



TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes – February 1, 2023

Key Bank Building, 100 Cushman Street, Suite 205

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

Telephone Number: 1 (253) 215-8782, Meeting ID: 895-6199-5076

1. Call to Order

Jackson Fox, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

2. Introduction of Members and Attendee

The following were present:

Name	Representing
*Jackson Fox, Chair	FAST Planning
*Corey DiRutigliano	FAST Planning
*Olivia Lunsford, Vice Chair	FAST Planning
*Deborah Todd	FAST Planning
**Alan Hoza for Justin Burgess	AES Transportation
**Judy Chapman	DOT&PF Planning
**Nick Czarnecki	ADEC Air Quality
**Michelle Denton (absent)	FNSB Transportation
**Kate Dueber	Alaska Railroad Corporation
**Kevin McKinley	FNSB Borough Planning Commission
**Robert Pristash	City of Fairbanks Engineering
**Bill Rogers	City of Fairbanks Engineering
**Lt. Mike Roberts (absent)	Alaska State Troopers
**Sarah Schacher	DOT&PF Preconstruction
**Kellen Spillman	FNSB Community Planning
**RJ Stumpf (absent)	Fairbanks International Airport
**Jakob Theurich	University of AK-Fairbanks
**Danny Wallace	City of North Pole
**John Weinberger	Fort Wainwright
*Randi Bailey	DOT&PF Planning
*Don Galligan	FNSB Planning
Peter Stern	Bike/Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Megan Flory	RESPEC
* FAST PLANNING Staff members	
** FAST PLANNING Technical Committee members	

3. Approval of the February 1, 2023 Agenda

Motion: To approve the February 1, 2023 Technical Committee Agenda as presented. (Chapman/Schacher).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

4. Approval of the January 4, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the January 4, 2023 Meeting Minutes as presented.
(Chapman/Rogers).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

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

Mr. Fox noted the following from the January 18, 2023, Policy Board meeting:

- The Policy Board made motions to approve the FFY23-27 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update documents, but postponed the vote to their next meeting. The postponement was made due to the Federal Highway Administration request to delay approval of the documents until the Air Quality Conformity Analysis determination has been made.
- The Draft Air Quality Conformity Analysis was released for a 30-day public comment period from January 22-February 21, 2023.
- The Policy Board passed an motion to add Barnette Street Reconstruction Project back into the TIP as an Illustrative Project with no funding dedicated to it at this time. That allows the Technical Committee and Policy Board to continue discussions about funding for this project.
- There were two Federal Register Notices related to Air Quality in our area and the Policy Board approved a motion directing staff to draft comment letters.
- At the Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Meeting on January 26, 2023, they:
 - Recommended approval of the Scope of Services for the Borough Transit Plan Updates.
 - Recommended adding funding in the TIP for the FAST Improvement Program in FFY2027.
- The Cooperative Agreement with the State of Alaska was signed to form a pilot Regional Planning Organization for the Borough on January 27, 2023.

6. Public Comment Period (Non-Action Items)

No public comment.

7. Old Business

a. Call for Project Nominations for Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality and Carbon Reduction Program – General Update

Mr. Fox explained that project nominations could be submitted to FAST Planning until February 17, 2023 at midnight. Mr. Fox noted that an Applicant Workshop was held on January 17 at the FAST Planning office. Mr. Fox explained that there were several ideas generated at that workshop. There was interest from participants in having roundabouts at West Valley High School near the main entrance, one near the intersection of Wilbur Street and Second Avenue near the Carlson Center, and another one at the intersection of Sheep Creek Extension and West Tanana Loop Road. There was an idea to subsidize the transit tickets for all UAF students and faculty, and possibly expand that to school age groups so they could ride the bus for free. Mr. Fox explained that purchasing and using apps was suggested for transit users to pay for their tickets, get current bus schedules, and bus locations. Other ideas included: a concept for developing wayfinding signs for new bike and ped facilities, new train switches, cold start programs, motor vehicle plugins, alternative/hybrid vehicles, installation of electric vehicle charging stations, and an electric vehicle charging infrastructure

plan. The University has interest in converting their busses to natural gas or some other type of alternative fuel.

