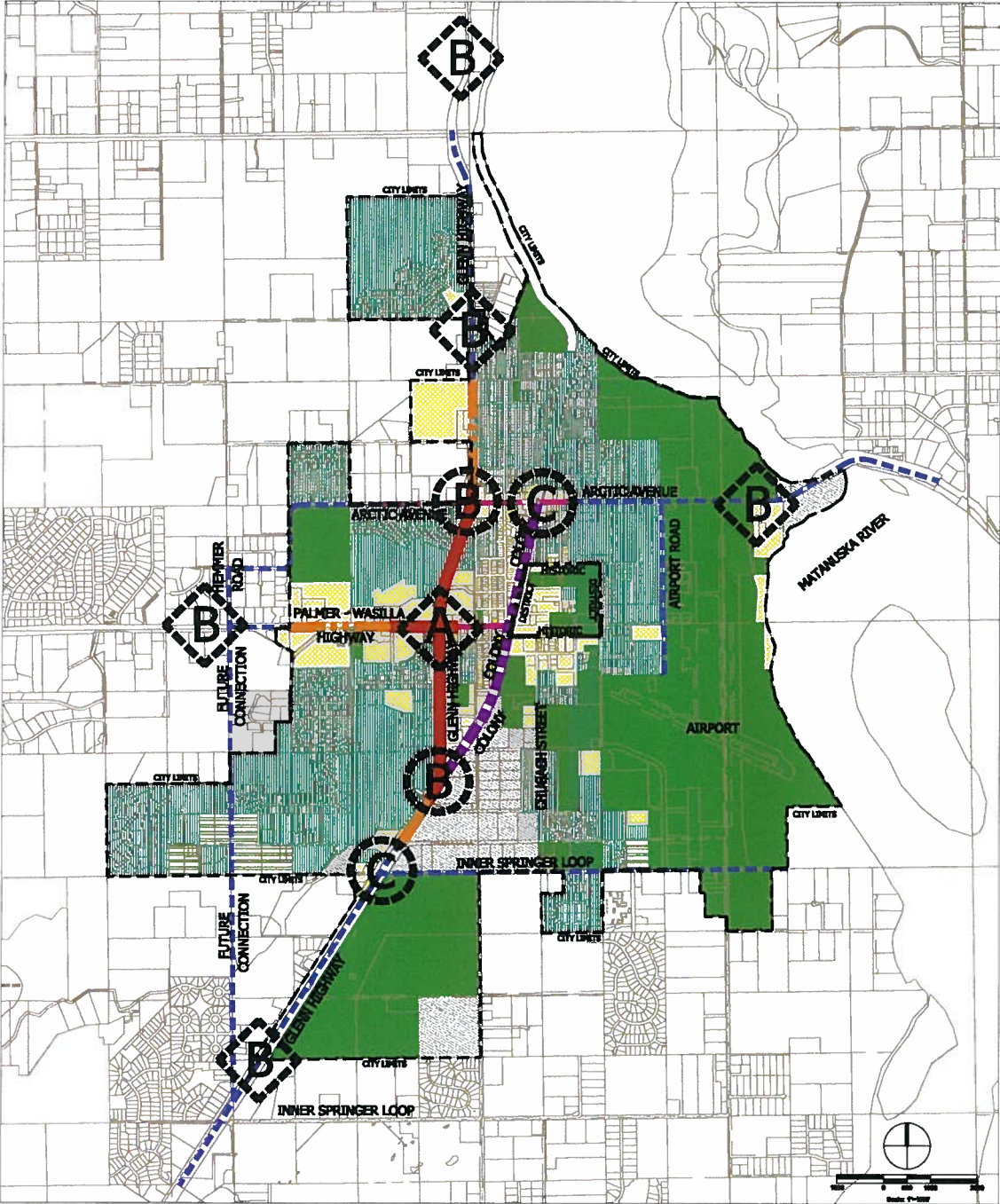
- Set date for next CAC
- Provide actual counts/LOS if just Dogwood is built? Would that segment alone help solve the problems?
- Come back with both 3 and 5 lane configuration for Evergreen for group discussion.

## PARKING LOT (SUMMARY OF ALL MEETINGS)

The parking lot is for items that are likely outside the scope of discussion. They will be addressed as time permits.

