



FAST POLICY BOARD

Meeting Minutes

April 17, 2024 • 12:00 – 2:00 P.M.

FAST Planning Office, KeyBank Building, 100 Cushman Street, Suite 215, Fairbanks, AK

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

Zoom Meeting Telephone Number: 1 (253) 215-8782 Meeting ID: 820-5927-0980

1. Call to Order

Mayor Bryce Ward, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

2. Introduction of Members and Attendees

Attendee	Representative Organization
*Bryce Ward, Chair	Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough
*Jerry Cleworth, Vice Chair	Fairbanks City Council
*Scott Crass	FNSB Assembly
*Joe Kemp	Director, DOT&PF Northern Region
*Jason Olds (absent)	Director, DEC Air Quality
*David Pruhs	Mayor, City of Fairbanks
*Michael Welch	Mayor, City of North Pole
**Jackson Fox	FAST Planning
**Olivia Lunsford	FAST Planning
**Corey DiRutigliano	FAST Planning
**Deborah Todd	FAST Planning
**Randi Bailey	DOT&PF Planning
**Don Galligan	FNSB Community Planning
+Kellen Spillman	FNSB Community Planning
+Danny Wallace	City of North Pole
Jack Barnwell	Fairbanks Daily News-Miner
Julie Jenkin	FHWA
Nathan Belz	UAF
Elise Blocker	Participant
Katherine Keith	DOT&PF Commissioner's Office

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

3. Approval of the April 17, 2024 Agenda

Motion: To approve the April 17, 2024 Agenda. (Welch/Crass).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

4. Approval of the March 27, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the March 27, 2024 Meeting Minutes. (Welch/Crass).

Discussion: Mr. Cleworth noted a correction at the top of Page 8.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

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

- 🗳️ FAST Planning staff held a kickoff meeting with Alaska DOT&PF and Borough staff for the FFY2025-26 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). This document describes the required and supplemental planning efforts that staff will be working on over the next two years. Examples of required planning efforts include updates to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The UPWP must be adopted by September 30, 2024.
- 🗳️ An Interagency Consultation (IAC) was held for the Fairbanks North Star Borough Serious PM2.5 Area State Implementation Plan (SIP) 2024 Amendment and the newly proposed Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets which are more stringent than previous years.
- 🗳️ Mr. Fox met with Dr. Wight of UAF to discuss electric vehicle usage in Fairbanks and charging station needs on UAF campus.
- 🗳️ Mr. Fox drafted a Letter of Support for the Alaska DOT&PF Grant Application from the US DOT for the Prioritization Process Pilot Program (PPPP).
- 🗳️ FAST Planning signed IRS Tax Form 990 which was submitted to the IRS by Alliance CPAs.
- 🗳️ FAST Planning signed Lease Amendment #4 extending the office lease for three years.
- 🗳️ Mr. Fox provided a presentation at the Associated General Contractor's Spring Agency Day to update local contractors on the implications of the Air Quality Conformity Freeze and other Federal actions related to the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).
- 🗳️ Mr. Fox submitted the UPWP 1st Quarter Report to the Alaska DOT&PF.
- 🗳️ Ms. Lunsford initiated the 2024 Bike Friendly FBX Sponsorship Program which has received \$3450 in donations to date for the 2024 Bikeways Map. This will fund twice the amount of maps printed last year.
- 🗳️ Mr. Fox, Anchorage MPO staff, and MatSu MPO staff met with FHWA staff on coordination of recent STIP changes with their respective TIPs and redemonstration of fiscal constraint in the STIP.
- 🗳️ At the **April 3, 2024**, meeting, the **Technical Committee:**
 - 🗳️ Recommended unanimous approval of the Letter of Support for the Alaska DOT&PF Grant Application for the PPPP.

- At the **February 29, 2024**, Meeting, the **Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee**:

- Recommended approval of the Alaska Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment comment letter.

6. Public Comment Period (Non-Action Items)

- No public comment.