b. Draft 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Air Quality Conformity Analysis

Mr. Fox explained that FAST Planning received the Draft 2045 MTP Air Quality Conformity Analysis document and advertised it for 30-day public comment from January 22-February 21, 2023. The Policy Board allowed releasing the document without their advance review because the document came in after the last Policy Board meeting. The document is also posted on the FAST Planning website. The Appendices of the document are available by request and can be emailed but are not available on the website at this time. The document included estimated emissions impacts for the proposed Kinross ore hauling truck activity to Fort Knox using the current proposed route.

8. New Business

a. Comment Letter to U.S. EPA on Partial Disapproval of the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for the PM2.5 Serious Non-Attainment Area (Action Item)

Mr. Fox explained that there is a notice in the Federal Register issuing both a partial notice of approval and of disapproval of the SIP for the PM2.5 Serious Non-Attainment Area. This is a 60-day public comment period. Mr. Fox explained that he has drafted a comment letter from FAST Planning and had received direction from the Policy Board for the content. Mr. Fox explained that if the EPA disapproves the SIP following the public comment period, they will begin implementing sanctions available to them through the Clean Air Act. The first sanction would be imposing an 18-month freeze on projects related to new sources of emissions in our area such as construction of a new power plant. That could hamper any new installations in our community. If the deficiency remains uncorrected for 24 months, the EPA could withhold funding for projects in the PM2.5 Non-Attainment Area. If the Plan is disapproved, we would fall into a conformity freeze. That would mean that FAST Planning could not make any amendments to or add any new projects to the TIP. Mr. Fox explained that the comment letter drafted by FAST Planning asks that the EPA issue what is called a "Protective Finding" to eliminate the possibility of a conformity freeze and sanctions. The EPA does not appear motivated at this time to issue a Protective Finding for our community. The EPA could eliminate the conformity freeze by simply approving the emissions budgets that the State submitted, and we can show with our test results that we can meet those budgets. Mr. Fox explained that a list of all the CMAQ-funded projects from past years was also included in the letter. Mr. Fox noted that the EPA is also proposing to lower the health-based emission standards for PM2.5.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To advance the comment letter to the Policy Board [regarding the EPA's partial disapproval of the State Implementation Plan for the PM2.5 Serious Non-Attainment Area]. (Schacher/Theurich).

Discussion: Ms. Schacher thanked Mr. Fox for diving into this very complicated issue that has serious repercussions she did not think most people were aware of. Ms. Schacher noted a correction in the letter on the fourth bullet down.

Mr. Czarnecki commented that from the State's perspective getting as many comments as possible from the community to EPA during this public comment period is very advantageous, and it is the strategy that the State of Alaska is actively pushing towards. Mr. Czarnecki commented that he thinks Mr. Fox did a fantastic job articulating the concerns of FAST Planning in this comment letter and he is fully supportive of it. Mr. Czarnecki commented that as leaders in the community, getting the word out for anybody to express their views to the EPA and to make comments on this, would be important and helpful for the community to get their viewpoint on the administrative record. Mr. Czarnecki explained that there will be a couple of different options for comments. He explained that the EPA will be in Fairbanks to hold an in-person public hearing on this and take verbal comments. They have not yet set a date, but it will probably be sometime in early March. Mr. Czarnecki commented that he will notify Mr. Fox when that date comes out.

Mr. Spillman stated that he knew the Borough Assembly was aware of this and had it on an upcoming agenda and asked Mr. Fox if the two cities were tracking this too.

Mr. Fox explained that the two city Mayors have been made aware of the Federal Register Notice at our last meeting and are very upset about this. Mr. Fox explained that he did not know if they have any proposed resolutions or comment letters that they were preparing. Mr. Fox explained that they had not indicated that to him at this time. Mr. Fox explained that there is an Air Pollution Control Commission Meeting at the Borough tonight (February 1, 2023) and he intends to be present and provide public testimony to let them know what our perspective is and that our Draft Air Quality Conformity Analysis is out for public comment. Mr. Fox explained that the Commission may be advancing something to the Assembly.

