

**Agency: Department of Transportation and Public Facilities****Project Title:****Project Type:** New Construction and Land Acquisition

# Chena Small Tracts Road Bicycle & Pedestrian Facility

**State Funding Requested: \$300,000****House District: 8 / D**

Future Funding May Be Requested

**Brief Project Description:**

Construct a facility along Chena Small Tracts Road from the existing Chena Pump Road path to the FNSB Chena Kiwanis Park to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians.
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**Funding Plan:**

Total Project Cost:	\$3,566,000
Funding Already Secured:	(\$150,000)
FY2012 State Funding Request:	<u>(\$300,000)</u>
Project Deficit:	\$3,116,000

*Funding Details:**FY11 State of Alaska Capital Budget Funding - \$150,000***Detailed Project Description and Justification:**

The proposed facility runs alongside Chena Small Tracts Road, a busy residential thoroughfare that runs from a main traffic artery (Chena Pump Road), to a popular borough maintained park on the Chena River (Kiwanis River Park). The road currently has no shoulder or sidewalk and the current speed limit is 40 miles per hour. The construction of a facility would allow non-motorized traffic to travel safely along the road.

Currently in Fairbanks there is no school bus service from the Chena Small Tracts area to Woodriver Elementary School, because it falls within a half-mile radius. This absence of bus service forces many students to walk along Chena Small Tracts Road to school posing a significant danger to them due to the lack of pedestrian facilities. Chena Small Tracts Road also has a higher than average occurrence of ice fog, due to geographical location, further reducing the visibility. In the winter months the danger to bicyclists and pedestrians is increased because of a snow constricted roadway surface along with increased traffic due to the frozen Chena River crossing. Since 2004 there have been three recorded accidents on Chena Small Tracts Road.

This project would significantly improve the health and quality of life for local residents and visitors alike. This facility would allow for multi-modal transportation options in the area while providing an aesthetically pleasing transportation corridor. A connection would also be provided by this facility linking the community and the existing Kiwanis River Park. Over the past few years the area served by this road has grown tremendously, now serving a large residential population, as well as Woodriver Elementary School. This facility would provide students with safe access to the Chena River allowing for ample scientific and ecological learning opportunities.

The DOT has agreed to commit to the post-construction maintenance of the facility.

**Project Timeline:**

As funds are available. FY12 funding would go towards environmental studies, engineering and right of way.

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

State Department of Transportation and Public Facilities - Northern Region

**Grant Recipient Contact Information:**

Name: Steve Titus  
Title: Northern Region Director  
Address: 2301 Peger Road  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709  
Phone Number: (907)452-2210  
Email: steve.titus@alaska.gov

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

*For use by Co-chair Staff Only:*

10:26 AM 5/27/2011

Dear Senator Thomas:

This letter is in support of funding for the Chena Small Tracks pedestrian pathway on behalf of the Woodriver PTA. We are concerned about unsafe road conditions for children who have to walk along this road to get to/from Woodriver Elementary school. It is especially unsafe in winter time, i.e. 2/3 of the school year. There is no bus service for the area south of the Chena Small Tracks road, so families have to either let their children walk/bike in unsafe conditions or drive them to/from school. Unnecessary driving adds to the winter air pollution problem in Fairbanks. Also, in recent years one of the focus areas of the National PTA is the fight against obesity epidemic among children. We encourage children to stay active, and one way for them to do it is to walk/bike to school. Making Chena Small Tracks road safe for children to walk/bike will help children to be more active. This project will greatly benefit community as a whole. We request continuing funding for this project.

Sincerely,

(Signed)

Natalsha Ruppert  
President  
Woodriver Elementary School PTA

## INTRODUCTION

Woodriver Elementary is located off Chena Pump Road between Palo Verde and Amherst streets. There were 446 students enrolled for the 2010-2011 school year. The walk-zone encompasses the University West subdivision between Chena Pump Road, the Parks Highway and the Chena River (Figure 1). The walk-zone is a residential area with a mix of single- and multi-family dwellings.