7. Old Business

a. Comment Letter on Alaska DOT&PF Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment (Action Item)

- Consideration of Approving Comment Letter from Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (Agenda Item Postponed from March 27, 2024 Policy Board Meeting)**

Mr. Fox explained that the comment letter drafted regarding the Alaska DOT&PF Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment was recommended for approval by both the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee and the Technical Committee.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To adopt the comment letter to the Alaska DOT&PF for the Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment. (Crass/Welch).

Discussion: Mr. Crass commented that reviewing the area, the thing that jumped out at him was the scope of College and Geist Road was not complete and he appreciated them putting this forward.

Mayor Welch commented that one of the things North Pole has problems with is ATVs running up and down the road and sidewalks. Most of these are teenagers with no driver's license. Mayor Welch observed someone coming through the City of North Pole traffic circle going in excess of 50 mph. Mayor Welch asked Mayor Pruhs what the City of Fairbanks Police did to keep that from happening.

Mayor Pruhs commented that in the greater Fairbanks area their biggest problem was four-wheelers and not snowmachines.

Mr. Cleworth asked Mr. Fox what the FHWA was hoping to accomplish with all the reports.

Mr. Fox explained that the current Transportation Bill encouraged States to look at all their vulnerable road user fatalities and serious injuries and develop a plan to address their safety.

Mr. Cleworth asked if the State had to do other reports in addition to this one.

Mr. Fox explained that another report the State was required to do was to develop a Carbon Reduction Strategy. That plan was developed and submitted

on November 15, 2023. There was coordination with MPOs when developing the plan but there was no public comment opportunity.

Mr. Cleworth asked if DOT did that internally or had a consultant do that plan.

Mr. Fox explained that both planning efforts used consultant teams, but it was internally led.

Mr. Cleworth asked if this was the first time they had done this since this law was passed.

Mr. Fox responded that it was.

Mr. Cleworth commented that he tried to follow through with this and did not know how many read it from cover to cover but on Page 59 it talked about a Justice 40 initiative.

Mr. Fox explained that President Biden issued an Executive Order for that.

Mr. Cleworth commented that when they talked about climate change, etc., he thought they were really trying to get some good solid data to make some decisions on whether road maintenance is bad, or the design is inadequate and causing problems. Mr. Cleworth commented that it just seemed like a lot of bureaucratise that the State had deal with. Mr. Cleworth asked if there was a list of contacts included in the letter.

Mr. Fox commented that somewhere in the letter there was a list of stakeholders.

Mr. Cleworth commented that if he were trying to get input on that he would go to DOT Engineering or City of Fairbanks Engineering and they were not listed. Mr. Cleworth commented that he thought they were more important than anything else that was listed in the letter. Mr. Cleworth thought Golden Heart Parking should be included. Mr. Cleworth commented that Borough Planning should also be included. Mr. Cleworth thought there were some oversights. Mr. Cleworth commented that the data they should look at not only drugs and alcohol but if it is a problem that could be fixed. It would be nice if the data could be differentiated or extrapolated out of that.

Amendment to the Motion: If they are not already in the Addendum, to add Golden Heart Parking, Borough Planning, DOT&PF Engineering, and City of Fairbanks Engineering. (Cleworth/Welch).

Mr. Crass asked if they could explain how Golden Heart Parking could be involved in the Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee input as they would not be vulnerable users because they would be representing people in vehicles.

Mr. Cleworth commented that they do more than just provide parking. They are the Downtown Ambassadors for the City of Fairbanks. Very similar to the Downtown Association, they have a Board that makes recommendations to the City of Fairbanks.

Mayor Pruhs commented that they also provide a lot of free bicycle parking in the parking garage at events such as the Midnight Sun Festival and Golden Days events.

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

Discussion: **Mayor Ward** asked if there was a definition of what a “high risk area” was.

Mr. Kemp asked Mr. Fox if the Technical Committee was coordinated with on this Safety Assessment.

Mr. Fox explained that no presentation occurred at the Technical Committee meeting. There was a call where they looked at some of the findings, but the changes requested were not included in the plan.

Mr. Kemp commented that he felt that for Comment #4 it was starting to feel like we were beating a dead horse with the comment about the Geist Road bridge replacement, and they were still working through it. Mr. Kemp thought they should be a little bit vaguer in Comments #5 and #6. Mr. Kemp commented that the way it is worded assumed that the DOT was negligent, and they were not. Mr. Kemp commented that the way we were presenting our comments could be presented a little differently, so they were not quite so crass, with no pun intended to Mr. Crass.

Mr. Crass commented that as Mayor Pruhs and Mayor Welch were both talking about issues regarding crash data versus the issues of data we have on hand, and he was wondering how that data was collected.

Mr. Fox commented that he believed that DOT relied on the Statewide Crash Database and the data is supplied by the City Police Departments, Alaska State Troopers, and emergency personnel. Typically, the crash data is a couple of years old by the time we see it in the database. Mr. Fox commented that they have heard through Nathan Belz of UAF that some of the data is provided by the Alaska Trauma Registry. Mr. Fox explained that there are different data sources that the BPAC thought would be useful to get a more comprehensive report about what might be occurring.

Mr. Kemp commented that the crash data was usually unreliably late. If people get in an accident and the cops are not called, then they have no record of it. If there is no police report, then they do not know about it. It is hard to ensure that they are getting the right data to design their infrastructure.

Mayor Ward commented that when he looked at the coordination efforts and planning efforts, they were really focused on the high-risk areas. Mayor Ward commented that all things considered Fairbanks seems to be doing pretty well comparatively speaking. On page 54, Fairbanks is #5 on the list and 85 percent of the fatalities and serious injuries that have occurred are above our threshold.

Mayor Ward commented that he thinks that if there are coordinated efforts that need to be done, the majority of fatalities they were looking at were in Anchorage and MatSu. He said that if you were looking at funding and looking at the data, most of the funding would go to Anchorage and MatSu. Mayor Ward added that there still needs to be better coordination with Fairbanks. Mayor Ward commented that if we are going to be providing comments as an organization, he felt it was appropriate that the Executive Director be commenting and not the various committees. Mayor Ward said that his concern is that if we are providing comments, it probably should be filtered through our Executive Director and the approval of the Board not the Committee Chair. No offense to any of the Committee Chairs. In general, our comments should come through the Executive Director. Mayor Ward commented that he does not see any harm in sending the letter.

Mr. Cleworth commented that he shared Mr. Kemp's concerns about numbers 5 and 6. Mr. Cleworth asked if this was time sensitive.

Mr. Fox said it was not time sensitive.

Mr. Cleworth asked Mr. Kemp if he would like more time to review the letter.

Mr. Kemp commented that he thought the comments in the letter were valid. It is something that Statewide just started doing. He just wanted to bring to light that they were saying these things and correct it going forward.

Amendment to the Motion: To change "known deficiencies" to "possible deficiencies" [on Page 2 of letter, Comment #6]. (Cleworth/Welch).

Discussion: Mr. Crass commented that he thought the deficiencies that were addressed were known but if it helped the letter get through, he was okay with it.

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

Vote on Original Motion as Amended. None opposed. Approved.

Amended Motion: To adopt the comment letter to the Alaska DOT&PF for the Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment; if they are not already in the Addendum, to add Golden Heart Parking, Borough Planning, DOT&PF Engineering, and City of Fairbanks Engineering; and change "known deficiencies" to "possible deficiencies" [on Page 2 of letter, Comment #6].

**b. FFY2024-27 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)
Partial Approval**

Review of Approved Elements of the STIP, Elements Excluded from Approval, and Updated Conditions for STIP Amendment Approval

Mr. Fox provided a brief update on the partial approval of the FFY2024-27 STIP included in the meeting packet.

Mr. Kemp commented that in the future it might be more appropriate to have the DOT show up and talk to the Policy Board to provide a more comprehensive update about what was going on with the STIP since they were more familiar with what was going on and dealt with it on a daily basis.

8. New Business

a. Letter of Support for Alaska DOT&PF Grant Application for Prioritization Process Pilot Program (PPPP) (Action Item)

Mr. