HANDOUTS

Comments on Resolution 26-01

Brian O'Connor
7080 West Knox Drive
Wasilla, AK 99654
Alpenglow Properties LLC

MSB Planning Commission
Ordinance OR-26-021

Dear Planning Commission Members,

I oppose OR-26-021 because it would weaken protections for drinking water, erosion control, and neighborhood quality of life by removing the Comprehensive Plan requirement for gravel removal.

The first of many is our ground/drinking water. Without oversite and protections, our drinking water will be drastically affected by gravel/earth removal. The water table changes with improper ground removal, which deletes or reroutes well water used by many Alaskans in the Matanuska- Susitna borough. Many homes rely on well water for their home. Also, the water runoff from improperly planned gravel removal can have many contaminates that could adversely affect our struggling salmon population. Many lakes and streams in the MatSu have salmon returns and salmon fry that grow up here.

Secondly, erosion control would not have oversite. Gravel removal near or within neighborhoods poses erosion and sediment risks that can affect homes, infrastructure, and public spaces. A Comprehensive Plan provides a framework to design and enforce erosion control measures and to plan for slope stability, drainage, and post-extraction restoration.

Lastly, as mentioned earlier, many potential gravel sites are near or within neighborhoods. The impact to our neighborhoods can be extremely detrimental. Increased noise, traffic, and heavier axle loads can degrade quality of life and strain local roads not engineered for such use. The Comprehensive Plan helps anticipate and mitigate these impacts through land-use coordination, transportation planning, and public engagement. The noise alone that is associated with earth removal can cause property values to drop, loss of quality of life and health issues. Some communities are strained as it is with vehicle traffic. Adding additional traffic from earth moving could put these communities to the breaking point and push others into strain. Also, many small communities do not have roads engineered for heavy axle weights. The increased axle weight on a road that has not been engineered to withstand the strain will fail prematurely and putting the community in a position of having to pay for either road repair or increased vehicle maintenance.

Our salmon, our drinking water, our structural stability of our homes, our peace of living should not be in jeopardy because an individual wants to remove a little "red tape" placed by the people to protect the people so that they can make it less costly and less of a hassle to move earth. All of our "neighboring" states (Washington, Oregon, Idaho, California) require a

Comprehensive Plan before removing earth. In fact, some states require much more research and planning to be added to the Comprehensive plan than what we currently require. I am asking the board to please uphold the current rules to require a Comprehensive Plan for earth/gravel removal at the current load and yardage limit. Do not allow any changes to be made. Again, my voice is to NOT support the OR 26-021.

Thank you,

Brian O'Connor

Dear Members of the Planning Commission and Assembly,

My name is Steve Rudd, and I am a resident of the Rainbow Heights Subdivision and a member of the Meadow Lakes Community Council. I am writing to express my strong opposition to Assemblymember Max Sumner's proposed Ordinance OR26-021.

This ordinance proposes removing Section 17.30.060, which requires that a community's Comprehensive Plan be considered when reviewing a Conditional Use Permit for gravel extraction. Eliminating this requirement is deeply concerning for residents in our area and across the borough.

The Comprehensive Plan exists to ensure that development decisions reflect the safety, character, long-term vision, and input of the communities they impact. Removing this requirement effectively dismisses the role of community planning and public participation in decisions that can permanently affect our neighborhoods.

Residents of Meadow Lakes have already experienced the importance of this protection. When a gravel pit was proposed on Mental Health Trust land near Sylvan, the community voiced legitimate concerns about safety, property values, environmental impacts, and the overall character of the area. Because the Comprehensive Plan was considered as part of the Conditional Use Permit review, those concerns were able to be heard and weighed appropriately.

If Ordinance OR26-021 passes, it would remove an important safeguard and significantly weaken the ability of residents to ensure that industrial activities such as gravel pits are evaluated in the context of the communities surrounding them.

Local comprehensive plans represent the collective voice and long-term vision of the people who live in these areas. Eliminating their consideration in Conditional Use Permit decisions undermines both community planning efforts and public trust in the process.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Planning Commission and the Assembly to reject Ordinance OR26-021 and preserve the requirement that Comprehensive Plans be considered when reviewing Conditional Use Permits for gravel operations.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Steve Rudd - Resident, Rainbow Heights Subdivision & Member, Meadow Lakes Community Council

CORRESPONDENCE & INFORMATION

North Lakes Community Council

3060 Lazy Eight Ct #2 PMB 449
Wasilla, AK 99654

November 30, 2025

Kelsey Means, HDL Alaska (via email)

Re: Draft Engstrom Road to Trunk Road Corridor Route Selection Report

Thank you for the opportunity to review the subject report. We appreciate the public outreach. The North Lakes Community Council (NLCC) submits the following comments and we look forward to further discussion with your team and with the Borough Public Works and Planning folks as they prepare a recommendation to the Borough Assembly for a final decision on the route selection.

To cut to the chase, the NLCC still strongly believes that the “Southern Route” offers the best value (cost, schedule, quality) road and traffic safety infrastructure solution to Borough residents and taxpayers.