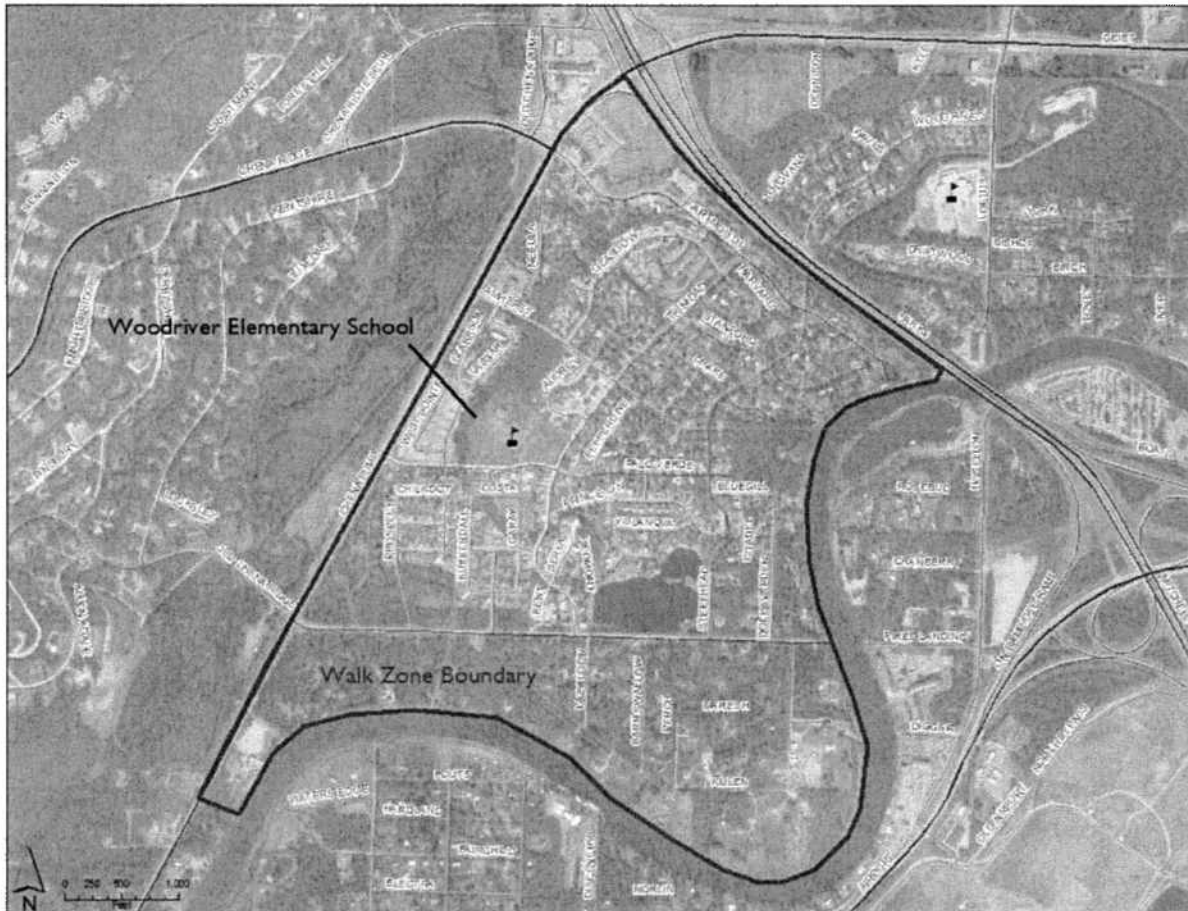


Figure 1 - Woodriver Elementary Walk Zone

## SITE CHARACTERISTICS

- There are separate loading/unloading zones for buses and parents, each with one-way traffic flow. The school property is fenced with four gates, two each on the north and east sides.
- There are no sidewalks in the neighborhood. Students use a network of informal trails on the north and west sides of the school to access school property from Vassar, Amherst and Audrey streets. Another informal trail connects the Gold Rush and Kuykendall area with Palo Verde. The only crosswalks in the walk-zone are located at the intersection of Palo Verde and Trinidad.

- Palo Verde is illuminated with street lights from Chena Pump Road to the intersection with Trinidad. Trinidad has streetlights from Chena Small Tracts to Amherst. Streetlights are generally limited to intersections throughout the rest of the walk-zone.
- The speed limit for most streets in the walk-zone is 20 mph. Chena Small Tracts Road is posted at 40 mph.
- School zone signs are posted appropriately in the neighborhood.

## PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

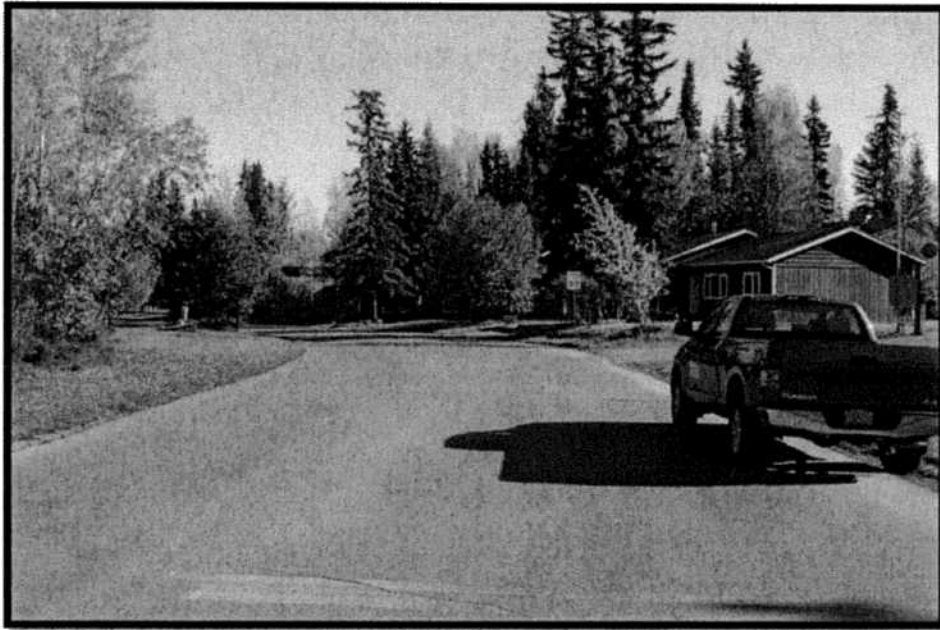
Up to 20% of children walk or bike to/from Woodriver Elementary, although those numbers fluctuate seasonally. A student tally conducted in early October, 2010 registered 58 students walking to school.

Parents in the Woodriver area identified the amount and speed of traffic along walking routes as the most influential factors in disallowing their children to walk or bike to school. Parents that allow their children to walk to school are most concerned about the weather. See the Appendix for complete results of the parent surveys.

Many respondents identified the lack of sidewalks, street lights and crossing guards as deficiencies in the walk-zone. Driver actions also influenced parents' perceptions of the safety of walking to school.

## SUMMARY

The Woodriver Elementary walk-zone is deficient in most areas. The absence of sidewalks forces students to walk in the roadway or on the limited road shoulder. This is particularly dangerous in winter when snow berms cover the shoulders. Likewise, there are insufficient streetlights and limited sight distances on several of the walk-zone streets (Figure 2).



**Figure 2 - Typical Woodriver area streets; note the limited sight distance and lack of sidewalks**

The prevalence of cul-de-sacs in the walk-zone contributes to the lack of connectivity. As a result, students are creating informal paths through wooded areas and across private property. These informal paths are unlighted and unmaintained, and often force kids to cross the street at undesirable and unmarked mid-block locations.

A portion of the walk-zone is located south of Chena Small Tracts road. This road is unlighted, lacks any marked crosswalks or sidewalks, has narrow shoulders and is posted as 40 mph (Figure 3).

