



# City and Borough of Sitka

100 Lincoln Street • Sitka, Alaska 99835

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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Mayor Hunter and Assembly Members  
Keith Brady, Municipal Administrator

**From:** Michael Harmon, P.E., Public Works Director  
David Longtin, P.E., Senior Engineer

**Cc:** Dan Tadic, P.E., Municipal Engineer

**Date:** September 5, 2017

**Subject:** Public Works Department recommendations on Alaska Department of Transportation plans for Sawmill Creek Road improvements

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### Background

The City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) Public Works Department is excited about the upcoming Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT) project to reconstruct Sawmill Creek Road (SMC) from the roundabout to Jeff Davis Street. This is the last portion of a multi-phase effort to improve this heavily used road. This project will also resurface SMC from Jeff Davis to Smith Street without significant changes to the lane alignment.

ADOT has prepared two alternative typical sections for the roundabout-to-Jeff Davis part of the project. ADOT is the entity responsible for designing, constructing and maintaining the project improvements. The project is slated for Summer 2019 construction. This memo provides the CBS Public Works Department's recommendations for Assembly consideration.

### Analysis

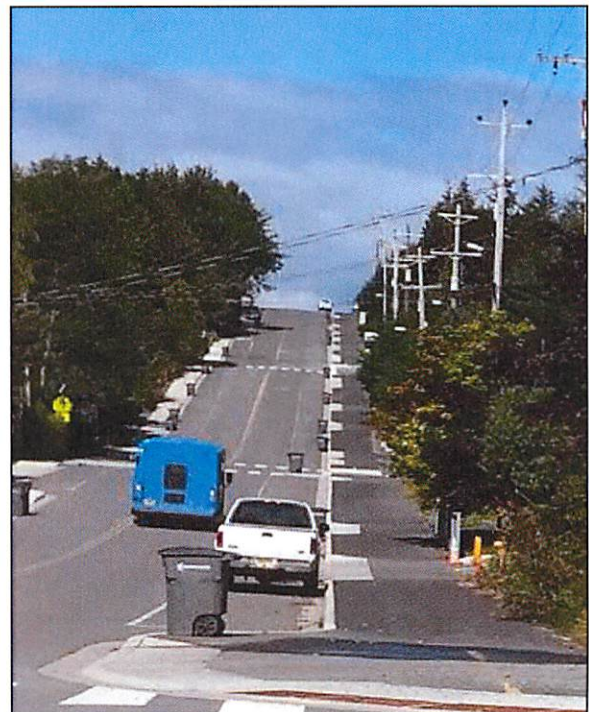
Option 1 would reconstruct this segment of SMC Road essentially as it is today: two 13.5-foot-wide driving lanes with on-street parking and 5-foot-wide sidewalks on either side of the road. Option 2 would establish two 5-foot-wide bike lanes between the curbs and provide a wider sidewalk on the water (south) side of the road by narrowing the driving lanes to 11 feet wide and by eliminating the parking lane on the water side of the road. Both options will comply with relevant design standards. However, Option 2 is more consistent with the alignment of the rest of SMC, extending from Jeff Davis to the Gary Paxton Industrial Park, in that it better accommodates cyclists and provides a wide

pedestrian pathway. It is our understanding that Option 2 has received significant public support, including a vote in support from the Parks and Recreation Committee.

### **Recommendation**

Public Works recommends the following features be included in the project:

1. The installation of Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) at the school crossings at Monastery and Baranof Streets. CBS installed RRFBs on Edgcumbe Drive at the Kashevaroff and Kostrometinoff intersections in the Spring of 2016, and worked with community volunteers and the ADOT to install a pair at the Halibut Point Road (HPR) and Peterson Street intersection in the Spring of 2017. RRFBs have been shown to increase driver yielding to pedestrians in the crosswalks where they are installed, and Public Works has received positive feedback on the RRFBs installed in Sitka to date. CBS has recently built sidewalks on Monastery and Baranof streets to direct students to these SMC crosswalks, and adding the RRFBs would make the crossings safer.
2. Public Works would like to see driveway cuts similar to the Edgcumbe Drive multi-use path installed on this project if Option 2 is selected. These partial-width cuts would allow half of the pathway to maintain the same grade across the driveways, which would eliminate dips in the “wide sidewalk.”
3. The use of asphalt pavement for the Option 2 “wide sidewalk.” This would eliminate the control joints that have to be installed across a concrete sidewalk, and would also produce a smoother ride for wheelchairs, strollers, skateboards, etc., and would be consistent with the pedestrian pathway paralleling the rest of SMC.
4. Improvements to the transition from the separated pathway east of Jeff Davis and the proposed sidewalk west of Jeff Davis, in particular if Option 1 is selected. There are two issues here. First, if Option 1 is selected, the separated pedestrian pathway will essentially end at Jeff Davis. Inbound cyclists using the pathway would have to cross to the mountain (north) side of SMC to legally use the road, and without a crosswalk across SMC Road, this could be unsafe.



**Partial-width concrete driveway cuts are shown in the asphalt-paved Edgcumbe Drive multi-use path. Public Works recommends partial-width cuts and asphalt surfacing if the Assembly chooses ADOT’s Option 2 alignment.**

Second, the Jeff Davis crosswalk is located such that drivers stopped at Jeff Davis Street pull into the crosswalk to see traffic approaching on SMC. The alignment of the crosswalk at this intersection should be carefully designed to allow stopped drivers to see oncoming traffic while allowing pedestrians a safe crossing.