



## **POLICY BOARD MEETING**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**August 18, 2021 • 12:00 – 3:00 P.M.**

**FAST Planning Office, 100 Cushman Street, Suite 205, Fairbanks, AK**

**Web Conference at: <https://fastplanning.us/keepup/zoom/>**

**Zoom Meeting Phone Number: 1 (253) 215-8782 Meeting ID: 814 4919 6412**

#### **1. Call to Order**

Mr. Anderson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

#### **2. Introduction of Members and Attendees**

<b>Attendee</b>	<b>Representative Organization</b>
*Ryan Anderson, Chair	Director, DOT&PF Northern Region
*Jim Matherly, Vice Chair	Mayor, City of Fairbanks
*Bryce Ward	Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough
*Michael Welch	Mayor, City of North Pole
*Aaron Gibson	Fairbanks City Council
*Alice Edwards	Director, DEC Air Quality
*Frank Tomaszewski	FNSB Assembly
**Jackson Fox	FAST Planning
**Olivia Lunsford	FAST Planning
**Deborah Todd	FAST Planning
**Don Galligan	FNSB Community Planning
**Randi Bailey	DOT&PF Planning
+Steven Hoke	DEC Air Quality
+Robert Pristash	City of Fairbanks
Adam Moser	DOT&PF
Jeanne Bowie	Kinney Engineering
Brian Lindamood	Alaska Railroad Corporation

*\*FAST Planning Policy Board Members, \*\* FAST Planning Staff Members, + FAST Planning Technical Committee Members, • Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) Members*

#### **3. Approval of the August 18, 2021 Agenda**

**Motion:** To approve the August 18, 2021 Agenda. (Welch/Edwards).

**Discussion:** No discussion.

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

#### **4. Approval of the July 21, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

**Motion:** To approve the July 21, 2021 Meeting Minutes. (Ward/Edwards).

**Discussion:** No discussion.

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

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

##### **a. Staff Report and Technical Committee Action Items**

Mr. Fox noted the following updates:

- Three work sessions were held with the Seasonal Mobility Task Force to provide updates to the 2010 Mobility Recommendations Report for maintenance of non-motorized facilities during the winter months. A fourth work session will be held on August 31, 2021 to finalize that report update which will be brought to the Technical Committee and Policy Board for approval and to discuss the presentation agenda for the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Winter Maintenance Forum to be held in October. At the last meeting of the Seasonal Mobility Task Force, FAST Planning presented the draft priority route map for winter maintenance of non-motorized facilities. The Task Force had a lot of positive feedback on the draft map from City Public Works and DOT Maintenance.
- Mr. Fox regularly attended meetings with the Consultant and DOT Project Manager and submitted comments on sections of the Long-Range Transportation and Freight Plans.
- Received letter from the Alaska Railroad in response to FAST Planning April 2021 letter regarding interest in a long-term land lease.
- Prepared Draft FFY22 office budget.
- Ms. Lunsford completed the online Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Dashboard and presented it at the Statewide MPO Coordinate meeting and the AMATS staff in Anchorage.
- Drafted a revision to the FAST Planning Transportation Improvement Policy to consolidate the FAST Improvement, Sidewalk, Intersection, and Safety/Efficiency Programs into a single program.
- Coordinated with DOT&PF on FAST fiscal year end funding obligations.
- The Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) completed their work on a Draft Priority Route Map for seasonal maintenance of non-motorized facilities and passed it along to the Seasonal Mobility Task Force for consideration of use in their future operations.
- Peter Stern of the BPAC did field work and took photos as a condition assessment for paths in the community and as a result of his work, two new projects were nominated for the FAST Improvement Program for future years where were the Geist path on the south side of the roadway and the Farmers Loop path section between Taku Drive and Ballaine Road.
- The Technical Committee recommended that the Policy Board adopt the Fairbanks Road/Rail Crossing Reduction/Realignment Plan with three changes and included in the meeting packet.
- The Technical Committee recommended that the Policy Board adopt the TIP Policy changes with one amendment to add language to the consolidation of those four programs to provide allocation of 80% for motorized projects and 20% for non-motorized projects.
- The Technical Committee Recommended that the Policy Board add a new crosswalk on College Road at the Farmers Market as a contingency project for the 2022 FAST Improvement Program.
- The Technical Committee recommended that the Policy Board approve the FFY22 FAST Planning office budget.