The Southern Route is the most cost effective by far and could be implemented in a much shorter time frame than any of the Northern Route options. Implementation of the Southern Route connection will significantly improve the traffic congestion problems in the Fishhook Triangle, particularly in combination with these other Borough and DOT projects already underway:

- North Engstrom to Tex Al Connection project (MSB)
- Tex Al to Tex Al Extension project (MSB)
- Bogard / Engstrom / Green Forest Roundabout project (DOT).

The Southern Route connector would also offer significant traffic safety improvements along the most heavily trafficked section of Bogard Road between Engstrom and Trunk. The Southern Route connector would replace Bogard Road as the primary access point for trucking associated with the large Central Gravel Products operation in this area.

The State DOT and the Mat-Su Borough, with significant input from the community, invested heavily to study the dangerous Bogard - Seldon Corridor and recently adopted a Corridor Access Management Plan (CAMP) outlining many principles and strategies to improve traffic safety. A Southern Route connector would be entirely consistent with the vision described in the approved CAMP.

We believe that the HDL Route Selection work must move forward quickly to finalize the analysis and provide Borough decision makers the information they need to make a timely “best value” decision. Such a decision weighs cost, schedule, and quality. We offer the following recommendations in each category as you finalize your analysis:

1. Cost Analysis: More accurately describe and characterize cost comparisons between the options. Consider these facts:
    a. The Southern Route is less than ½ the overall length of the northern route.
    b. The Kircher family has indicated a willingness to sell necessary ROW.
    c. The Central Gravel Products property owner has offered to sell ROW from his property to the MSB and to have the ROW totally on his side of his northern property boundary, thereby eliminating the need for any ROW purchase from the Havemeister family.
    d. The Central Gravel Products property owner has offered to construct the new road bed from Engstrom to Trunk, less the work associated with the final D1, paving, and any bridge construction.
    e. The Lohmann-Olson family (property owner significantly impacted by the Northern Route options) has clearly indicated to the Borough that they have no interest in selling ROW across their undeveloped property.
    f. There are other property owners who strongly object to ROW across their properties being used for residential and agricultural / livestock grazing along the Northern Route.
    g. The environmental characteristics and challenging topography of the Northern Route options will significantly drive up construction costs as compared to the Southern Route conditions.
    h. With multiple stream crossings and fish habitat along the Northern Route, the cost of environmental mitigation measures should be described.

2. Schedule Analysis: More accurately describe the timelines associated with a Southern Route versus Northern Route decision. The community deserves the safety improvements this project delivers in the most timely manner possible. The final Route Selection Report should outline schedule comparisons considering the following:
    a. The engineering for the Southern Route will be significantly less involved than the engineering for any of the Northern Route options. Explain this difference in the report.
    b. As described above, the complexity of ROW acquisition for any Northern Route option will drive significant schedule impacts when compared to the Southern Route option. The report should describe and quantify this schedule impact.
    c. The construction phase of the project will be significantly shorter for the Southern Route option. In large part this is because of the willingness of the Central Gravel Products owner to construct the road base. The construction of the Southern Route can be accomplished in a single season. Given the nature of the environment and topography, the Northern Route options would likely take over two seasons.

3. Quality Analysis: In this context, a “quality” decision must consider the degree to which a route option meets the desired outcomes and actually solves traffic congestion problems now, and into the future. The final Route Selection Report should offer comparisons that consider the following:
    a. Traffic Analysis, Modeling, & Engineering - there are excellent tools available for predicting traffic levels and driver behaviors, but it is still a “prediction” and not an exact science. While it may seem logical that selecting one of the Northern Routes would offer better traffic flows, we believe it would be wise to construct the Southern Route, and the other projects described above, and then step back and evaluate whether and when a future Northern Route connector is warranted after traffic flows and driver behaviors can be observed.
    b. Only the Southern Route directly addresses Bogard Corridor risk mitigation with a serious reduction in gravel truck traffic. Removing gravel truck traffic from the most congested section of Bogard Road and moving it to a new Southern Route Connector (designed with left turn lanes for Central Gravel Products access), is a significant reduction in risks to the community.
    c. Future development / tax revenue benefits: a decision to construct the Southern Route alternative results in excellent transportation infrastructure in an area that will very likely see growth in commercial property and residential property development. We would expect the demand for commercial property and/or multi-family residential property in the vicinity of the Bogard / Trunk roundabout will grow much more quickly than on any of the Northern Route options as those properties support agricultural production and owners have expressed significant opposition to further development.

The NLCC is aware of mixed public input on route selection. We acknowledge there are some residents along Engstrom Road who favor a North Route Connection. Our organization and membership have been studying this project for some time and our broader community based recommendations have been vetted with our membership more than once. We believe that public support will swing significantly away from any Northern Route alternative once the project schedule is more fully communicated and once the impact to the taxpayers due to project costs are more transparent. Approval of this letter at our November, 2025 NLCC Meeting was by a 91% vote.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide suggestions. By addressing these issues more thoroughly in the final report, we believe the decision makers will have the information they need. We hope you find the NLCC input helpful.

