



Sterling Highway MP 45–60 Project Update



October 1, 2022, Phase 1A paving activities.

The purpose of this monthly report is to provide a snapshot update of the project. For more detailed project information, please visit www.sterlinghighway.net.



Tasks Performed in October

Project Overview

The Sterling Highway Milepost (MP) 45 to 60 Project will reconstruct the east and west ends of the existing roadway from approximately MP 45 to 46.5 and MP 56 to 58. This construction will widen shoulders, straighten the road, and add passing lanes. Between MP 46.5 and 55.5 (the off-alignment section), the project will construct 10 miles of new roadway north of Cooper Landing and the Kenai River, including a new bridge spanning Juneau Creek Canyon.

This project will bring the highway up to current standards by efficiently and safely serving through traffic, the local community, and traffic bound for recreation destinations both now and in the future. Construction began in 2021 and the goal is to open the new highway to traffic by the end of 2027.



Public Involvement: A project update was provided to the Cooper Landing Advisory Planning Commission at their October 5, 2022, meeting. The team also advertised the availability of public firewood.



Environmental: Archaeologists completed fieldwork for the season in October and are now working on required post-field reporting. This work will be ongoing for most of the project. DOT&PF continued to prepare a modification request to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to update the wetland permit to match the refined highway design.



Phase 1A: Phase 1A prepared for winter shutdown, which will take place in mid-November. Construction updates will continue to be available on DOT&PF's Navigator page at www.alaskanavigator.org.



Phase 1B: The Phase 1B team continued to incorporate the Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) constructability comments into the Phase 1B final design and coordinated with utility owners on the needed utility relocations. The team held several breakout meetings to work out the Phase 1B/Phase 3 final plan set details. This phasing arrangement is the result of excess excavated material in Phase 1B that will be used to complete Phase 3.



Phase 2: The design team progressed the Steel Plate Girder bridge concept design to 30%. The CM/GC and Independent Cost Estimator performed independent quantity comparisons and provided input to mitigate risk and reduce cost regarding shipment, launching bed, steel erection, and drilled shaft installations.



Near-term Schedule Goals



Agencies: DOT&PF will work with Agencies to finalize amendments to the Programmatic and Curation Agreements, Temporary Water Use authorizations within Phase 3, Maintenance Agreements, and a modification request to USACE. Several Working Group (wildlife, vegetation, recreation, staging, and parks) meetings are scheduled for November.



Phase 1A: Phase 1A will be completed in July 2023.



Phase 1B: The Phase 1B team will submit the 95% Phase 1B/3 Plan assembly on November 30, 2022.



Phase 2: The Steel Plate Girder bridge 95% design will be submitted in February 2023.



Phases 3–6: Geotechnical investigations for Phase 5 will occur in spring 2023. The design team will then further the Phase 5 tight diamond interchange design after the investigation results are available. The Phase 5 design will be finalized by 2024. Phase 5 clearing will begin in March 2023. This clearing work will help provide better access for archaeologists, hydrologists, engineers, drill rigs, and surveyors.



Right-of-Way: Right-of-way acquisition for Phase 1B and Phase 5 is taking place.

Contact

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Design Questions

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Tasks Completed in 2022



January

Phase 5: The tight diamond alternative was selected for the Western Intersection.



May

Phase 1B: The design was advanced to approximately 99% level of completion with the submission of the 99% PS&E assembly.



July

Agencies: An Agency site visit took place on July 28, 2022.



August

CM/GC: The Phase 3 & 4 Early Work Package was awarded to Colaska/QAP-Traylor Joint Venture.



June

Phase 2: DOT&PF made a Bridge Type Selection: Concept 12 – Steel Plate Girder bridge.



August

Public Involvement: The fall public meeting was held on August 25, 2022, at the Cooper Landing Community Club.



September

The Project Management Plan and Annual Financial Plan were finalized.