



## TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

### Meeting Minutes – May 5, 2021

Zoom Meeting URL: <https://fastplanning.us/keepup/zoom/>

Telephone Number: 1 (253) 215-8782, Meeting ID: 878 1090 6277

#### 1. Call to Order

Jackson Fox, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

#### 2. Introduction of Members and Attendee

The following were present:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Representing</b>
*Jackson Fox, Chair	FAST Planning
*Olivia Lunsford, Vice Chair	FAST Planning
**Andrew Ackerman	City of Fairbanks Engineering
**Bob Pristash	City of Fairbanks Engineering
**Bill Butler	City of North Pole
**Steven Hoke	ADEC Air Quality
**Kate Dueber	Alaska Railroad Corporation
**Judy Chapman	DOT&PF Planning
**Sarah Schacher	DOT&PF Preconstruction
**John Perreault (absent)	FNSB Planning Commission
**Kellen Spillman	FNSB Community Planning
**Michelle Denton	FNSB Transportation
**John Weinberger	Fort Wainwright Planning
**Justin Burgess	AES Transportation
**Jakob Theurich	UAF
*Deborah Todd	FAST Planning
*Don Galligan	FNSB Community Planning
*Randi Bailey	DOT&PF Planning
Peter Stern	BPAC
John Netardus	DOT&PF
Adam Moser	DOT&PF
Carl Heim	DOT&PF
Phoebe Bredlie	Kinney Engineering
Jeannie Bowie	Kinney Engineering
JoAnn Mitchell	Kinney Engineering
Matthew Stone	HDR Engineering
Michael Lukshin	FHWA
Corey DiRutigliano	Bettisworth North
Jewelz Barker	Catalyst Communications
Andrew Ooms	Kittelsohn & Associates

\* FAST PLANNING Staff members

\*\* FAST PLANNING Technical Committee members

**3. Approval of the May 5, 2021 Agenda**

**Motion:** To approve the May 5, 2021 Technical Committee Agenda.  
(Chapman/Denton).

**Discussion:** No further discussion.

**Vote on Motion:** None opposed. Approved.

**4. Approval of the April 7, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

**Motion:** To approve the April 7, 2021 Meeting Minutes. (Denton/Chapman).

**Discussion:** No discussion.

**Vote on Motion:** None opposed. Approved.

**5. Committee/Working Group Reports (including the Chair's Report)**

Mr. Fox noted the following updates:

- Received a letter from Governor Dunleavy's office approving the MPO boundary adjustment adding the Chena and Tanana Lakes Recreation Areas.
- Special Policy Board Meeting motion failed to advance the letter regarding snowmachine/ATV use on public roads to the Department of Safety.
- The letter regarding the Chena River Walk Project was transmitted to the Alaska Railroad and an official response was requested by June 30, 2021.
- The Policy Board authorized FAST Planning to apply for the Bloomberg Grant Opportunity for the Asphalt Art Initiative on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Lacey Street.
- The Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee recommended approval of the Non-Motorized Plan as presented at the April 29, 2021 meeting.
- FAST Planning received a letter from Representative Don Young's office that the Cowles Street Reconstruction Project was submitted as an earmark under the Transportation Reauthorization Bill to the Chairman of the House Transportation Committee and the project had Representative Young's support.

**6. Public Comment Period (Non-Action Items)**

John Netardus of DOT commented that he wanted to provide the Technical Committee with updates on his projects. Mr. Netardus explained that DOT was awarding FAST Planning Sidewalks 2019 Project for Loftus Road sidewalks, the little patch in front of the Carlson Center, Snowman Lane, and the North Pole High School Boulevard sidewalks. Mr. Netardus explained that both the Growden Park Path Project putting a path from 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to Stewart Street and the FAST Intersection Improvements 2021 Project improving the left turn lane from west Tanana Loop onto Sheep Creek Road Extension and adding a right turn lane off Chena Pump Road at Chena Point Avenue went out to bid. Mr. Netardus explained that for the FAST Area Surface Upgrades Parent Project and they had skipped a year on putting the PM jobs out this summer, but he thought they had money for next summer, so he wanted to get with either this committee or the subcommittee to make sure that future priorities remained the same even though they missed a year. Mr. Netardus explained that he also wanted to let them know that the parent projects for FAST Sidewalks and FAST Intersections was ending this year so if they wanted those projects to keep going, they needed to start a new Phase 2 for those projects.

Mr. Fox stated that he would schedule a subcommittee meeting for that and provide an update at the next Technical Committee meeting on what was discussed.

Mr. Butler commented that he wanted to be notified when the DOT&PF had Preconstruction Meetings because for the last several projects that occurred, they had

not known who the contractors were or even been aware of when those projects started.

Mr. Netardus stated that he would put the City of North Pole, Fairbanks North Star Borough, and City of Fairbanks on the list so they would be notified when those meetings were coming.