Please feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions.

Regards,

Rod D. Hanson
President, North Lakes Community Council
board@nlakes.cc 907-841-8735

cc via email: Tom Adams, MSB Public Works
Cole Branham, MSB Projects
Alex Strawn, MSB Planning
Lonnie McKechnie, MSB Clerk (for distribution to the Assembly)
NLCC Board

Rod Hanson <rod@nlakes.cc>

Engstrom to Trunk Connector - Proposed Southern Route

1 message

Jade CGP <jade@centralgravelproducts.com> Wed, Jan 21, 2026 at 11:43 AM
To: Tom Adams <Tom.Adams@matsugov.us>
Cc: Alex.Strawn@matsugov.us, Lonnie.McKechnie@matsugov.us, Rod Hanson <rod@nlakes.cc>

Dear Tom et. al.

I would like to go on record with my opinion regarding the proposed Southern Route - Engstrom to Trunk Connector.

As I am sure everyone knows, we have recently purchased the 80 acres that used to be the Havemeister Dairy. We are more than willing to discuss and negotiate the proposed route being entirely located on our property, joining with the backside of Kircher property, thus having no impact on Bob & Franci Havemeister's adjoining parcel. In the past Kircher has been amenable to discussing this route as well, and we surmise nothing has changed regarding that. We are willing to facilitate discussion with Kircher when the time comes.

If a reasonable agreement can be reached we are willing to collaborate with MSB on the design and construction of the basic road base using materials and equipment if available from our pit.

Once constructed we would consider using access to the connector as our primary entrance/exit for traffic into and out of the gravel pit.

Please feel free to distribute/share this email with any interested parties. If you have additional questions or would like to discuss this further please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,
Jade
Central Gravel Products
(907) 745-4044
jade@centralgravelproducts.com
www.centralgravelproducts.com

The content of this email is confidential and intended for the recipient specified in message. Please do not share this message without the consent of the sender.

North Lakes Community Council

3060 Lazy Eight Ct #2 PMB 449
Wasilla, AK 99654

March 4, 2026

Lonnie McKechnie, Borough Clerk (via email)

Re: Joint Assembly / Planning Commission Meeting - March 10, 2026
Engstrom Road to Trunk Road Corridor Route Selection Report

Following a recent conversation with the MatSu Borough Manager, the NLCC is requesting that you forward a copy of this letter to the Assembly and Planning Commission members in advance of their joint meeting on March 10, 2026. We have reviewed the Public Works Presentation and the Resolution from the Transportation Advisory Committee. We believe the joint body would benefit by more clearly understanding the nature of public comments as they consider any feedback they may provide to Public Works at this important meeting.

The administration assured us they are not requesting a decision from the Assembly on March 10th, and that an ultimate decision on route selection will be made after the Draft Route Selection Report is finalized.

The NLCC has been providing community input on this project from the beginning. We fully support the East-West connection of Engstrom and Trunk roads to relieve traffic congestion in the Fishhook Triangle. We strongly encourage public input to be fully considered and addressed before Public Works makes a final recommendation on the route.

The Borough's long range plans envision both a Northern and Southern connection. At this point in time, the "Southern Route" offers the lowest cost, shortest schedule, and least environmental impact. It directly addresses the safety concerns of significant gravel truck operations on the most congested section of Bogard Road. The Engstrom North Connector and the Tex Al to Tex Al Connector projects that are already underway will provide much improved East-West connections on the northern end of Engstrom and the residential growth in that area. A Southern Route connection will support future residential and commercial growth in the Trunk / Bogard "node" area.

We provided detailed feedback and recommendations on the Draft Route Selection Report in a November 30, 2025 letter (see attached).

Property owners along the Southern and Northern routes have also submitted their comments. They express strong objections to providing ROW agreements for the Northern route. In contrast, property owners along the Southern route have expressed a willingness to engage in good faith ROW negotiations and the owner of Central Gravel Products has offered to construct the road minus final surface (paving) and bridge construction. (see attached).

The NLCC is hopeful that the comments, concerns, and recommendations from our community will be fully considered. The Final Route Selection Report must present an accurate assessment and relative scoring of project criteria and a recommendation that properly balances cost, schedule, environmental, and safety considerations.

For those wishing to understand the involvement and position of the NLCC in more detail, please visit our https://www.nlakes.cc website. This project is referenced under "HOT TOPICS" on the home page.

If anyone would like to further discuss our perspective, please feel free to contact me directly.

Regards,

Rod D. Hanson
President, North Lakes Community Council
board@nlakes.cc 907-841-8735

cc via email: Mike Brown, MSB Manager
Tom Adams, MSB Public Works
Alex Strawn, MSB Planning
NLCC Board

Attachments: November 30, 2025 Letter to HDL Alaska on the DRAFT report
January 21, 2026 Central Gravel Products Email