Mr. Wallace commented that if there is a resolution that FAST Planning would like to see the North Pole City Council pass, and if he could send some sort of a draft or text for that, they can support that.

Mr. Fox explained that he would work with Mr. Wallace offline on that.

Mr. Pristash asked Mr. Fox if he could send that draft resolution to him for Fairbanks City Council consideration, he would appreciate it.

Ms. Schacher asked Mr. Fox if there had been a presentation to the Fairbanks Chamber Transportation Committee on this issue.

Mr. Fox explained that Mr. Czarnecki was giving a presentation to the Chamber Transportation Committee on February 9, 2023, and he would share the FAST Planning draft comment letter with them.

Mr. Hoza asked Mr. Fox whether there were advertisements to get the community involved or anything of that sort planned, or if that was even allowed.

Mr. Hoza commented that he knew that could go either way. It always can.

Mr. Hoza commented that, for the most part, he thought that if people understand that this is a chance for us to keep moving forward, they might actually make comments.

Mr. Czarnecki commented that there is absolutely nothing wrong with advertising and trying to get the word out to the community and doing it through whatever means folks have at their disposal. Mr. Czarnecki commented that if you wanted

to do Facebook ads, or a tv or radio spot, that is all fine. Mr. Czarnecki explained that the State of Alaska is not currently doing any of that because their advertising budget comes from federal grants from the EPA, so they kind of get crosswise if they use their grant funding that way. Mr. Czarnecki commented that they are doing a lot of community outreach in a grassroots effort trying get in front of the Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce, Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation, the Borough Assembly, FAST Planning, and all of these places. Mr. Czarnecki explained that what they are doing is trying to ask those community leaders to spread the word and get it out by whatever means possible.

Mr. Hoza asked if there was anything that Mr. Czarnecki had that could be packaged that was short and sweet and could be sent out. Mr. Hoza stated that if there was anything of that nature, he would not mind a copy of that and maybe he could help in some way.

Mr. Czarnecki explained that he had some PowerPoint presentations that he could definitely share, because they will be public material for these different venues that they were going in front of. Mr. Czarnecki explained that the State's actual comments are still being developed so it would be a little bit of time before they could release any of those publicly.

Mr. Czarnecki commented that he was seeing in the comments that a one-page information sheet would be helpful so that is something that could be developed.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

b. **Long & Short Range Transit Plan & Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (Action Item)**

• ***Recommendation to Policy Board on any Revisions and Approval of Scope of Services for Plan Updates***

Mr. Fox explained that a Scope of Services has been put together for both the Long & Short Range Transit Plan and Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan. Mr. Fox introduced Corey DiRutigliano to provide a brief overview of both plan updates.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To recommend that the Policy Board approve the two scopes of services [for the Transit Plan updates]. (Chapman/Schacher).

Discussion: Mr. Spillman stated that population densities were something to consider. Mr. Spillman explained that since that 2013 plan, they have had a lot of requests over the years, and everyone would love if they had a transit line that went from their home to their place of employment. Mr. Spillman commented that his suggestion would be to specifically call out looking at the densities in this and areas where it is feasible and not feasible based on population densities.

Mr. DiRutigliano commented that on demand or micro transit is a trend where people are using Ubers and Lyfts, where you can identify your point of origin and destination, as well as minibuses such as VanTran to provide transit opportunities to sparsely populated areas and not just looking at fixed route, high capacity busses.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