## 7. Old Business

### a. Non-Motorized Plan Update (Action Item)

- ***Review of public comment responses and consideration of adoption of revised Plan***

Mr. Fox explained that the meeting packet included the summary of comments received from the 30-day public review of the Non-Motorized Plan and the responses to each comment. Mr. Fox explained that in general, the comments were supportive of the Non-Motorized Plan Update, but some minor revisions were made as a result of those comments. Mr. Fox then explained the revisions that were made to the document.

**Public Comment:** No public comment.

**Motion:** To recommend to the Policy Board to approve the Non-Motorized Plan Update as presented. (Denton/Pristash).

**Discussion:** Mr. Ackerman recommended that since it was large, the Plan should be broken into separate segments with links to each segment so people could easily access it.

Ms. Schacher stated that she was concerned about not addressing the maintenance challenges that they had directly in the Plan. Ms. Schacher explained that she understood it was in the Appendix and PDC had done a great job of capturing all the issues, but it was not made clear in the Plan about the real challenges our agencies were facing. Ms. Schacher explained that she just felt that it was setting the public up for expectations of facilities and services that they might not be able to deliver on which history had shown, they could not.

Ms. Schacher explained that about two weeks ago they had an issue with DOT, Borough, and City of Fairbanks about maintaining flashing beacons on the Growden Park Project and they were ready to pull them from the project if they could not figure it out. Ms. Schacher stated that these were things that happened after a project was initiated. Ms. Schacher stated that it was not just one beacon, and all the agencies were not receiving revenue dedicated to maintenance let alone maintenance for non-motorized facilities. Ms. Schacher stated that she thought this a great plan and a lot of great thought and effort had gone into it. Ms. Schacher stated that it was an issue that faced all our agencies and was concerned that there were projects in this Plan that would never see the light of day simply because of this issue. Ms. Schacher suggested that we be a little more direct about this challenge. Ms. Schacher stated that it was a difficult challenge that was at the Legislature, at the Assembly, and at City Council. Ms. Schacher stated that our community needed to come together to decide what we were going to pay for or suffer a result in facilities or services as a result. Ms. Schacher stated that maybe they should add text to make that caveat clear. Ms. Schacher stated that she knew this has been through the Policy Board already and she might be

overspeaking on DOT, but she also thought the Policy Board would have that same understanding and would appreciate such an addition.

Mr. Spillman stated that he reviewed the Plan and thought it was a good plan. Mr. Spillman stated that he thought it was interesting that the Non-Motorized Planning efforts received more comments than the Motorized Plan. Mr. Spillman stated that he thought what Ms. Schacher had said the Borough did not have money set aside for maintenance either. Mr. Spillman explained that the City Ordinance regarding property owners maintaining the sidewalks adjacent to their properties seemed like they could enforce it to reduce maintenance costs and a lot of other public entities nationwide had been successful with that model and reducing the maintenance cost of their non-motorized facilities.

**Amendment to the Motion:** To add a maintenance section that addresses the real budgetary issues affecting local government and maintenance of these facilities. (Chapman/Pristash).

**Discussion:** Mr. Ackerman stated he generally supported the amendment but one thing that he took a slightly different perspective on was that it did not need to be budgeted but he was not sure if it was so much an issue of local and state funding availability as it was prioritization. Mr. Ackerman stated that the bottom line was that it needed to be spelled out more clearly what it took to maintain these facilities and, if they were not prioritized and budgeted for, what the expectations would need to be.

Ms. Schacher commented that she agreed with what Mr. Ackerman said and that it was a matter of how they prioritized the resources all their agencies were allocated. Ms. Schacher stated that she recalled that there was a suggestion in the Non-Motorized Plan for agencies to create dedicated budgets for non-motorized facilities. Ms. Schacher stated that she thought that was a direction that could produce some traction because she did not think any of their agencies could say how much they spent exactly on non-motorized facilities nor were they well-equipped to necessarily go ask for budget increments to provide and improve levels of service for non-motorized facilities or because they inherited additional non-motorized facilities. Ms. Schacher stated that she thought they were headed in the right direction pointing to all these things and she supported this amendment. Ms. Schacher stated that she did not think it would be a lot of work for the Consultant to get some wording in and was sure that each of their agencies would be happy to input on some bullet points that they would feel comfortable adding or review something they came up.

Mr. Fox stated that it would be very helpful.

Mr. Pristash stated that he did not think it would hurt in a public document to maybe not emphasize, but at least make the public aware, that with the project the capitol cost was one thing, but the maintenance of these items was something else. Mr. Pristash stated that also, if it were in the document, it would help him present those things to the Council, so he really did not see a downside to adding this to the document.

**Vote on Amendment to the Motion:** None opposed. Approved.

**Discussion:** Mr. Spillman commented that he wanted to discuss High Priority Project #23, the College Road Road Diet. Mr. Spillman stated that the wounds

were still fresh from the 2014 effort they spent a lot of time and FAST Planning money on this project. Mr. Spillman asked what the strategy was to implement a successful project and not go through another failed effort.