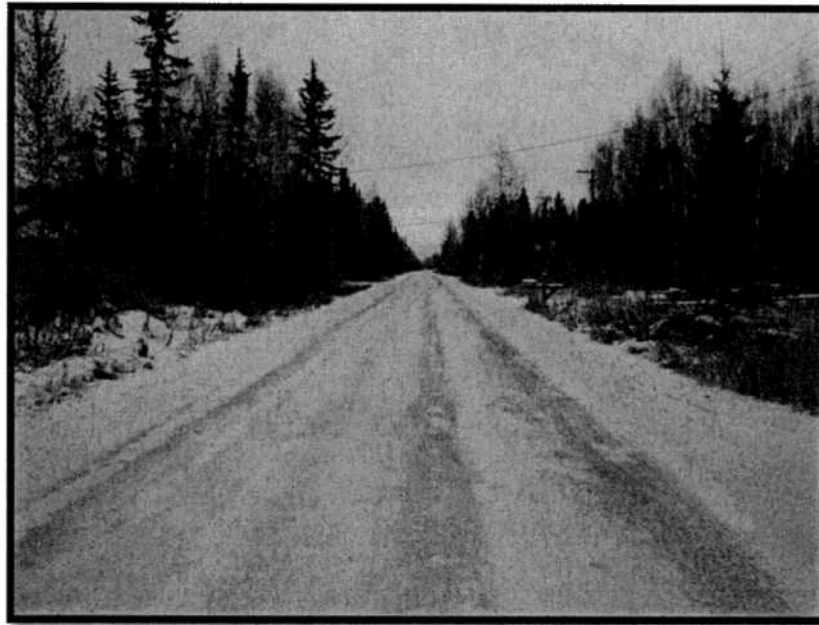


Figure 3 - Chena Small Tracts Road in October

In addition to the infrastructure deficiencies described above, Woodriver Elementary faces the seasonal issue of substantial wood smoke in the walk-zone and particularly around the school. Smoke from outdoor wood boilers on private property in the neighborhood stays close to the ground during temperature inversions. Not only is this smoke unhealthy, it makes it difficult for motorists to see children walking along neighborhood streets.

**NOVEM POLE**  
 Petition: We the undersigned are concerned citizens of Fairbanks, Alaska who urge our leaders and legislators to make the safety of our children, elderly, disabled and community members a priority by continuing to fund a pedestrian pathway along Chena Small Tracks. This project will also allow community members and students safe access to enjoy and study the chena river, the borough park and the natural resources that Alaska has to offer. We urge our leaders and legislators to act now by requesting funding and support for this important project.

Name	Signature	Address	Email	Date
1 Tam See Kins		41033 Marsh Ave FBK, AK 99709	tamseekins@hotmail.com	2/2/11
2 Melissa Sikes		PO Box 10243 Fairbanks, AK 99706	MelSikes5@gmail.com	2/2/11
3 Pam Rosier		837 Ridge Loop Rd. N.P. AK.	ridgeloop@sci.net	2/2/11
4 Heather Hayden		Cash #B Eschstrom, Fairbanks, AK 99709	kates.hayden@gmail.com	2/2/11
5 George Hitz		3124 UFW St. N.P., AK	georgehitz@gmail.com	2/2/11
6 Joanne Kugendall		PO Box 61405 Fairbanks, AK 99706	dink@assalaska.net	2/3/11
7 Ten Oestreich		2510 Astor Rd. Unit B Fairbanks, AK 99709	joestreich5@yahoo.com	2/3/11
8 Cassie Light		5059 Murphy Dene rd, FBK, AK 99709	crippy@acetek.com	2/3/11
9 Bryon Lopez		2481 Clons Rd North Pole, AK 99705		2/3/2011
10 Rodney Everett		2308 Robinson Ln N.P. AK 99705	everetts@pc.net	2/3/11
11 Jessica Guritz		1819 Norway Lane FBK, AK 99705	Jguritz@gmail.com	2/4/11
12 ARILL MOORE		925 5th Ave FBK, AK 99701	apntmooreak@gmail.com	2/4/11
13 Jeffrey Mann		125 Charles St.	Mann@alaska.net	2/4/11

