



PROJECT BRIEFING

Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

June 18, 2024

PROJECT TEAM



A COLAS COMPANY



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Project Manager

Julia Hanson, P.E.
Design Manager

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Manager

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Construction Manager

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Design Project Manager

Erica Jensen, P.E.
Assistant Project Manager

Richard Pribyl, P.E.
Project Engineer

Stephanie Queen
Public Involvement Lead

PROJECT OVERVIEW

DESCRIPTION, PURPOSE & GOALS

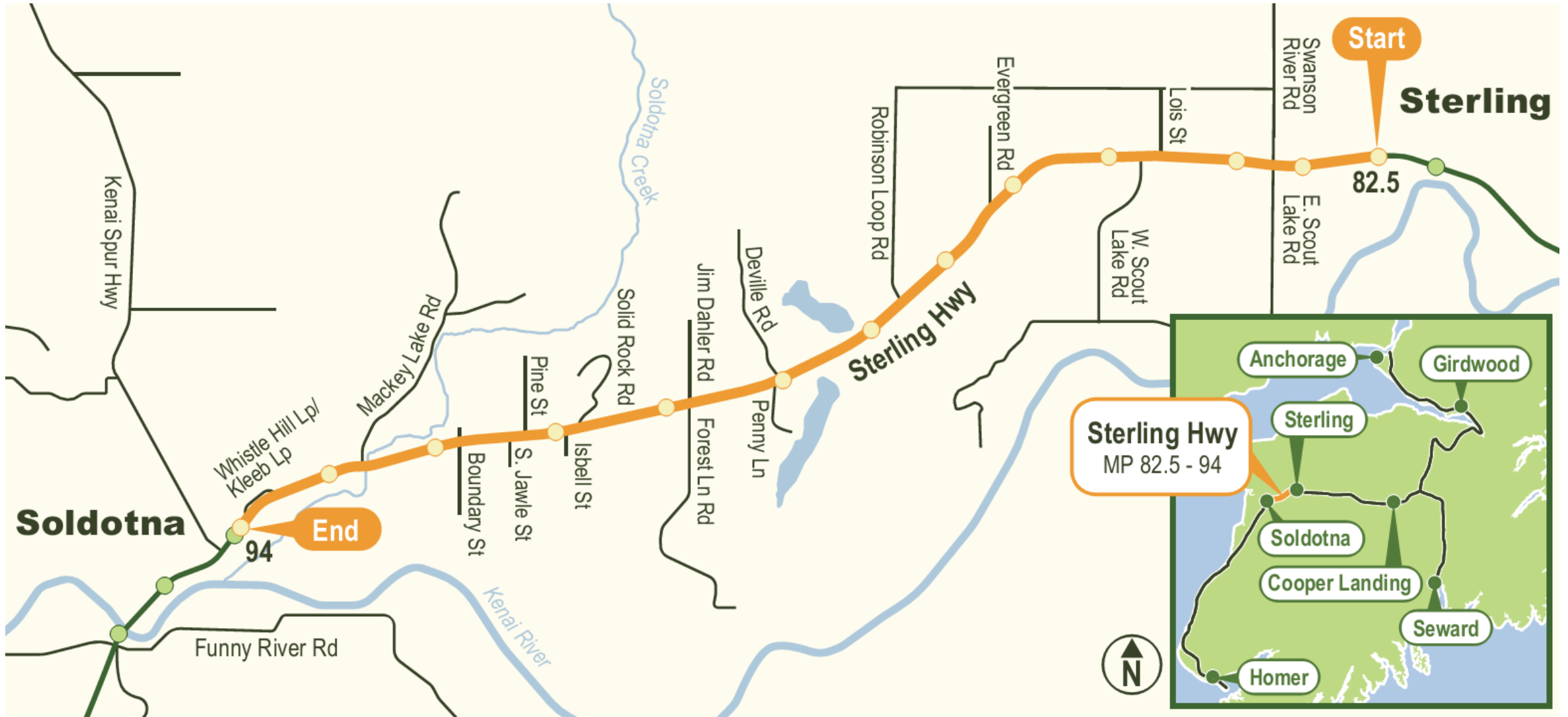


- Federally-funded project to reconstruct Sterling Highway between Sterling and Soldotna
- Purpose: **improve safety** and **reduce congestion**
- Goals:
 - Provide a safe and reliable roadway
 - Allow for decommissioning of the Traffic Safety Corridor
 - Accommodate the seasonal traffic increases
 - Uphold the trust of stakeholders and the public
 - Balance needs to maintain access
 - Begin construction in 2026
 - Phase construction to maximize benefits from available funding