- ~~Future of Glenn Highway through Palmer. What are ADOT's plans?—Addressed Dec 10, 2009~~
- Walkway from Palmer to Fairgrounds
- ~~Frontage Road with limited access along west side of Palmer Wasilla Highway (Discussed during alternative development)~~
- *Noisy Goose ROW impacts*
- *Medians*

LEGEND		
<b>GATEWAYS</b>	<b>CORRIDORS</b>	<b>ZONES</b>
Primary	Road Section 1	Agricultural
Secondary	Road Section 2	Commercial/Business
Tertiary	Road Section 3	Industrial
	Road Section 4	Public
	Road Section 5	Residential



Palmer Corridor and Gateway Map



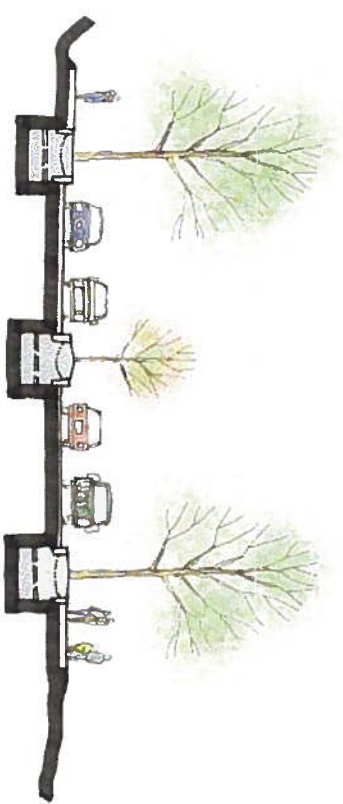
# Palmer Landscape Ordinance

CAG Meeting #3

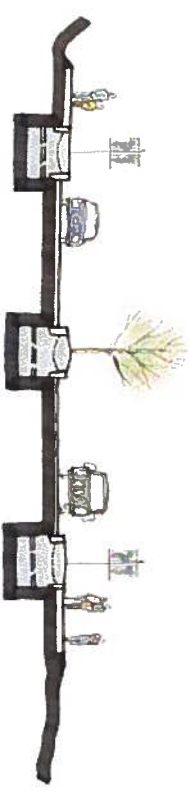
August 17, 2009

## Road Cross Sections

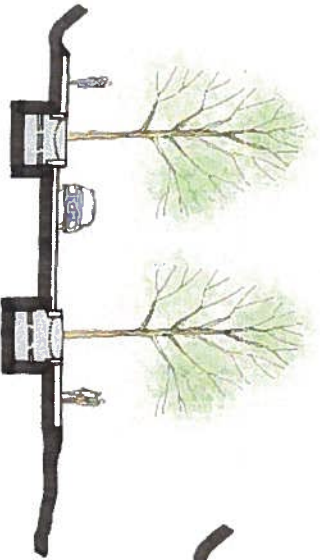
Number of Lanes	Sidewalk/Trail	Min Sidewalk Width	Street Trees	Center Median	Median Elements
4	Both Sides	10'	Shade	Y	Ornamental Trees, Vertical Elements, Shrubs
2 to 4	One or Both Sides	10'	Substitute Vertical Elements	Y	Ornamental Trees, Vertical Elements, Shrubs
2 to 4	One or Both Sides	10'	Shade	N	None
2 to 4	One or Both Sides	10'	Ornamental	Y	Vertical Elements, Shrubs
2	One or Both Sides	6'	Shade or Ornamental	N	None