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

Bob Pristash, City of Fairbanks, commented that New Business Item 8a in the Agenda regarding the Draft Maintenance Map for Non-Motorized Facilities where there was a time commitment for clearing the sidewalks, the City of Fairbanks Maintenance Department wanted it on the record that they could not be held to those time periods and going forward would like the flexibility of not sticking to the time limit shown.

**7. Old Business**

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

- ***Review of Comment Response Summary, Final Plan Revisions, and Consideration of Adoption***

Mr. Fox explained that the 45-day public comment period for the Plan ran from May 21-July 9, 2021 and some comments were received. Mr. Fox explained that as a result of those comments, three changes were made to the Plan that were shown in the final version included in the meeting packet. Mr. Fox explained that the changes were: additional language regarding the relocation of the rail main line in Section 1.1 of the Plan; the section of Trainor Gate Road between the Old Steese and New Steese Highways now has two alternatives in the plan showing a one and two-way configuration and with the Old Steese Highway Improvements Project, DOT would not address that section of Trainor Gate Road; and the graphic for the Fairbanks North Pole Realignment Project graphic was modified and changed the location of the track for Phase 2 of that project to be closer to the Levee where that project would occur.

**Public Comment:** No public comment.

**Motion:** To approve the Fairbanks Road/Rail Crossing Reduction/Realignment Plan with the three adjustments noted in the meeting packet. (Edwards/Welch).

**Discussion:** No discussion.

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

**b. Chena River Walk, Stage III**

- ***Review and discussion of ARRC response letter to FAST Planning***

Mr. Fox explained that a response letter was received from the Alaska Railroad regarding the long-term land lease interest for construction of the project with conditional approval to move forward. Mr. Fox explained that the Railroad proposed a new long-term agreement with the City of Fairbanks, and not necessarily DOT, to avoid indemnification issues. Mr. Fox explained that part of that agreement would be that the City of Fairbanks would continue to commit to permanent ownership of the pedestrian bridge at Pioneer Park that extended across the river to an asphalt path at the Chena Landing Loop Road. Mr. Fox explained that the Railroad also wanted to divest themselves of the existing asphalt path that went from that bridge up to Chena Landings Loop Road which was currently not part of the project. Mr. Fox explained that FAST Planning had agreed to resurface that existing path at some point in the future. Mr. Fox stated that regardless of that, the Railroad would like to see the City of Fairbanks assume maintenance responsibilities for that path. Mr. Fox stated that the Railroad proposed a one-time lump sum rent payment and in his discussion with Mr. Donovan of the Railroad the lease amount would be related to Fair Market Value despite previous commitments from the Railroad

to provide this property at nominal or no cost to the community. Mr. Fox stated that the proposed lease term was a minimum of 20 years or a maximum of 30 years. Mr. Fox explained that as part of the agreement to building the north side from Peger to Chena Landings Loop, the Railroad wanted the City to agree to maintain the existing path in the future. Mr. Fox explained that the Railroad would like to see this project get built but some of the conditions of this agreement would involve the Fairbanks City Council taking on additional maintenance responsibilities. Mr. Fox explained that he believed that Mr. Pristash had introduced this item to the City Council at one of their Finance Committee meetings, so they were aware of it, but no decisions had been made to date. Mr. Fox explained that DOT was interested in opening the right-of-way phase of this project potentially as early as October 2021 but, given the timeline and the fact that we don't have an agreement, this was getting very tight to get it to construction by next summer. Mr. Fox explained that they would need to modify the TIP for the new lease amount, but currently he did not have a guess as to what that amount would be.

## 8. New Business

### a. Preview of Draft Priority Route Map for Non-Motorized

Mr. Fox briefly explained the base map, priority levels and timeframes for maintenance, and the various features that were included on the map. Mr. Fox explained that they did not map gravel paths, dirt trails, or the widened shoulders on roadways because those were assumed to be plowed with the associated roadways.

### b. Discussion of Adding a Public Safety Representative to the Technical Committee

Mr. Fox explained that this was on the Agenda at the request of Mayor Ward. Mr. Fox explained that the FAST Planning Bylaws would need to be revised and voted on by both the Technical Committee and Policy Board to add a new member seat to the Technical Committee. Mr. Fox introduced Mayor Ward to provide further explanation.

