

**Agency: Commerce, Community and Economic Development****Grants to Municipalities (AS 37.05.315)****Grant Recipient: Fairbanks (City of)****Project Title:****Project Type:** Remodel, Reconstruction and Upgrades

# Fairbanks (City of) - Traffic Calming Demonstration Project

**State Funding Requested: \$280,000****House District: 10 / E**

One-Time Need

**Brief Project Description:**

Design and installation of "speed humps", traffic circles, and speed signs at locations designed to slow traffic, improve pedestrian safety and neighborhood tranquility.

**Funding Plan:****Total Cost of Project: \$280,000***There is no other funding needed***Detailed Project Description and Justification:**

An increase in traffic has greatly concerned the neighborhood of Island Homes. Two years ago a child was hit and killed by an automobile in the neighborhood. The City proposes to plan and build traffic-calming alterations to City streets to include "speed humps", traffic circles, and "your speed is" signs.

**Project Timeline:**

This project could be completed in 2011.

**Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:**

The City of Fairbanks

**Grant Recipient Contact Information:**

Name: Michael Schmetzer  
 Address: 800 Cushman Street  
 Fairbanks, AK 99701  
 Phone Number: (907)459-6740  
 Email: mjschmetzer@ci.fairbanks.ak.us

Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority?  Yes  No

November 6, 2009

Dear Governor Parnell:

Re: Speed Humps for Island Homes

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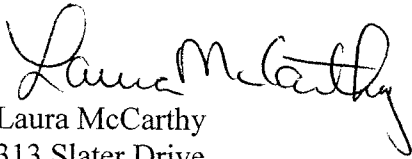
I am writing to express my support for the installation of speed humps in the neighborhood of Island Homes. If you're not familiar with this subdivision located in Fairbanks, it's a family neighborhood consisting of mostly older homes situated closely on quarter acres lots – therefore, there are numerous people and personal and delivery vehicles traveling through this neighborhood daily.

Many neighbors, including myself, have yelled at vehicles speeding by our homes and posted our own signs to slow down, but to no avail. A couple years ago a small child lost his life to an impaired driver while playing on my street. Speed humps won't prevent impaired drivers from going through our neighborhood or replace the parent's role of overseeing their children, but they will slow vehicles down and contribute to safer streets for children, pets, walkers/joggers, etc.

I and others in Island Homes are appreciative of Representative Ramras and his staff's work to ensure safer neighborhoods in District 10.

I hope you will support the use of funds for this worthwhile cause.

Sincerely,



Laura McCarthy  
313 Slater Drive  
Fairbanks, AK 99701

---

**From:** matt irinaga [mailto:m\_iguana@hotmail.com]

**Sent:** Mon 8/25/2008 2:32 PM

**To:** Terry M. Strle; paula.earp@gmail.com

**Subject:** Island Homes traffic

Dear Mayor Terry Strle,

As you are probably aware, there was a tragic accident in the Island Homes neighborhood last week involving an underage drinking driver and a 4 year boy. We live in Island Homes about 1/4 mile from where the accident took place. We utilize that same intersection to access the neighborhood. My wife and I have two boys, ages 4 and almost 2 so the news was of major concern.

Our house is across the street from the Snedden Park. Our kids are regulars at the park and it is one of the big reasons we decided to buy the home we are in. Traffic along Slater Drive is ridiculously fast, particularly along that stretch of road. The road widens as you approach the park from the west and people tend to accelerate up to 35-40 mph with the opening and semi-clear view. It is commonly used as a "U" turn spot too. Two years ago my wife called the city asking to post warning signs or speed limit signs in close proximity to the park. The city did respond by posting "children playing" signs but because they were only able to utilize existing posts, they are ineffective as they are both too far away from the park and obscure to be noticed.

What would it take for the city to install temporary "speed bumps" near the park (and other areas of the neighborhood) which can be removed once the snow falls? Granted, the tragic accident involved a drinking driver, but still, people drive too fast in this small neighborhood and an accident like this was unfortunately bound to happen. There are a lot of kids in the neighborhood, we see them filing past our house everyday to and from the park. Some of these kids are young and accompanied only by an older sibling, maybe not. Signs are not enough to change people's driving habits, a better deterrent needs to be put into place.

