



# CHUAC White Paper

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This paper identifies the purpose, membership, and operational details for the Citizens and Highway Users Advisory Committee (CHUAC) in the Highway to Highway (H2H) project.

## **Purpose of CHUAC**

The CHUAC is one of many public involvement tools that will be used to provide public input into the project development process. The purpose of the CHUAC will be to provide a public involvement tool to inform the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. The CHUAC will be used to gain stakeholder input to the NEPA process and will meet regularly with the study team in a forum that allows for interactive discussions. The CHUAC is not a decision-making body. Project decisions will be made by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) within the NEPA process, by the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) as the project sponsor, or by other agencies with jurisdiction over aspects of the project. Information brought forth by the CHUAC will be considered as citizen input with the intent of informing the decision-making process.

The CHUAC is intended to:

- Promote understanding of a range of perspectives,
- Inform the decision makers of community perspectives,
- Build a sense of partnership within the community,
- Develop constructive relationships,
- Facilitate an effective information channel,
- Augment but not substitute for broader public involvement,

- Serve as a “sounding board” for the project team,
- Comment on reports and work products,
- Provide input on the broader public participation effort.

## Membership:

The CHUAC will provide a balance across a broad range of characteristics, including:

- **Interest** – Membership should reflect the breadth of relevant interests or perspectives for the H2H project. Members will be citizens and not State of Alaska or Anchorage municipal staff acting as part of their job duties.
- **Organizational affiliation** – Stakeholder groups such as social service agencies, chambers of commerce, environmental groups and community councils will be represented on the CHUAC and, whenever possible, interests will be represented by umbrella organizations that represent multiple businesses or special interests.
- **Geography** – CHUAC members will represent the entire project area.
- **Demographics** – The CHUAC will represent the demographics of the project area.

It is anticipated that additional H2H advisory committees will include Neighborhood Partnerships and the H2H ALL SPEAK. All stakeholders participating and engaged are key. The Neighborhood Partnership committees will focus on neighborhood-level issues. The H2H ALL SPEAK will focus on project issues as they relate to minority and low-income populations in the project area. Members of the CHUAC that may also be members of other H2H advisory committees will have dual roles. They will represent their interests at the CHUAC and report back about CHUAC activities to their other advisory committees and vice versa.

## Operations:

Meetings will be held at major project milestones to provide citizen input into project decisions. In the next year, it is anticipated that the CHUAC will meet every other month. At a minimum, and in accord with SAFETEA-LU, the CHUAC will provide input on the purpose and need, the range of alternatives, and the draft and final Environmental Impact Statement. Meeting times and durations will vary. The CHUAC must be conducted in a manner that is consistent with basic NEPA principles. Additionally,

- CHUAC meetings will be open to the public,
- Materials from the CHUAC process will be made available to non-CHUAC members,
- Information from the CHUAC will be documented in the project files,
- Substantive issues raised by the CHUAC will be addressed in the EIS or elsewhere in the project files,
- CHUAC member activities outside the CHUAC process will not be represented as speaking on behalf of, or representing the H2H project nor FHWA.

CHUAC members will be expected to:

- Attend meetings regularly.
- Articulate their interests, concerns, and perspectives on any issue being addressed,
- Maintain an open mind regarding other views,
- Work as a team member,
- Constructively manage conflict between themselves and others in the group,
- Respect meeting start and finish times,
- Respect the views of others,
- Allow everyone to speak without dominating the conversation,
- Take responsibility for the success of the meeting.