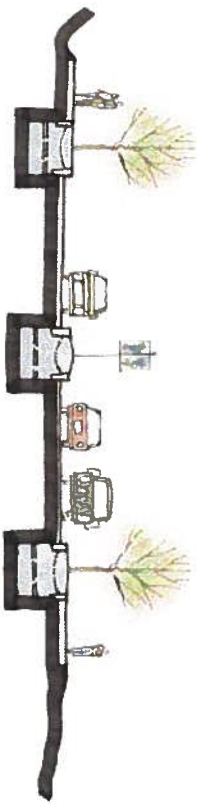
Road Cross Section 1



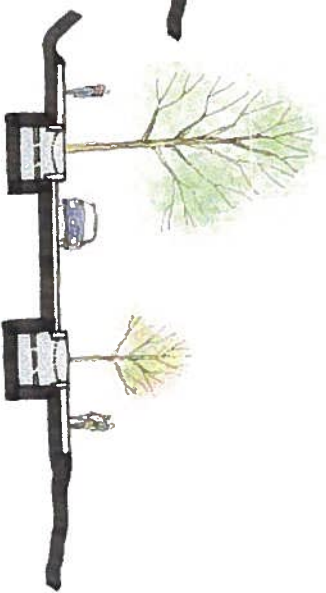
Road Cross Section 2



Road Cross Section 3



Road Cross Section 4



Road Cross Section 5

# Appendix G

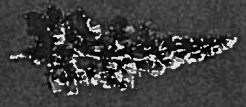
## Corridor Sections and Plans



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Palmer

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# Appendix G

## Corridor Sections

### Corridor Requirements

	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4	Section 5
Number of Lanes	4	2 to 4	2 to 4	2 to 4	2
Sidewalk/Trail	Both Sides	One or Both Sides	One or Both Sides	One or Both Sides	One or Both Sides
Min. Sidewalk Width	10'	10'	10'	10'	6'
Street Trees	Shade	Substitute Vertical Elements	Shade	Ornamental	Shade or Ornamental
Center Median	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Median Elements	Ornamental Trees, Vertical Elements, Shrubs	Ornamental Trees, Vertical Elements, Shrubs	None	Vertical Elements, Shrubs	None
Min. Planting Strip Width	12'	10'	12'	12'	8'