Thank you,

Matt Irinaga

321 Island Drive South

Fairbanks, AK 99701



## FAIRBANKS POLICE

911 Cushman Street  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701-4616  
Phone: (907) 450-6500  
Fax: (907) 452-1588  
Email: fpd@ci.fairbanks.ak.us



## Press Release

**Incident: Motor Vehicle Accident      Location: Slater and Kody Drive**

**Case Number: 08- 16766**

**Date: August 21, 2008**

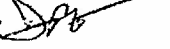
Emergency personnel with the Fairbanks Police and Fire Departments responded to the intersection of Slater and Kody Drives at approximately 7:55 p.m. for a motor vehicle/pedestrian accident.

Initial investigation indicates that Fairbanks resident Jessica Paul, DOB 11-19-1987, was driving a silver 2004 Pontiac Grand Am on Slater Drive when she struck a 5 year-old boy who was riding a "Big Wheel" type tricycle on the street in the Island Homes Neighborhood. The child was transported to Fairbanks Memorial Hospital for treatment and was later flown to Anchorage for injuries that were determined to be life threatening.

Investigation further revealed that Paul had been drinking with her three passengers in the area and was attempting to drive home when she struck the child. Neither Paul nor her passengers were injured in the accident. Paul was arrested for Driving Under the Influence. A subsequent DataMaster test revealed a .105 BrAC. Paul was later remanded at the Fairbanks Correctional Center for Assault in the First Degree and Driving Under the Influence.

Additionally, one of Paul's passengers, Kathryn Folger, DOB 3/17/1988, interfered with an officer during the on-scene investigation and was arrested for Disorderly Conduct and also remanded at FCC.

This case is still under investigation. Anyone that may have witnessed or has information regarding this case is asked to contact the Fairbanks Police Department.

App:   
CC Mayor Strle  
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# Phillip Daniel Lara

2003 - 2008



Phillip Lara

Phillip Daniel Lara, age 5, died Sept. 22, 2008, at Seattle Children's Hospital. He was born Aug. 28, 2003, in Fairbanks to Edward and Rose Lara.

According to his family, Phillip always seized the day. He had a fun-loving character and was highly skilled with his light saber — he was "our little Jedi." Phillip loved to go on covert operations with his big brothers with his Nerf gun and enjoyed having picnics in the backyard with his sisters. Phillip did everything without fear.

Psalm 23: The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the path of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me: Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil: my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Phillip was preceded in death by his maternal grandfather, William F. Finucane, and paternal grandfather, Felix Lara.

He is survived by his parents, Edward and Rose Lara; siblings, Edward M, Benjamin, William, Sarah Elizabeth, and Gabriella Rose; maternal grandmother, Mary M. Finucane; paternal grandmother, Maria L. Lara; aunts, Carmelita Baza and Gloria Solano; uncles, Felix Lara, Eliseo Lara and Ernest Lara; Godmother, Jillian Baza and many cousins.


The rosary will be said at 7 p.m. today at Porter Loring Mortuary North in San Antonio, Texas.

A funeral service will be held at 10 a.m. Wednesday, Oct. 1, at St. Helena's Catholic Church in San Antonio.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to Ronald McDonald House (5000 40th Ave. N.E., Seattle, WA 98105) or Seattle Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center (P.O. Box 571, Seattle, WA, 98105-0371).

Arrangements were made by Porter Loring Mortuary North of San Antonio ([www.porterloring.com](http://www.porterloring.com)).

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## Fairbanks boy who was riding Big Wheel when struck by alleged drunken driver dies

By Tim Mowry

Originally published Tuesday, September 23, 2008 at 2:01 p.m.  
Updated Wednesday, September 24, 2008 at 9:05 a.m.

FAIRBANKS -- The 4-year-old Fairbanks boy who was struck by an alleged drunken driver in August while riding his Big Wheel on the street died unexpectedly on Monday in a Seattle hospital.

Phillip Lara was playing with his father, Edward, when he went into cardiac arrest at Seattle Children's Hospital.

"He was sitting in a chair next to the bed playing Legos with me and his heart just stopped," Edward Lara said Tuesday by cell phone from Seattle.

Doctors tried for an hour and a half to revive the boy, he said.

"We finally asked them to stop so we could say goodbye to him," Edward Lara said.

Phillip's death came as a shock. He was scheduled to move into a rehabilitation unit on Monday and start exercises, his father said. Doctors were planning to discharge him in about two weeks.

"He was getting healthier," Edward Lara said.

But there was more damage done to his heart during the accident than doctors evidently realized.

"It was always a day by day thing with his heart," Edward Lara said. "They had never seen this kind of damage to someone so young.

"They kept doing echocardiograms and they were showing the aneurysms had gotten a little bit bigger but it was one of those things that they didn't know what was the best thing to do," he said. "They didn't want to do any surgery until they saw scar tissue forming.

