North Spur Hwy Extension Project
06/22/2017 Public Meeting - Nikiski Community Recreation Center
Questions/Answers and Additional Information
The meeting recording is also available at www.kpb.us/NRDEXT

Meeting products: project cover sheet, project imagery, Jacob Ladder mitigation project map, FAQs sheets, display board with online address and contact information.

KPB representatives/staff: Wayne Ogle, Assembly Member District #3; Pat Malone, Road Service Area Director; Henry Knackstedt, Roads Project Manager; Brenda Ahlberg, Community & Fiscal Projects Manager

McLane Consulting, Inc.: Gina Debardelaben, Project Engineer

Q: Why is the project not going to be bid by the mile?
A: The project will be bid by the ton due to the material needs, the wetland challenges and the possible subsidence. The contractor will be expected to assume the costs; therefore, bidding the project by ton will be less of a financial risk to the contractor than price by mile. The lower the price, the farther the road can be built.

Q: What is the main expense of the project?
A: The gravel; it is estimated that 130,000 cubic yards will be used.

Q: What is the cost for gravel per cubic yard?
A: The cost of raw versus final product is different. The cost of raw gravel (unprocessed) $1.35 to $2.80. The engineer’s estimate for gravel cost per cubic yard may be released when the design and engineering is finalized.

Q: Is there a local gravel source that can be used for the project?
A: Preliminarily, there isn’t a local site adjacent to the project big enough to provide the amount needed for the project.

Q: Did the Apache engineering provide the match for the grant?
A: Yes, the Apache engineering is part of the 20% match requirement.

Additional information: The U.S. Department of Transportation, Division of Western
Federal Lands is the grantor of the SAFETEA-LU “Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users” grant in the amount of $5,142,231.38, which requires a 20 percent match. The borough met the match by way of the Apache engineering and permitting products, GIS imagery, borough right of way, Leaf Creek bridge construction, and the Jacob Ladder state grant. The borough ordinance O2016-19-15, match agreement and support documents may be viewed online at https://kpb.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2859479&GUID=D815628C-B8A4-4A32-ACC3-F9BC7526E318&Options=ID|Text|&Search=

Q: Is the $250,000 still available from the state grant in 2002?
A: The information was not available at the meeting; however, provided here.

Additional information: The original 1998 SAFETEA-LU allocation was $6,000,000 which required a 20 percent match of $1,230,000. State grant of $250,000 was used as part of the match to complete the phase I environmental assessment (2002 State of Alaska HCS CSSB 29(FIN) am H Chapt. 61, p.41, line 10). The borough ordinance O2002-19-27 and support documents may be viewed online at http://www2.borough.kenai.ak.us/AssemblyClerk/Assembly/Ordinances/2002/O2002-19-27.pdf

This grant was deobligated because it was not feasible to construct the project as originally intended. The remaining fund balance of $5,142,231.38 was set aside until a project could be done in the area. Fast forward to today, and the 2017 grant agreement was released and finalized between the borough and the US Department of Transportation, Division of Western Federal Lands under the SAFETEA-LU program to construct the road extension as a mitigation project, alleviating damages to area wetlands.

Q: Is there an engineer’s estimate for the overall project?
A: There is an engineer’s estimate, but it is preliminary and will not been released as it may be updated after the permitting has been completed.

Q: Has the grant money been given to the borough? And is the interest going into the general fund, and will it be applied to the project also?
A: No the borough does not have full payment of the grant funds and is not collecting interest. The federal grant and the state grant are on a reimbursement basis. This means that the borough submits quarterly narrative and fiscal reports and is reimbursed for actual costs that have been approved by the grantor for payment. The borough must adhere to state and federal laws in order to receive reimbursements.

Q: Is it prudent to do a soils investigation on the project location and to locate a local gravel source? The design has taken into account the soil types in the area, so no additional soils investigation is warranted.
Q: Will you consider the borough providing the gravel?
A: The borough does have a gravel source, but has not been developed. 

Additional Information: The question of gravel was presented several times throughout the meeting. Developing the borough gravel source would require additional cost and permitting separate from the road construction project. The assessment of gravel grade, quality and quantity may not produce enough material as required (estimated 130,000 cubic yards). This effort would impede the construction timeline. Any development of potential borough gravel sources is the responsibility of the bidding contractors.

Q: How many culverts will be installed? And have you considered possible flooding impacts to nearby private property?  
A: There are 1,200 feet of culvert material estimated, additional arch pipes to be installed on anadromous streams, and permeable construction to allow water flow. Additional culverts will be installed as needed during construction.

Q: Who is providing project management?  
A: The borough road service area in collaboration with McLane Consulting.

Q: What is the amount of the state grant to be used on the Jacob’s Ladder beach access?  
A: The remaining balance of $94,651 is listed as part of the 20 percent match and will be used solely for the Jacob’s Ladder portion of project construction. 

Additional Information: (Note the amount was incorrectly cited during the meeting.) The borough ordinance O2013-19-01 and support documents may be viewed online at http://www2.borough.kenai.ak.us/AssemblyClerk/Assembly/Ordinances/2013/O2013-19-01.pdf

Q: The turnouts are for vehicles to pull over?  
A: Yes, and they will be constructed on upland areas.

Q: Do we have permitting to go past the design if the project is under budget?  
A: The borough is limited to construct only to the proposed area which has been permitted to just beyond Otter Creek. Some road extension is possible only if it does not impact additional wetlands.

Q: What is the cost of maintaining the road?  
A: The cost of road maintenance is variable depending on seasonal weather conditions. No evaluation has been performed to estimate the average maintenance cost of this road, but that is a maintenance issue not included with the design and construction phase.

Q: What will constitute improving Jacob’s Ladder?  
A: The trail will be ten foot wide with two-to-one shoulder slopes. The structural section will be 24 inches on top of textile on the uplands and 30 inches on top of textile in wetlands, using Type
I gravel for upland and wetland areas.

Q: Have you considered the traffic impacts on the turnouts at the intersections of Cloudberry and Golden Rod?
A: Subdivision approaches were considered during the Apache public meetings and will be looked at again. Currently, the approaches to platted right of ways are designed at 18’ widths like the north road extension.

Q: Will the Kenai Spur Highway, north of Halibouty Road be improved to handle the truck traffic?
A: This is a state road and it currently isn’t on the schedule for repair or improvement.

Q: Can these funds be used for subdivision roads?
A: No, the funds are specifically for the permitted extension of Spur Highway only.

Q: Will there be preference to local hire; local contractors getting a contract like this?
A: These are federal funds and local preference is not allowed.

Q: Is this contract subject to minority hire?
A: The invitation to bid will be available to anyone.

Additional Information: Qualified bids will be accepted by sealed bid and awarded to the lowest bidder considering that the contractor is fully qualified to complete the project.

Q: Is work on Jacob’s Ladder part of this (schematic)?
A: The work to be completed will be done as a separate bid schedule because the funding is separate (see state grant O2013-19-01).

Q: Is this (road project) designed like any other borough road?
A: The Road Service Area Board approved the design using the borough road standards and granted a variance to build the road 18 feet wide, which allowed for a longer buildout.

Q: What is the contractor going to do with the wood?
A: The contractor is responsible for logistics including woody debris. Specific requirements include mulching along the right of way (ROW); excavation in the upland areas; timbers may be stacked along the ROW for residential use or sold, which is the contractor’s decision; and wetlands will be cleared but not grubbed as the root mat provides some reinforcement.

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