



5th Avenue Pedestrian Safety Project

Highway Safety Improvement Program: 5th Avenue Concrete Street to Karluk Street Pedestrian Improvements

Updated: March 2026

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What is the 5th Avenue Pedestrian Safety (the Project) proposing to do?**

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) is proposing to install a median barrier along 5th Avenue, between Concrete Street and Karluk Street at the couplet of 5th and 6th Avenues in Anchorage. The primary goal of the Project is to improve pedestrian safety in a timely and cost-effective manner.

2. **Why is the Project needed?**

Fifth Avenue ranks as a top pedestrian fatality corridor in the state (2013–2016 DOT&PF Crash Data). Anchorage accounts for 63% of the non-motorist fatalities and serious injuries in the state. Improving this corridor has the potential to significantly reduce the number of pedestrian fatalities in Anchorage. Although it's not a complete solution, similar methods have reduced fatal crashes in other states by more than 80%.

3. **What is the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)?**

The HSIP is a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) program, managed in Alaska by DOT&PF. The program looks at high-crash locations and works to determine cost-effective measures that can save lives and reduce injuries for vulnerable road users like pedestrians and cyclists as well as motorists. HSIP nominations are submitted annually by DOT&PF project staff to the Statewide Traffic and Safety team, who determine eligibility and recommend approved projects to be included in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

4. **What will the barrier look like?**

We don't know yet and that's where you come in! The Project team is looking for community input on the few options that we have to choose from. In order to receive funding, any option chosen must be crash tested according to the American Association of Highway and Transportation Officials Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware and approved by FHWA to help ensure that it meets high safety standards. The safety standards limit the available options. We will have more details on what the options will look like at the March 2026 Open House.

¹ <https://dot.alaska.gov/dmio/shsp/assets/Alaska-SHSP-2023-2027-Updated-Aug-2024.pdf>

² https://www.roads.maryland.gov/OPR_Research/MD-17-SHA-UM-4-28_Median-Fencing_Report.pdf

5. Will the project look at lighting improvements?

Lighting improvements will also be evaluated, but opportunities are limited by the project area's proximity to the active runway at Merrill Field. Further investigation is needed, which may place lighting improvements into a later phase or a separate project.

6. When will construction begin?

The project is currently in the design phase. Public input is being considered as the team advances to final design. Construction is estimated to begin and be completed in 2027, pending funding availability.

7. Will there be right-of-way (ROW) impacts?

The Project team anticipates that the improvements can be completed within the existing ROW with minimal impact on surrounding properties during construction.

8. Will there be impacts to Buffer Park, the Anchorage welcome sign, or the Blue Star Memorial?

No physical impacts to Buffer Park, the Anchorage welcome sign, or the Blue Star Memorial are anticipated. Visibility of the Blue Star Memorial from the roadway may look different depending on barrier placement and type selected for this section of the project area.

9. How will this Project be funded?

The Project will be developed and federally funded through HSIP. This Project is listed in the STIP as well as the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions 2023–2026 Transportation Improvement Program.

10. How can I stay up to date?

Sign up for Project-related emails and view the latest updates and materials on the Project website.



Visit 5thAvePedSafety.com for more information!