

RE: Willow Parks Highway By-Pass

Dear Ms. Nelson:

The Willow Area Community Organization (WACO) recently appropriated \$2,500 of their revenue sharing funds to identify alternative routes for a Willow Parks Highway By-Pass and overlay these alternatives onto a base map that shows current land ownership.

WACO learned through the Willow Comprehensive Planning Process that the Parks Highway Visioning Document indicates that a four lane, divided highway with controlled access, requiring up to 1,000 ft of right of way, is planned to be constructed through the Willow town center at sometime in the future. Existing businesses, homes, community center, fire department and the public airport could be impacted. Moreover, if the community chooses to wait and begin the planning process for a by-pass after the community is developed, the impact could be far greater, as is currently being experienced in the Wasilla area.

WACO is requesting the borough to partner with WACO to complete this project. In an hour or two, Borough staff, a WACO hired traffic consultant, and a WACO volunteer would identify up to three highway by-pass routes. These proposed routes would be overlaid onto a borough provided based map. The base map would need to show both land ownership and soil conditions. WACO's traffic consultant would be expected to review the proposed overlay routes. WACO will also request the traffic consultant provide 100 8 1/2 x 11 color copies of the maps.

Willow is underlain by poor soils, so there appears to be few routes available. MSB planning staff is familiar with the local conditions, available mapping and potential routes. It is estimated using this team approach, identifying the alternate routes could be completed in a day.

WACO would coordinate activities with a traffic consultant to complete the project and the final overlay map. It is anticipated this map will be utilized by the community council to educate the public, the Willow Comprehensive Planning team members and solicit input. Should a final preliminary route be selected, reclassification of public lands could be initiated.

Please coordinate directly with Jane Dale, WACO Vice-Chair on this new project.

Sincerely,
Linda Oxley
WACO Chair