- c. **Airport Way West Bicycle/Pedestrian Facility Project Increase (Action Item)**
• **Consideration of Approving a Construction Phase Increase of \$139,292**
Mr. Fox explained that an increase \$139,292 has been requested for the construction phase of the Airport Way West Bicycle/Pedestrian Facility Project. Mr. Fox explained that the reason for the increase is construction overruns from last fall and the Indirect Cost Allocation Plan rate increased. Mr. Fox explained that he visited with Project Control at DOT to find out if there were any offset funds available. Mr. Fox explained that funds were found in the Design Phase, so they only need \$44,007 which FAST Planning has sufficient offset funds to cover.
Public Comment: No public comment.
Motion: To approve the Airport Way West Bicycle/Pedestrian Facility construction phase increase in the amount of \$44,007 using offset funds. (Schacher/Theurich).
Discussion: No discussion.
Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.
- d. **College Road Bus Pullouts Project Increase (Action Item)**
• **Consideration of Approving a Construction Phase Increase of \$100,000**
Mr. Fox explained that there is a need for an additional \$100,000 to close out this project due to cost overruns for traffic control, unclassified excavation, and asphalt on pullouts and driveways. Mr. Fox explained that he had created three different options for funding this increase and adding the FAST Improvement Program.
Public Comment: No public comment.
Motion: To approve the requested \$100,000 for College Road Bus Pullouts Project utilizing offsets or Advance Construction funding. (Spillman/Schacher).
Discussion: Mr. Spillman commented that it was vague about the funding source, and thought Ms. Schacher was right that it was a good option. Mr. Spillman commented that did not like Option A, Option B is an okay option but again it has ripple effects, so he thought Option C was the best one.
Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.
- e. **FAST Improvement Program (Action Item)**
• **Recommendation to Policy Board on FFY2023 and FFY2027 Funding Proposals**
Mr. Fox explained that the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee authored a letter to ask the Technical Committee and Policy Board to consider providing funding for the FAST Improvement Program in FFY27. The Committee hoped that the Technical Committee and Policy Board would take another look at this and potentially pass a motion to include it in the TIP. Mr. Fox explained that the second issue was the shortfall in the FAST Improvement Program for this coming summer of \$181,500 and the option of removing one of the roadways in the Aztec Subdivision to cover that.
Ms. Schacher explained that the DOT estimate has not changed, but they wracked their brains on how to make this work. Ms. Schacher explained that on this size project, it is not that much money. Ms. Schacher explained that they do not have the option of crossing their fingers and hoping that the bid comes in low. Ms. Schacher explained that they do have the funding in the design phase of this

project to cover the cost increase, but it would limit their future design work. Ms. Schacher explained that they can obligate the estimate that they have and approve the bid if we approve the transfer of funding from the design phase.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To fund the [\$181,500] increase for [the FAST Improvement Program] 2023 construction phase with existing design phase funding. (Schacher/Theurich).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

Motion: To recommend to the Policy Board to consider the BPAC's request for the FAST Improvement Program [for FFY2027 construction funding] in future TIP Amendments. (Schacher/Theurich).

Discussion: Ms. Schacher commented that she has spoken passionately about the importance of this program because it delivers fast, and this program can serve as something that can be scaled up or scaled down with any funding shortfalls or availability. Ms. Schacher stated that we have a lot of time to figure out what is going to happen in 2027.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

9. Other Issues

No other issues.

10. Informational Items

a. 2020 Census Update – Fairbanks Area Urbanized Area Boundary Change

Mr. Fox explained the Urbanized Area boundary change for the Fairbanks area with the recent 2020 Census update.

b. Obligations and Offsets

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

11. Technical Committee Member Comments

- Ms. Schacher commented that if anyone has any project ideas for the Carbon Reduction Program, they are working on them and will help anyone if they need it.
- Ms. Schacher commented that the second thing is that they have had several bid openings in the last two to three months, and it is not looking great in the construction bidding climate with respect to our cost estimates. Ms. Schacher commented that there is a number of these projects that are very specialized, but it is clear to us that what we started seeing with the significant increase in the cost of fuel last year, that it is catching up to the Contractors now. Ms. Schacher commented that she just wanted to give everyone a heads up that is what they are seeing, and it does not look like it is going to get any better in the foreseeable future.

12. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn: (Spillman/Chapman). The meeting adjourned at 2:02 p.m. The next Technical Committee meeting is Wednesday, March 1, 2023.

Approved: J Fox Date: 3/1/2023
Jackson Fox, Chair
FAST Planning Technical Committee