Photo by AA Roads, 05/10/23

PROJECT AREA

VICINITY & OVERVIEW MAP



PROJECT BACKGROUND

CORRIDOR HISTORY



- 1950: Sterling Highway constructed
- 1983: Environmental Assessment to widen highway from MP 79-94
- 1991: MP 79-83 (within Sterling) widened to 4 lanes with center left-turn lane
- 1991: MP 83-94 improved 2-lane section with widened shoulders
- 2009: Traffic Safety Corridor designation
- 2015-2021: Preliminary Engineering Report and Environmental Assessment completed
 - 4-lane divided highway was preferred alternative
- 2022: Design-Build project started but cancelled after significant public input
- 2024: Project restarted using Progressive Design-Build delivery

PROJECT FOCUS: SAFETY & CONGESTION

WHY THIS PROJECT IS NEEDED

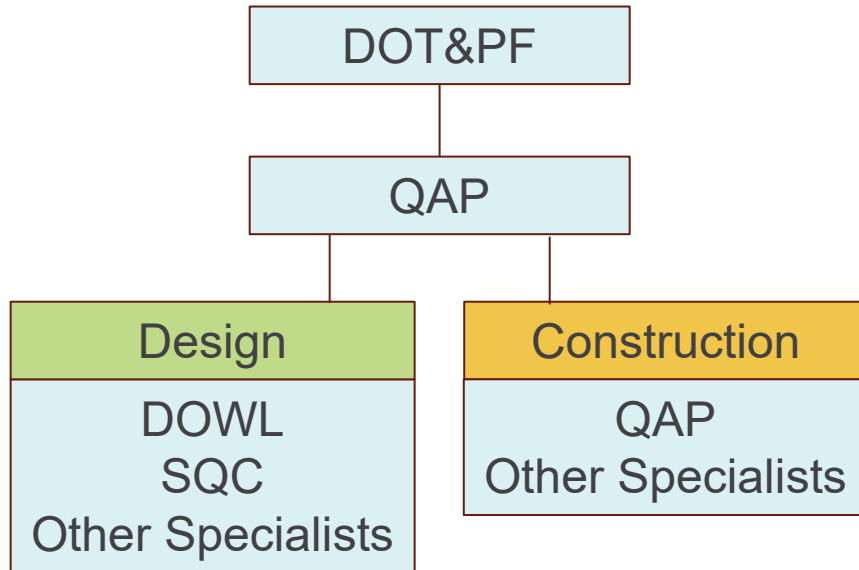


Photo by Erin Thompson/Peninsula Clarion, 2021

- Fatal and major injury crash rates remain above national averages
- Most fatal and major injury crashes occur during winter months
- Head-on collisions account for nearly half of fatal and major injury crashes
- Traffic volumes have increased >400% since the 1970s
- Traffic exceeds current 2-lane roadway's capacity
- July traffic is more than double winter traffic