### c. Revision to Transportation Improvement Program Policy (Action Item)

- ***Consideration of consolidating FAST Improvement, Sidewalk, Intersection, and Safety/Efficiency Programs into Single Program (Action Item)***

Mr. Fox explained that he received a request from DOT for the Policy Board to consider the consolidation of the four programs into one program called FAST Planning Improvement Program to make it more efficient for DOT so that annual project nominations for the previous individual programs could be turned in together instead of separately so DOT could initiate one design start and bid package for all the individual projects in the combined program. Mr. Fox stated that he was very much in support of this consolidation.

**Public Comment:** No public comment.

**Motion:** To consider the revision to the Transportation Improvement Program Policy as outlined on pages 99 to 104. (Welch/Tomaszewski).

**Discussion:** Ms. Edwards stated that she supported the idea of trying to simplify this and thought about issues that were raised related to the individual categories and wondered if it would be helpful to say that the subcommittee would meet annually to develop a list of projects by category to highlight that

we wanted to see those projects listed by category to emphasize the fact that we did want to see those categories.

Mayor Ward stated that he appreciated Ms. Edwards' comment regarding the components but did not think we needed to have it in the language of the motion. Mayor Ward stated that he was supportive of making things simpler and bringing the projects together but just did not want to lose the individual identities of the different types of projects.

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

**d. Proposed Crosswalk on College Road at Farmer's Market (Action Item)**

• **Consideration of Adding Crosswalk into FAST Improvement Program as an FFY22 Contingency Project**

Mr. Fox explained that this was the second request from DOT related to the proposed crosswalk on College Road at the Farmers Market. Mr. Fox explained that according to DOT, the crossing met the MUTCD requirements for installation of a rectangular rapid flashing beacon and a marked crosswalk like the one on Cowles Street that did not stop traffic flow but alerted drivers that someone was walking across at that location. Mr. Fox explained that the cost estimate to install the crosswalk was about \$125,000 based on the cost for the beacon that was going in on Wilbur Street this summer in association with the Growden Park Area Accessibility Improvements. Mr. Fox explained that DOT thought it was appropriate to add this project as a contingency project to the 2022 FAST Improvement Program. Mr. Fox noted that the idea of a crosswalk at this location and other locations along College Road had been a longstanding priority in both the Non-Motorized Plan and Long-Range Metropolitan Transportation Plan for many years now. Mr. Fox explained that in the most recent iteration of the Non-Motorized Plan the crossing project was elevated to a high priority project. Mr. Fox explained that there were a number of people crossing the road at the Farmers Market. Mr. Fox explained that due to COVID, the Farmers Market had spread out their booths taking away some of the parking spaces in front of the Farmers Market and with less parking spaces available, people were parking across the street and walking across College Road get there. Mr. Fox explained that the road had a relatively high speed of 45 mph and DOT was requesting that this be added as a contingency project should additional funding become available.

**Public Comment:** No public comment.

**Motion:** To add a crosswalk on College Road as a contingency project for the 2022 FAST Improvement Program. (Matherly/Welch).

**Discussion:** Mayor Matherly stated that he had heard a lot of complaints about this area, and he liked the idea. Mayor Matherly stated that there was a lot of foot traffic in that area and thought it was a good idea, so he was happy to make the motion.

Mayor Ward asked Mr. Fox if we did this at the Farmers Market if that was the entire project or just one piece of it. Mayor Ward asked if there were any other projects that were to be considered and if crosswalks were warranted in any other locations that warranted that.

Mr. Fox stated that there were other locations for this project, and this was just one of them that DOT said warranted installation. Mr. Fox explained that this

was just one of a handful of crosswalks that they had interest in putting on College Road.

Mayor Ward asked Mr. Fox if they would be separate projects.

Mr. Fox explained that the project would remain in the Non-Motorized Plan and Metropolitan Transportation Plan that FAST Planning would be updating this winter they should probably identify the remaining locations after this was constructed.

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

**e. Use of Remaining FFY21 Offset Funding (Action Item)**

- ***Consideration of Using Offset Balance for FFY22 Advance Construction Payback***

Mr. Fox explained that a letter to DOT Headquarters was included in the meeting packet requesting approval to use the outstanding balance of 2021 Offset Funds towards payback of the 2022 Advance Construction Funds programmed in the Transportation Improvement Program. Mr. Fox stated that they had done this in 2019 and did not have to do it last year because McGrath Road took up the rest of the funds. Mr. Fox explained that current year there was a balance of approximately \$61,000 in offset funds.