"It was just one of those things where it's his time to go home," Edward Lara said.

Phillip Lara, who turned 5 in the hospital, was injured on Aug. 21 when he was struck by a vehicle as he was riding a Big Wheel down Slater Street in the densely populated Island Homes Subdivision in east Fairbanks.

The boy suffered a fractured skull, broken back, bruised lung and bruised heart in the accident.

The driver of the vehicle, 20-year-old Jessica Paul of Fairbanks, was arrested on drunken driving charges. She also was charged with first-degree assault, repeat minor consuming and minor operating a vehicle after consuming. Paul is in jail at Fairbanks Correctional Center awaiting trial, which is set for the week of Nov. 17.

Assistant district attorney Corinne Vorenkamp said the district attorney's office is reviewing the charges against Paul in light of Phillip Lara's death.

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~~Edward Lara said the family plans to have a funeral in Texas, where Phillip will be buried.~~

"He's going to be buried in the Texas hill country near family," the father said.

Neither one of the boy's grandmothers had ever met him because he was born in Alaska and the family hadn't visited family Outside since he was born, Edward Lara said.

"This is going to be the only opportunity for them to see him," he said, his voice cracking.

There will be a memorial mass held in Fairbanks at Sacred Heart Cathedral when the family returns to Alaska, Edward Lara said. He thanked Fairbanks residents for what he called an "amazing amount of support" following the accident. A fund was set up at Denali State Bank to help the family with medical expenses and a fundraiser was also held to raise money, as well as sign cards that were sent to Phillip.

"Just let the community know we appreciate what they've done," Edward Lara said.

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## Fairbanksans gather for fundraiser to benefit injured 4-year-old

By Christi Hang

Published Sunday, August 31, 2008



Photo by John Wagner

FAIRBANKS — Radio personality Troy Lewis heard his co-host read the story, but it wasn't until he read the words himself that the story about Phillip Lara, the 4-year-old struck by an alleged drunken driver in Fairbanks, hit home.



Photo by John Wagner

"At first, it broke my heart; then it pissed me off," Lewis said.

Lewis used that emotion to host a fundraiser for Lara and his family. Lewis and volunteers have been in the parking lot of Sportsman's Warehouse on the Johansen Expressway, taking donations and overseeing the signing of get-well cards since Thursday.



Photo by John Wagner

Volunteer Duane Petersen said he heard Lewis talking about the fundraiser on Lewis's radio show, "Lewis & Lewis in the Morning" and asked his boss if he could have the day off to help with the fundraising efforts. He said the story hit home for him.

"I have a child that age, and you think it could happen to anyone," Petersen said.

Petersen said he was especially touched when Lara's godparents and older siblings came to the fundraiser site.

Other volunteers included Lewis' bandmates, Joshua Wright and Chad Taylor, who decided Lara's cause was more important than band practice.

"I've been standing in this spot all day," Taylor said.

The volunteers said there had been a steady turnout Thursday and Friday. Wright said people have been giving everything from the change in their ashtray to a generous Fairbanksan's gift of \$100.

Lewis said he has been surprised by the turnout, and although he is happy with the results so far, he could be happier and urged people help any way they could. Right after he announced the fundraising campaign, Lewis said a man handed him \$5. By the end of the day, he had collected \$5,000.

"I could not be more proud of this town," Lewis said.

Many people who donated brought their children with them, a trend that did not go unnoticed by the volunteers. Lewis said the accident struck a nerve in the community.

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~~"You can see them holding their kids a little bit closer," Lewis said.~~

Maggie Ragusa watched as her son, Eric, put their donation check in the collection box on Friday afternoon. She said she wanted to donate because of Lara, a hurt child who was innocent in the whole ordeal.

Ragusa and her family were one in a steady stream of people who wanted to help the Lara family. Lewis said he spoke to the family and now Lara was out of the ICU and breathing on his own, but doctors were still worried about his heart. Lewis said everyone was hoping Lara would be home for his 5th birthday on Sept. 30.

After two successful days of fundraising, Taylor said he hoped the rest of the weekend would be as lucky. Lewis saw no need for luck.

"You don't need luck when you have people that care," Lewis said.

Donations for Phillip Lara also can be made at Denali State Bank.

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## Community Discussion

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### CEO

8/31/2008, 1:11 a.m.  
Suggest removal

Yet another senseless tragedy caused by yet another selfish drunk driver. How many times do innocent people need to be injured or killed by drunk drivers before we treat drunk drivers like the self centered morons that they are?

And for the passenger in the car to laugh about the critical injuries she and her pals caused to a four year old kid.