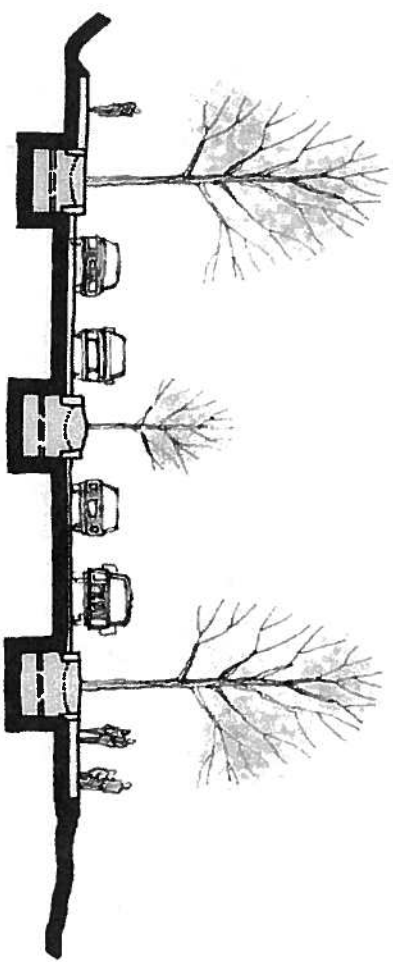
# Appendix G

## Corridor Sections

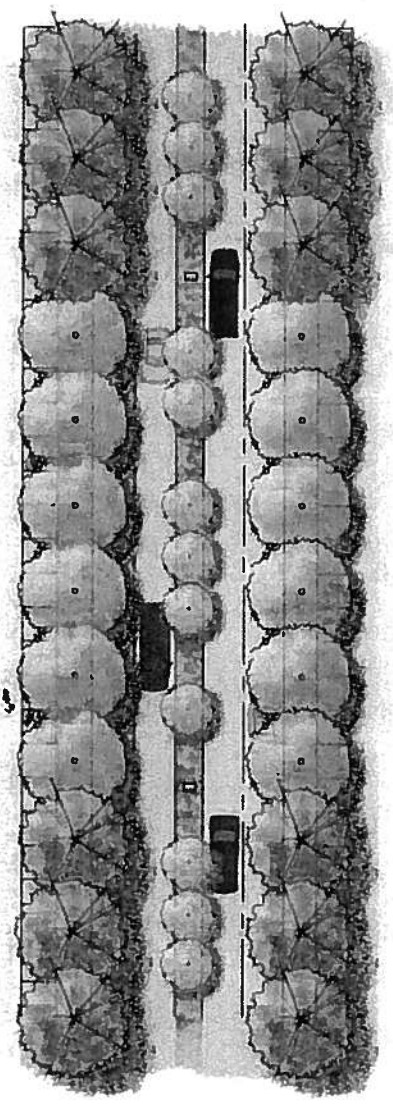
### Corridor Sections and Plans

#### Section 1

Section

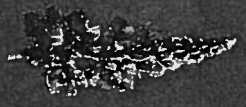


Plan



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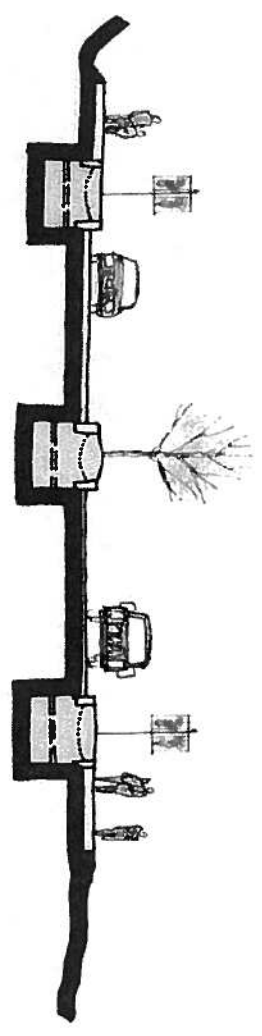
# Appendix G

## Corridor Sections

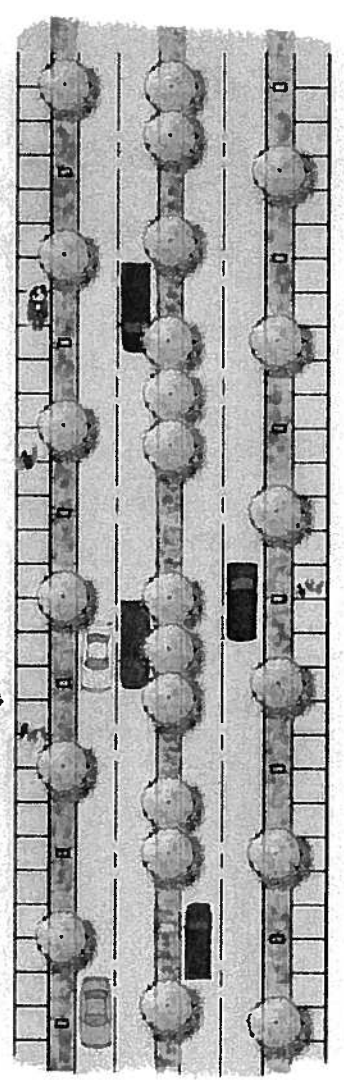
### Corridor Sections and Plans

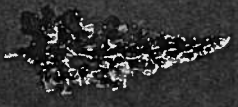
#### Section 2

Section



Plan





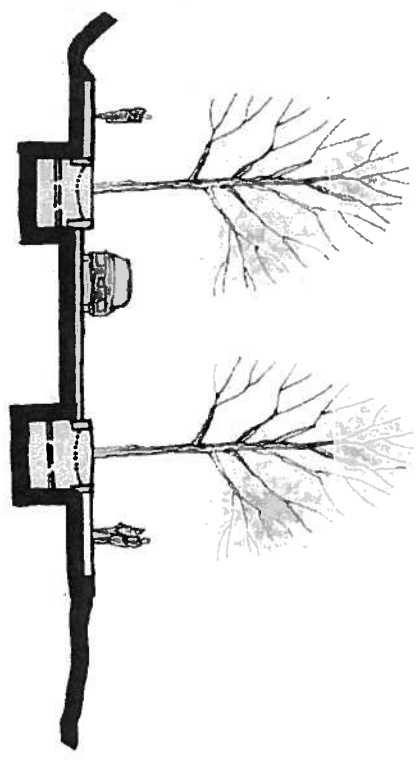
# Appendix G

## Corridor Sections

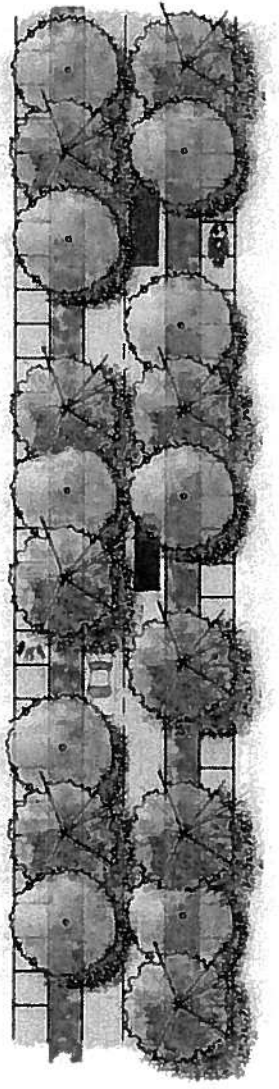
### Corridor Sections and Plans

#### Section 3

Section



Plan



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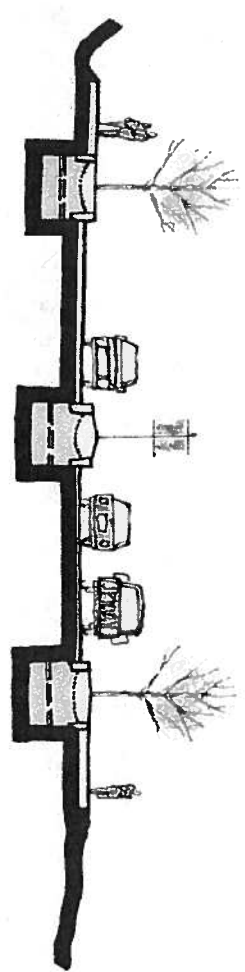
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## Corridor Sections

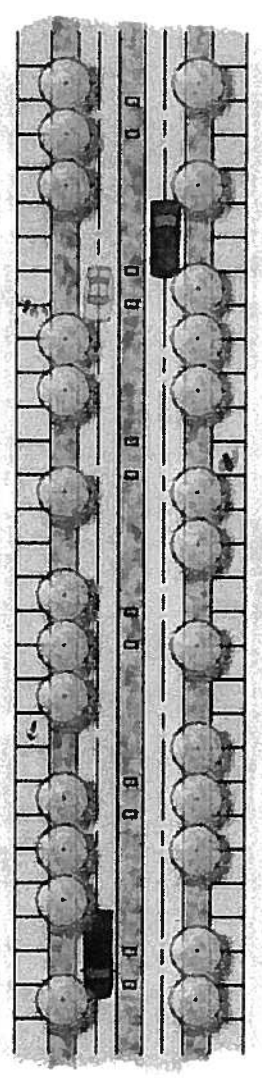
### Corridor Sections and Plans

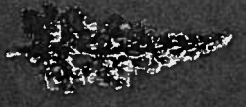
#### Section 4

Plan



Elevation



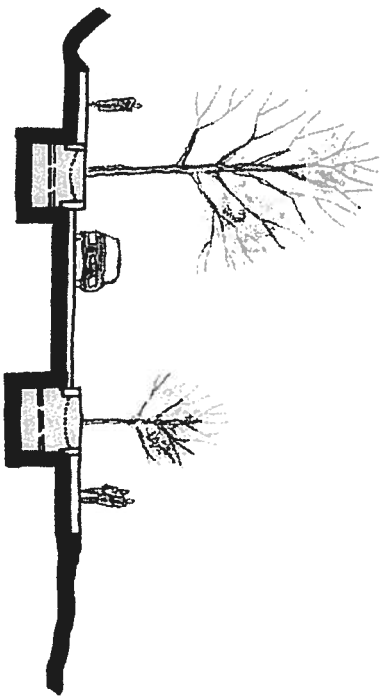


# Appendix G Corridor Sections

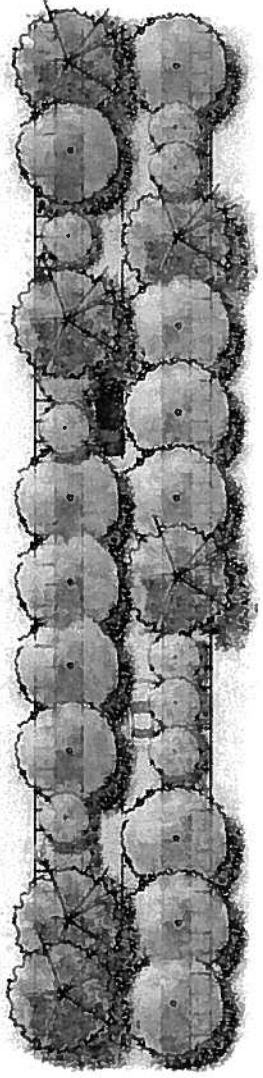
## Corridor Sections and Plans

### Section 5

Plan

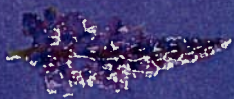


Elevation



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# Appendix B

## Complete Streets

### Complete Streets

Visit this interactive website for more information on Complete Streets:  
<http://www.goodis/post/the-street-of-the-future-is-a-livable-street>



THE STREET OF THE FUTURE IS A LIVABLE STREET!  
THE FUTURE STAYS AND REMAINS AFFORDABLE.  
**BEFORE** AFTER

THE STREET OF THE FUTURE IS A LIVABLE STREET!  
THE FUTURE STAYS AND REMAINS AFFORDABLE.  
**BEFORE** AFTER





No segments had a rate above critical UCL rate, and as such are not issues. The Cobb Street intersection and Daron Drive intersections were the only two intersections shown to have crash rates that were both above average and above the 95% Upper Control Limit. The Daron Drive intersection was reconstructed in 2000 when a median was installed in the PWH. This reconstruction limited Daron Drive movements to right-in / right-out turns and provided a median break for eastbound left turning vehicles into the grocery store entrance. Since the 2000 reconstruction, the crash rate has been above average, but not above the UCL, and since the intersection was just improved again in 2006, no improvements are recommended.

### 8.2.2 Cobb/Evergreen Analysis

Table 50 summarizes the crash types that occurred at the Cobb/Evergreen intersection between 1995 and 2005 by year.

Year	Left Turn	Overtaking Sideswipe	Rear End	Right Angle (minor street straight)	Right Angle (minor street turning left)	Right Angle (minor street turning right)	Annual Totals
1995	1						1
1996				2	1		3
1997	1	1		2		1	5
1998				2	1		3
1999			1	2			3
2000					1		1
2001			1	1	1		3
2002		1		3	2	2	8
2003				1	2		3
2004				1			1
2005	1			2	1	1	5
<b>Type Totals</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>% of Total</b>	<b>8.33%</b>	<b>5.56%</b>	<b>5.56%</b>	<b>44.44%</b>	<b>25.00%</b>	<b>11.11%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Table 50 - Cobb/Evergreen Crash Experience, 1995 to 2005**



Of the 29 right angle class collisions, 16 were caused by actions, or involved a southbound approach driver.

Left turn collisions and all right angle types of crashes would have been correctable by signalization (see shaded columns). Alternatively, roundabouts and medians that prohibit crossing conflicts would have corrected these types of collisions as well. However, there is not the right-of-way for roundabouts here, and medians would adversely affect downtown circulation. Two of the last four years of the study period had five or more crashes that would have been correctable by signals, which is the 12 consecutive month accident threshold for the crash experience signalization warrant. As such, signalization is the most likely feasible crash countermeasure for this location.

### *8.2.3 Severity Analysis*

Recently, traffic safety programs have emphasized reduction of crash severities, especially fatality and major injury crashes. AASHTO's Strategic Highway Safety Plan has a goal to reduce the fatality crash rate to no more than 1.0 fatality per 100 million vehicle miles traveled by 2008. Alaska's current average rate (2004) is about 1.9 fatalities per million vehicle miles; and the 20-year rate between 1986 and 2005 is about 1.9 fatalities per million vehicle miles as well. These rates were computed from data presented in past Alaska Traffic Accidents/Collision Reports published by the Department on an annual basis. In September 2007, the Department published the *Alaska Strategic Highway Safety Plan*, which contains similar rates for fatalities.

A second approach to evaluating severity performance is to look at the proportion of severity types at locations and compare them to the State overall population proportion. This is especially useful for intersection or spot locations where there have been no population rates computed (intersection would be reported in fatalities per 100 million entering vehicles). Table 51 summarizes study area fatalities and rates (fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles), inclusive of segments and intersections.



Intersection	Fatality Collision	Major Injury Collision	Minor Injury Collision	Property Damage Collision
Evergreen/Bailey	4.76%		14.29%	80.95%
Evergreen/Cobb		2.78%	13.89%	83.33%
Evergreen/Colony/Alaska			11.76%	88.24%
Evergreen/Dimond		6.67%		93.33%
PWH/Daron		4.05%	31.08%	64.86%
PWH/Ellen			25.00%	75.00%
PWH/Felton				100.00%
PWH/Glenn/Evergreen			22.96%	77.04%
PWH/Hemmer		9.09%	31.82%	59.09%
PWH/IRWIN Loop			14.29%	85.71%
PWH/IRWIN ROAD			18.18%	81.82%
PWH/Local 302			33.33%	66.67%
State of Alaska Populations	0.57%	2.85%	24.96%	71.62%

**Table 53 - Intersection Severity, By Proportion of Severity Type**

Table 53 shows that the Evergreen/Bailey, Palmer Wasilla/Dimond, Palmer Wasilla/Daron, and Palmer Wasilla/Hemmer intersections have experienced higher than average fatality and major injury crashes (those types of most concern). However, these over represented proportions are not statistically significant. As such, it can be concluded that the higher severities at these locations may be due to randomness rather than an underlying contributing factor.

### **8.3 Perceived Safety Issues Raised by the Government and the Public**

In April 2006, the Palmer City Manager, Tom Healy, was interviewed. The City Manager said that there was about one crash per month at the Palmer-Wasilla and Glenn Highway intersection. He emphasized the need to encourage greater pedestrian access by beautifying the downtown and improving the visibility of crosswalks (particularly on Evergreen Avenue and the Glenn Highway). He also mentioned sight distance at the Arctic Avenue and Glenn Highway intersection.



## **8.4 Safety Issues Raised by Emergency Responders**

In November and December, representatives of the Palmer Emergency Services Department and Police Department were interviewed.

The Emergency Services Department is not having difficulty getting through the traffic when they are responding to an emergency. However, they would like to have opticom capabilities. They also noted that accidents are difficult to manage. Limited roadway widths sometimes require the traffic to be stopped. Congestion makes return trips slow.

The Police Department noted that in many locations there is not sufficient roadway width for vehicles to move out of the traveled way and allow the emergency vehicles to pass. Congestion at the intersection of the PWH and the Glenn Highway impedes emergency vehicles. Opticom would help and the Department is providing Opticom hardware with each new signal project. They also suggested more crossings of the railroad tracks to reduce response time and traffic congestion.

## **8.5 Summary of Crash Analysis**

The following are the key points of the analysis applicable to the alternative development and evaluation:

### ***8.5.1 Substantive Crash Experience and Alternative Performance***

The measurable analysis reveals two crash issues that indicate poor safety performance. The intersection at Evergreen Avenue and Cobb Street has a crash rate that is higher than the upper control limit. The dominate classes of crashes are crossing types, which would have been correctable by signalization. During two of the last four years of the analysis period, crash experience signal warrants would be satisfied.



Alternatives 1 and 2 would provide a signal at the Evergreen/Cobb intersection, but the distance between the Cobb signal on Evergreen and the Glenn signal on Palmer-Wasilla/Evergreen is too short for two-way streets. As such, signalization of the intersection under Alternatives 1 and 2 would correct crashes, but may cause operational problems for the Glenn and Cobb signals. However, separation is less of an operational challenge for one-way streets, as would be constructed with Alternative 3. Other countermeasures available to correct these crashes include conflict removal/reduction through medians that would prevent crossing maneuvers, or modern roundabouts. Medians would substantially change traffic circulation and may cause crash patterns to migrate to other locations with the increased traffic. Modern roundabouts would require ROW, probably full takes in all four quadrants.

Severities on PWH (inclusive of intersections and segments) are significantly over represented as indicated by the high fatality rates (between 1985 and 2005) that exceeded the upper control limit. The area of poorest performance for fatalities is between Hemmer Road and Local 302 Road, where there were three fatalities, two of which were head-on collisions. These may be improved under all alternatives, but head on crashes would have been correctable under Alternative 3 if the couplet were extended to that area.

### *8.5.2 Non-Compliant Elements*

Table 46 lists 14 driveways on Palmer-Wasilla Highway/Evergreen Street that do not comply with current PCM recommendations. These non-compliant driveway features have no evident correlation to crashes. However, these driveway elements could be improved by all alternatives.

Table 47 lists cross-section non-complying features of the Palmer-Wasilla Highway/Evergreen Street. This could be improved by all alternatives.