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1 North Pole

14	Lisa Forbes		3162 Roden Lane	lisa_forbes@k12northstar.org	2/4/11
15	Diana Hawkins		855 Carterbury Dr	diana.hawkins@k12northstar.org	2/4/11
16	Kimi Martinson		2081 Dr. on Forest Ave	mykimbartinson@ginna.org	2/4/11
17	Moderne Stinger		2827 Chief Alexander Dr	moderne.stinger@k12northstar.org	2/4/11
18	Nancy Viale		105 Maple Dr.	nancy.viale@k12northstar.org	2/4/11
19	Joy Grubis		1601 Hans way F&Ks	joy.grubis@k12northstar.org	2/4/11
20	Hannibal Grubis		1601 Hans way F&Ks.	hannibal.grubis@k12northstar.org	2/4/11
21	SARA HUBERT		1590 Jonstrom way		2/4/11
22	Patricia Cannon		2307 Cordas Dr.		2/4/11
23	Kelly S. Gordon		3200 Hillary Ave	chelly@qoi.net	2/4/11
24	Amy Lanam		5002 Dartmouth #17		2/4/11
25	Jack Lanam		5002 Dartmouth #17		2/4/11
26	Mrs Sanborn		2999 Olympic Terrace Cir Anchorage AK 99502		2/4/11
27	Eric Stone		550 Remington Dr. Fairbanks AK 99701	eric.stone@k12northstar.org	2-4-11

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*North Pole*

28	Russel Hawkins		855 Centerway Dr Fairbanks <sup>99709</sup>	hawkinsr@alaska.net	2/5/11
29	Erin O'Brien		1335 Berea Ct Fairbanks 99709	erinobrien3@gmail.com	2/4/11
30	Broke Brun		4482 Daitructh 99709	brokasunday@alaska.net	2/4/11
31	Joy Collison		140 Cornell Way 99709	Joycollison@alaska.net	2/4/11
32	Leshle Dolan		193 Crest Dr. Fairbanks 99709		2/4/11
33	Amie Greer		12 1/2 Nadelst Fairbanks 99709	amie@alaska.net	2/4/11
34	David Brashear		775 MERIDIAN AVE <sup>FAIRBANKS, AK</sup> 99709	dbrashear@alaska.net	2/4/11
35	Nicole Eisenman		PO BOX 208 ESTH 99708		2-4-11
36	James Brashear		775 Wadlin Fairbanks 99709		2/4/11
37	Jenni Opp		2010 Stevestry Fairbanks <sup>99709</sup>		2/5/11
38	Keith Berrian		POB 80341 Fairbanks AK 99708	kberrian@alaska.net	2/5/11
39	Mikki Bateman		1005 TRIMMON DR. FB 99712	mikki.bateman@gmail.com	2/5/11
40	KATRINK BERGMANN		PO BOX 85286 FBKS AK 99708	opk@ak.net	2/5/11
41	BRAD SWARTZ		2285 Shay Ct. FAIRBANKS 99712	brad@alaska.net	2/5/11

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AND SIGNATURE PAGE

PRINTED NAME	SIGNATURE	ADDRESS	support for this important project.	EMAIL	DATE
42 Kazumi Landis	<i>[Signature]</i>	1003 8th Ave. FBKS AK 99701			2/5/11
43 Rob Landis	<i>[Signature]</i>	1003 8th FBKS			2-5-11
44 Connie Seekins	<i>[Signature]</i>	4011 Muesel Ave. FBKS AK			2-5-11
45 Andrea Reinbelle	<i>[Signature]</i>	530 Knightbridge Rd FBKS 99709			2-5-11
46 Beth Austin	<i>[Signature]</i>	1821 Barn Swallow FBKS 99704		paulbeth.austiney@com	2-5-11
47 Paul Austin	<i>[Signature]</i>	1821 Barn Swallow FBKS 99704			2-5-11
48 Eric Graham	<i>[Signature]</i>	2557 Michah Rd Northside			2-5-11
49 Trudy Pink	<i>[Signature]</i>	3124 VFW Street, North Pole			2/8/11
50 Darcy Etcheverry	<i>[Signature]</i>	4900 Eielson Fwy Rd North Pole, AK			2/9/11
51 Ben Seekins	<i>[Signature]</i>	4633 Marash Ave		FBKS, AK 99709	2-9-11
52 Sherwin Amacher	<i>[Signature]</i>	1208 27th Ave FBKS, AK 99709		amachers@gmail.com	2-9-11
53 Dena Amacher	<i>[Signature]</i>	1208 27th Ave FBKS, AK 99709		amachers@gmail.com	2-9-11
54 Sheila Oden	<i>[Signature]</i>	1111 Concordia FBKS 99709			2-10-11
55 Kelly Seekins	<i>[Signature]</i>	3534 Holden Rd Fairbanks, AK 99709			2-10-11