How about we get serious about drunk driving like many Scandinavian countries? CLEARLY, the laws we have now are not working.

Lets toss drunk drivers in jail for a year on the first offense.

Or we can just pretend that this is not a problem and let more innocent people in our community suffer ruined lives.

Any candidate for the Alaska Legislature should be denied your vote if they refuse to take this problem seriously and get behind stiff penalties that will actually deter this crime.

### Nightshade

8/31/2008, 2:44 a.m.

*(This comment was removed by the Newsminer.com staff. Please see our User Agreement for further information.)*

### shibanut

8/31/2008, 6:50 a.m.  
Suggest removal

I am not sure what is taking so long, but I did ask the newsminer to remove the comment by Nightshade at about 3:30 this morning. Not only does it not make any sense, but it is tasteless and very hurtful. It has no place in this thread and should be removed.

C'mon Newsminer, either remove that post, or close all posting for this article, but comments like that should not be public on your website.

### aurora

8/31/2008, 7:15 a.m.  
Suggest removal

Newsminer staff, take it out. If I see it still on here when I get back home later, you'll hear from me by phone.

### northpolemom75

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## Fairbanks boy in critical condition after being hit by suspected drunken driver

By Tim Mowry

Originally published Friday, August 22, 2008 at 11:39 a.m.

Updated Friday, August 22, 2008 at 9:50 p.m.

A 4-year-old Fairbanks boy riding a Big Wheel tricycle was struck by an alleged drunken driver in the Island Homes subdivision in east Fairbanks on Thursday night and is in critical condition in an Anchorage hospital.

Jessica Paul, 20, of Fairbanks was charged with first-degree assault and driving under the influence of alcohol following the accident, which occurred at approximately 7:55 p.m. at the intersection of Slater and Kody drives.

The boy, Phillip Lara, was medivaced to Anchorage after being transported to Fairbanks Memorial Hospital.

His father, Edward, said his son has a fractured skull, broken back, bruised lung and bruised heart. He is in the pediatric intensive care unit at Providence Alaska Medical Center in Anchorage, where doctors are waiting to see if he needs surgery. He is not paralyzed, Edward Lara said.

"He's a strong little boy, and God's with him," said Lara, who remained home in Fairbanks to care for Phillip's five siblings while his mother, Rose, accompanied him to Anchorage. "Right now it's a waiting game, and he's doing good."

The boy was riding a Big Wheel, a plastic tricycle on which the rider sits just off the ground, on the street next to the curb when the driver struck him in a silver 2004 Pontiac Grand Am. The Big Wheel was trapped beneath the front bumper of the car.

"She never saw him," the father said. "She nailed him directly in the back. The Big Wheel was facing forward when she hit it, not sideways," he said. "It wasn't like he pulled out in front of her or anything like that."

The accident occurred two doors down from their Slater Drive house. One of the three female passengers in the car came running up the street yelling to call 911, Edward Lara said.

He and his wife, Rose, sprinted to the scene of the accident and told one of the passengers to call 911 on a cell phone. Phillip had vomited before they arrived.

"When we got there he was moaning, trying to open his eyes," Edward Lara said.

At the hospital, Phillip was able to talk before doctors inserted a breathing tube to help him breath because of the bruised lung, Edward Lara said.

According to a criminal complaint filed in court, Paul told Fairbanks police officer Kirt Allen that she was blinded by the sun when she came around the corner on Slater Drive and didn't see the boy. Allen could smell alcohol on Paul's breath and asked her to perform several field sobriety tests, which she failed.

She registered a breath-alcohol content of 0.105 percent on a chemical test, which is above the legal limit of 0.08.

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One of the passengers in the car, Rebecca Huntington, told police she, Paul and two other women — Amelia Paul and Kristi Folger — had been drinking at a park in Hamilton Acres shortly before the accident, the complaint stated. Huntington told police that she and Paul were "the soberest" of the four girls and that's why she was driving.

At her arraignment in district court on Friday, a distraught Paul sobbed as Magistrate Alicemary Rasley read off the charges and possible penalties — 20 years in jail and a \$25,000 fine for the assault charge.

When Rasley asked Paul if she had anything to say about bail, Paul buried her face in her hands and wailed, "I didn't mean to do it."

Calling Paul "a danger to the community," Rasley set bail at \$100,000. A preliminary hearing is set for Aug. 29.

In addition to the felony assault and DUI charges, Paul was charged with minor consuming and minor operating a vehicle after consuming.

Paul has one previous conviction for minor consuming, according to court records.