WHY IS THE CONTRACTOR INVOLVED ALR

PROGRESSIVE DESIGN-BUILD (PDB) DELIVERY



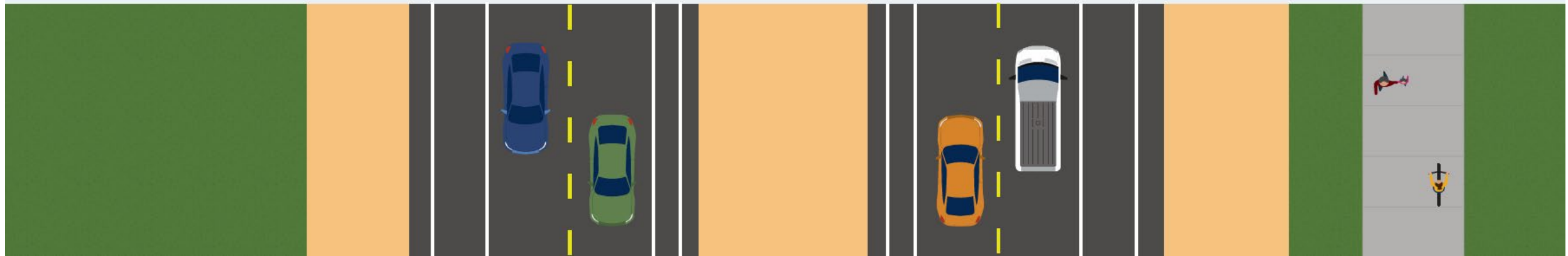
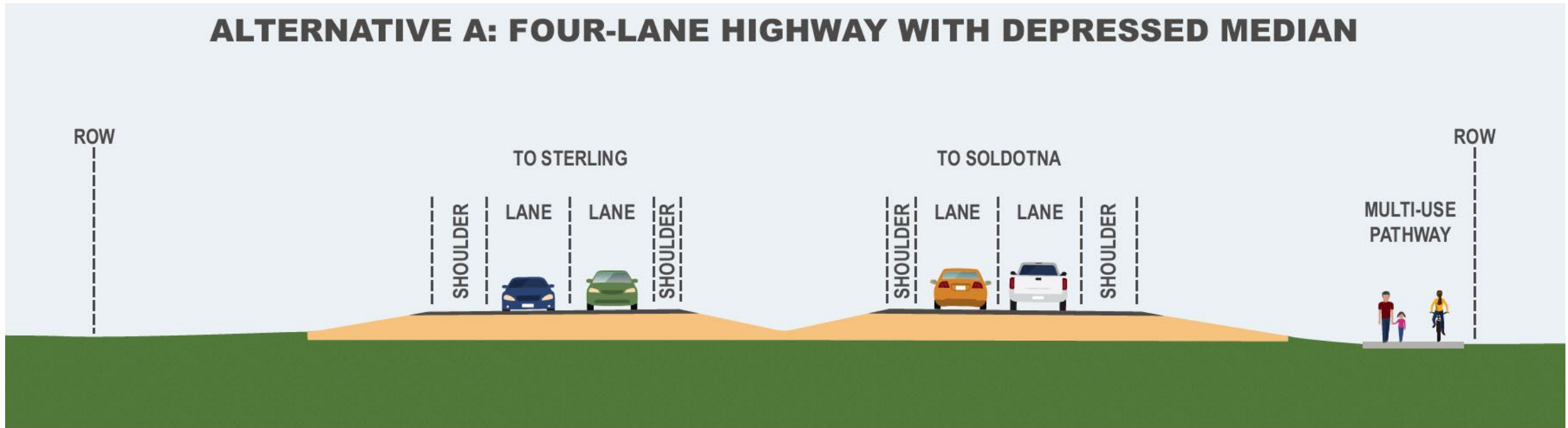
- Why did DOT&PF choose PDB process?
 - More collaborative
 - Fosters engineer/contractor innovation
 - Lower risk of budget overrun
 - More flexible construction schedule
 - Greater ability to phase construction
 - Continuity of project knowledge through construction

EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES

PREVIOUS PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE



ALTERNATIVE A: FOUR-LANE HIGHWAY WITH DEPRESSED MEDIAN



EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES

PREVIOUS PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE



- Recommended in 2021 Environmental Assessment:
 - 4-lane divided highway through most of corridor
 - 5-lane highway with center left-turn lanes on each end of the corridor
- Advantages:
 - Substantially reduces head-on crashes and improves safety
 - Reduces read-end crashes by providing left-turn lanes
 - Provides safe passing opportunities
 - Increases capacity
- Challenges:
 - Restricted access and required U-turns to many properties
 - Wider corridor for pedestrians to cross
 - Increased lanes – higher travel speeds and more exposure to animal-vehicle crashes
 - Utility relocation / impacts
- Broad range of public support and opposition

OBSERVATIONS AND INPUT

PREVIOUSLY VOICED CONCERNS AND CHALLENGES



- Large number of fatal crashes, injury crashes, and near misses
- Passing on the right, speeding, tailgating, and lack of headlight use
- Perceived lack of law enforcement
- Tourists driving slowly with no passing options
- School busses stopping in the lane of traffic
- Poor pedestrian amenities and inability to cross safely
- Competing uses: local vs through, recreational vs commercial, tourist vs resident
- Congestion and high seasonal traffic
- Impacts to emergency responders
- Noise from rumble strips
- Corridor lighting impacting quality of life
- Off-road, ATV, and snowmachine use
- Planning fatigue – decades of study without action

NEW TEAM FRESH PERSPECTIVE

UPCOMING OUTREACH AND DATA COLLECTION



- Continue to gather input from the public and stakeholders
- Schedule stakeholder meetings on specific topics:
 - Public safety and emergency response
 - KPB school district
 - Business owners, tourism, and economic interests
 - Trucking, freight, and transportation
 - Wildlife and environment
- Collect and analyze engineering data
 - Survey
 - Traffic
 - Geotechnical
 - Utilities
- Develop and evaluate design alternatives
- Begin permitting and preparation construction

PROJECT SCHEDULE

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONTINUED PUBLIC INPUT



JOIN US AT ONE OF THE OPEN HO



TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 2024, 5:00 – 7:00 P.M.

Sterling Community Center, Gym

38377 Swanson River Rd, Sterling, AK

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 2024, 5:00 – 7:00 P.M.

Soldotna Public Library, Community Room

235 N Binkley St, Soldotna, AK



PROJECT CONTACTS

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THANK YOU!