**Public Comment:** No public comment.

**Motion:** To send request to DOT to use the FFY2021 offset funding balance for FFY2022 Advance Construction payback. (Edwards/Welch).

**Discussion:** No further discussion.

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

**f. FAST Planning FFY22 Office Budget (Action Item)**

- ***Includes an EXECUTIVE SESSION for Employee Reviews***

Mr. Fox explained that he prepared a draft budget for FFY22 that he requested an approximately 3% increase in this year's budget. Mr. Fox explained that premium adjustments were made to the Personnel Account for Health, Dental, and Vision Insurance benefits for two employees; premium adjustments were also made to the Office and Administrative Account for commercial property, general liability, and commercial auto insurance; Information Technology Account increases in IT Services contract with AlasConnect, the addition of two Adobe Pro licenses for staff, and the telephone service bill increased due to holding virtual meetings instead of in-person meetings; the Travel Account increased for travel to attend MPO quarterly meetings in Anchorage, Juneau, and MatSu, as well as funds to attend in-person conferences instead of virtual meetings; the Advertising Account budget increased due to the increased frequency of Bike/Ped Committee meetings and the introduction of a new Project Enhancement Committee requiring more advertisement of those meetings; and the Office Supplies account increased due to increased paper purchases and office supplies such as personal protection equipment such as masks and sanitizing supplies. Mr. Fox explained that the culmination of those changes represented a 3% increase over the past year. Mr. Fox also explained that at the beginning of our new fiscal year, employees received a COLA increase related to the Consumer Price Index for Anchorage.

**Public Comment:** No public comment.



**Motion:** To suspend the rules for seven minutes. (Welch/Matherly). The meeting recessed a 1:39 p.m.

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

The meeting was called back to order at 1:46 p.m.

Mr. Anderson explained that the Executive Session would be held in a breakout meeting room in Zoom and then they would rejoin the regular meeting.

**Motion:** To go into Executive Session. (Welch/Ward).

The meeting went into Executive Session at 1:47 p.m.

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

The meeting was called back to order from Executive Session at 2:20 p.m.

**Motion:** To approve the budget with the discussed merit increases. (Ward/Matherly).

**Discussion:** Mr. Anderson thanked Mr. Fox for his service and all his efforts and hard work this past year.

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

## 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.

## 11. Policy Board Member Comments


- Mr. Tomaszewski commented that he appreciated all the hard work the team had done doing for the Policy Board and appreciated working with them and they were a good bunch of folks.
- Ms. Edwards stated that she wanted to really express her appreciation for the staff and appreciated all the hard work and effort the staff had been putting in to keep FAST Planning up and running.
- Mayor Welch commented that many citizens would never know how much really went on here for the benefit of us being able to move them around, so God bless everything the staff did, and he was very appreciative and hoped to be able to relay it to his citizens for some time to come.
- Mayor Ward commented that the Fairbanks North Star Borough was in the middle of nominating projects to its Capital Improvement Program and there would be a work session at the North Pole Library on the first Monday in September for Borough infrastructure. Mayor Ward stated that the FAST Planning TIP had been the genesis for this, and it had been a helpful tool for planning infrastructure. Mayor Ward stated that for those interested they could check the website for more information at [fnsb.gov/cip](https://fnsb.gov/cip). Mayor Ward thanked the staff.
- Mayor Matherly commented that his hat was off to the staff and Mr. Fox had a really good team and they always got the best bang for their buck. Mayor Matherly explained that he met with the folks at Eielson, and they were in all in a very somber mood due to what was happening in Afghanistan, and he hoped they got all the Americans out of there because

there was a bunch of them. Mayor Matherly hoped ever had a great rest of their day, thanked everyone for all their hard work, hoped to see them at the concert on Saturday.

- Mr. Anderson thanked all the staff and commented that he thought they were pretty awesome for putting all this stuff together. Mr. Anderson commented that DOT was winding up construction season and already thinking about next year. Mr. Anderson commented that the Infrastructure Plan went through the Senate but had not yet gone through the House. Mr. Anderson commented it could potentially be a 30-40% increase in their basic formula so there were a lot of ramifications for them if that went through.

**12. Adjournment**

**Motion to Adjourn.** (Welch/Edwards). The meeting adjourned at 2:32 p.m. The next Policy Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 15, 2021.

Approved:  for  
Ryan Anderson, Chair  
FAST Planning Policy Board

Date: 10/20/2021