

East Dowling Road Extension & Reconstruction Frequently Asked Questions

What is the East Dowling Road Extension & Reconstruction project?

The project consists of reconstructing Dowling Road from Lake Otis Parkway east to Norm Drive and constructing a new portion of Dowling Road from Norm Drive to the Abbott Loop extension. This is a total distance of approximately one mile. The road is expected to be four lanes.

Why does Dowling Road need to be extended to the east?

Anchorage transportation studies over the last decade have repeatedly identified a lack of connectivity in areas of east Anchorage. In particular, missing links in the road grid require traffic moving between south Anchorage and east Anchorage to travel circuitous routes. This results in longer vehicle trips, increased miles driven and higher vehicle emissions. The lack of connectivity also funnels more traffic into the Tudor Road and Lake Otis Parkway intersection, one of the City's most congested intersections. Extending Dowling Road to the east to connect to the Abbott Loop extension will relieve congestion at the Tudor Road and Lake Otis Parkway intersection by providing an alternative transportation route between east and south Anchorage.

Is this project consistent with other local planning efforts?

Yes, the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) adopted in December 2005 calls for improvements in connectivity in east Anchorage and in particular calls for a connection between Dowling Road and the Abbott Loop extension that is currently under construction. Earlier transportation studies, including the 2001 and 2003 LRTPs and the EAST (East Anchorage Study of Transportation) identified the need for additional road improvements in the study area to improve the connectivity of east Anchorage roads. The East Dowling Road Reconstruction and Extension project is currently ranked 12th in the AMATS FFY 2004-2006 TIP for roadway improvements.

Will this project require acquisition of private properties and residences?

This project does require acquisition of some private properties. DOT&PF Right of Way Section has already contacted homeowners whose properties are affected by the ROW acquisition. As of November 2006, about 80% of the homeowner ROW acquisition issues have been completely resolved. The eastern portion of the study area includes MOA-owned parkland on the north and Heritage Land Bank land on the south.

How will the project affect access to the Northern Lights ABC School?

Access to and from the school and surrounding neighborhoods is important for the success of the project. While not currently within the current project budget, traffic engineers determined the most efficient and safest circulation route around the school calls for a lighted signal at Lake Otis and 63rd to accommodate traffic off of Laurel. Once the project is complete, left turns will be restricted off of Laurel onto East Dowling. All other traffic movements currently allowed around the school will continue.

How will the project affect the neighborhood circulation in the residential areas along Dowling Road?

The new East Dowling Road will connect with a project currently being constructed, the Abbott Loop Extension. When complete, the Abbott Loop Extension will connect with Tudor Road giving residents another option besides Lake Otis to travel to and from the Tudor area.

While not within the scope of this project, the Mayor of the Municipality of Anchorage has written the project staff a letter indicating the project team should plan for a Spruce Street intersection on Dowling. If this occurs there would likely be a signal at this intersection. The Spruce Street extension and traffic signal will significantly improve access for many residents in the area.

Another proposed upgrade to residents living near the new project is a traffic signal at 63rd and Lake Otis. The new signal is not currently within the project budget but, if funded, will allow traffic to easily make a left or right onto Lake Otis. Lake Otis traffic will not be able to turn onto 63rd.

Circulation around Northern Lights ABC School will change slightly from current circulation patterns. Once the project is complete, left turns will be restricted off of Laurel onto East Dowling. All other traffic movements currently allowed around the school will continue.

Residents of Sunchase Condominiums will be able to continue to turn left or right in or out of the condominiums.

Residents of the trailer park near East Dowling will continue to use their platted access at Lake Otis as the main exit and entrance. Left turns off of the road near the post office onto East Dowling will be restricted. Once the project is complete, Lake Otis traffic is expected to be reduced by about 25% giving residents some relief during their commutes.

How will the project affect the Campbell Creek Park and Greenbelt?

The project study area includes a portion of the Campbell Creek Park. The potential for impacts on the southern portion of the park and greenbelt will be determined and discussed in an environmental assessment.

What is the plan for the Heritage Land Bank Lands that are adjacent to and south of the extended East Dowling Road?

The MOA Heritage Land Bank conducted a special planning study for these lands in 2005. There are two upland areas between East Dowling Road and 64th Ave that are expected to be developed for residential use. HLB has indicated that if a northern alignment route is chosen for the East Dowling Road extension (north of the CEA substation) then it would be willing to mitigate some of the wetlands impact by designating some of its wetlands south of the project footprint for no development.

What will this project cost and how is it funded?

The project is funded by State general funds and is currently funded at \$19 million. Right of Way (ROW) land acquisition was more costly than initially budgeted. Current ROW costs are about \$8 million. Additionally, some project features like the pedestrian crossing at East Dowling/Abbott Loop, wildlife crossing, and traffic signal at 63rd Avenue and Lake Otis were not in the initial project scope and are subsequently outside of the initial budgeted amount. DOT&PF project managers are currently looking at value engineering to reduce costs and looking at additional funding options.

How is this project related to other transportation projects in Anchorage?

There are several road projects underway to address road connectivity and congestion relief in east Anchorage. Some of these projects include:

Abbott Loop Reconstruction and Extension – This project is under construction, with most work currently occurring at the north end of the project, between 64th and 48th avenues. The project termini are Abbott Road and 48th Avenues.

Tudor and Lake Otis Intersection – The MOA is studying improvements to the Tudor and Lake Otis intersection. Traffic congestion relief at the Lake Otis Parkway and Tudor Road intersection will likely come in the form of incremental improvements from several projects.

Several potential projects in the vicinity include:

48th Avenue Extension – The LRTP includes an extension of 48th Avenue from Bragaw Street to Boniface Parkway. Design of this project is scheduled to begin this year and will be managed by the MOA. Construction funding was approved by the State Legislature in 2006.

Spruce Street – The recently adopted AMATS 2005 LRTP refers to an extension of Spruce Street from 64th Avenue to East Dowling Road as part of the overall Anchorage road grid and calls for the Official Streets and Highways Plan to include this new portion of Spruce Street as a neighborhood collector.

How can I participate in the public process on the project?

The public involvement process for this project includes public meetings, periodic updates to community councils in the area, project updates and newsletters, a project website (www.eastdowling.com) and a project information office at 4041 B Street. Public comments, questions and suggestions can be submitted through the project website, or via mail, e-mail, or fax to:

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What is the schedule for the project and when will road construction occur?

The project consists of eight stages as listed below. Road construction is expected to occur in 2008.

Project Scoping	January – March 2006
Preliminary Engineering Study	March – June 2006
Public Meeting Number 2	October 2006
Environmental Documentation & Permitting	March 2006 – January 2007
Public Meeting Number 3	Spring 2007
Design	July 2006 – July 2007
Bidding	August 2007 – November 2007
Construction	2008