Mr. Fox stated that he did not have an exact answer for Mr. Spillman but was currently negotiating with Kittelson to do an Update to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Mr. Fox explained that if the project moved forward as a high priority project in the Non-motorized Plan, it would be accelerated to a short-range project in the updated Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Mr. Fox stated that if that occurred, he thought they would have to develop a public outreach plan if they wanted to see that project get through to construction and FAST Planning could lead that discussion. Mr. Fox explained that the one thing that had changed from 2014 when this project was removed, and the project kept the four-lane configuration was that there was a Safety Audit on Badger Road related to access management and number of driveways on Badger Road. Mr. Fox stated that they converted the roadway from a four-lane to a three-lane road with a turn lane. Mr. Fox explained that it had reduced the number of crashes on that road if the road felt safer as you drove down it. Mr. Fox stated that, with that perspective, he thought the public could generalize College Road being somewhat similar. Mr. Fox stated that he had not heard negative comments about Badger Road since the road was built. Mr. Fox explained that no planning effort was underway, but it was something they could begin working on at FAST Planning.

Ms. Schacher asked Mr. Fox where the name "College Road Complete Streets" came from and asked that because she thought terminology matters and she was not sure that the road still functioned as an arterial. Ms. Schacher stated that they had already done the analysis that there was a capacity there for one lane and should they rebrand the project for all users.

Mr. Fox stated that was an excellent question and he did not have an answer for where that title came from and believed that at some point this project was removed from and then added back to the Plan but agreed that the project name was not consistent with the need there on College Road. Mr. Fox suggested that it could be called "College Road Safety and Access Improvements." Mr. Fox stated that the objective was to convert it from four to three lanes with a center turn lane to reduce conflicts with bicyclists and pedestrians on that road. Mr. Fox stated that someone could suggest a motion to rename that project.

**Amendment to the Motion:** To rename High Priority Project #23 as "College Road Safety and Access Improvements." (Chapman/Schacher).

**Discussion:** No further discussion.

**Vote on Amendment to the Motion:** None opposed. Approved.

**Amended Motion:** To recommend to the Policy Board to approve the Non-Motorized Plan Update as presented, add a maintenance section that addresses the real budgetary issues affecting local governments and maintenance of these facilities, and rename High Priority Project #23 as "College Road Safety and Access Improvements".

**Vote on Amended Motion:** None opposed. Approved.

## 8. New Business

### a. Fairbanks Road/Rail Crossing Reduction/Realignment Plan (Action Item)

- **Consideration of Releasing Document for 30-day Public Comment Period**

Mr. Fox introduced Phoebe Bredlie of Kinney Engineering to provide an update for the Fairbanks Road/Rail Crossing Reduction/Realignment Plan. Ms. Bredlie presented and explained the 15 crossings that were selected for improvement.

**Motion:** To extend the meeting to 2:30 pm. (Pristash/Chapman).

**Vote on Motion:** None opposed. Approved.

**Public Comment:** No public comment.

**Motion:** To recommend to the Policy Board to release the Road/Rail Crossing Reduction/Realignment Plan for public comment. (Chapman/Weinberger).

**Discussion:** Mr. Spillman commented that his concern was that the agreed to long-term plan of the Railroad main line was not discussed in this plan.

**Amendment to the Motion:** To include a statement in the body of the plan about this being a short-term plan and the long-term plan is relocation of the rail line around the Fairbanks area. (Spillman/Pristash).

**Discussion:** No further discussion.

**Vote on Amendment to the Motion:** None opposed. Approved.

**Amended Motion:** To recommend to the Policy Board to release the Road/Rail Crossing Reduction/Realignment Plan for public comment, and to include a statement in the body of the plan about this being a short-term plan and the long-term plan is relocation of the rail line around the Fairbanks area.

### b. Gaffney/Airport/Richardson/Steese (GARS) Intersection Project Update

Mr. Fox introduced Carl Heim of DOT to provide an update for the Gaffney/Airport/Richardson/Steese (GARS) Intersection Project.

## 9. Other Issues

No other issues.

## 10. Informational Items

### a. Obligations and Offsets

Mr. Fox explained the obligations and offsets included in the meeting packet.

### b. Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability & Equity (RAISE Grant Opportunity (formerly TIGER/BUILD Grant) -Applications due July 12, 2021

Mr. Fox explained the RAISE Grant opportunity from the US DOT was now open and applications were due on July 12, 2021. Mr. Fox stated that project criteria added was that the project must demonstrate improvements to racial equity, reduce impacts of climate change, and create good paying jobs.

## 11. Technical Committee Member Comments

- No comments.

**12. Adjournment**

**Motion to Adjourn:** (Spillman/Weinburger). The meeting adjourned at 2:27 p.m. The next Technical Committee meeting is Wednesday, June 2, 2021.

Approved:  \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 6/2/2021  
Jackson Fox, Chair  
FAST Planning Technical Committee