Folger, one of the passengers in the car, was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and minor consuming.

According to a criminal complaint, Folger refused to cooperate with police investigating the crash and at one point grabbed an officer's arm as he was looking in the vehicle. She refused to sit down as instructed. When the officer told Folger the magnitude of the situation and that the boy could possibly die from his injuries, Folger allegedly smiled and laughed.

While assistant district attorney Reynner Aberlein requested bail be set at \$200, Rasley said that was "too generous" given the gravity of the situation and upped it to \$500.

Contact staff writer Tim Mowry at 459-7587.

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## Driver convicted of negligent homicide in Big Wheel case

By Chris Freiberg

Originally published Thursday, June 4, 2009 at 1:12 p.m.

Updated Friday, June 5, 2009 at 12:00 a.m.



Photo by Sam Harrel



Photo by Sam Harrel

FAIRBANKS — The family of Jessica Paul, the 21-year-old woman accused of fatally hitting a 4-year-old boy while driving drunk in August, started crying even before the verdict was read.

But a family member let out an audible sound of relief as Superior Court Judge Paul Lyle read the verdict. The jury found Paul not guilty of the most serious charges of manslaughter and first degree assault.

She was found guilty of a lesser charge of negligent homicide and misdemeanor charges of driving under the influence and minor operating after consuming alcohol. Jurors reached the verdict after a day of deliberation.

Considering the circumstances, it was about the best outcome Paul's family could have hoped for.

Several family members embraced Paul's public defender, Jennifer Hite, and thanked her for her work on the case following the announcement of the verdict.

"(Paul's) going to be fine," said Hite, who declined to speak to the media. "You're all going to be fine."

Family and friends of Paul also declined to speak to reporters.

Before being taken back to Fairbanks Correctional Center, Paul, who mostly looked emotionless during the trial, appeared to tear up and also embraced Hite.

After drinking at a nearby park, Paul struck Phillip Lara in August as he rode a Big Wheel tricycle in the street just two doors down from his Slater Drive home.

The child sustained serious injuries because of the accident and died about a month later at a Seattle hospital, just weeks after his fifth birthday.

Assistant district attorney Corinne Vorenkamp argued throughout the two-week trial that the accident was caused by Paul's recklessness after drinking too much and said a sober driver could have avoided the child.

"The jury weighed the evidence and equities of the case and gave us their verdict, and we respect their service and effort," District Attorney Michael Gray said. "We hope this case gives everyone who even thinks about driving after they've been consuming alcohol pause to consider other options."

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~~“Multiple lives have been impacted forever because of a situation which probably would not have happened but for an immature lack of appreciation for the effect of alcohol on a person’s ability to perform any task which requires multitasking.”~~

The defense presented evidence that Paul, who had multiple convictions of minor consumption before the incident, was blinded by the sun and no driver could have avoided the accident. If convicted of the most serious charges, Paul was looking at a sentence of between seven and 11 years in prison. The presumptive range of negligent homicide is between two and four years of incarceration, and Paul’s family, a constant presence at the trial, expressed hope that she could spend at least part of that sentence at a treatment facility.

After the verdict was read, Paul’s family and friends gathered in a circle outside the courtroom, and led by a local nun, thanked God for the verdict and prayed that Paul would remain strong in jail. No one mentioned Phillip Lara or his family.

Sentencing is scheduled for Oct. 13.

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### Julie Stricker (News-Miner staff)

6/4/2009, 1:13 p.m.  
Suggest removal We will be keeping a close eye on comments, so please abide by the user agreement.

### P3T

6/4/2009, 1:21 p.m.  
Suggest removal Got off easy...

### newlck

6/4/2009, 1:21 p.m.  
Suggest removal Let everyone who is touched by this event find peace in their hearts.

### suggins

6/4/2009, 1:22 p.m.  
Suggest removal Comments should not be allowed. No one will write anything that hasn’t been thought or said before and no one will write anything so profound that anyone’s life will truly change because of it. All comments can be predicted. To allow comments is to allow cruelty to the family of the child.

### nanook1934

6/4/2009, 1:23 p.m.  
Suggest removal then don't comment suggins.....

### siamiam

6/4/2009, 1:24 p.m.  
Suggest removal i was just expecting a longer possible sentence

### fbkreader

6/4/2009, 1:28 p.m.  
Suggest removal I wonder if there will be a civil case over this?

### just\_my\_opinion

6/4/2009, 1:33 p.m.  
Suggest removal She'll be out in 2 to 4 yrs doing the same thing! Where is the justice?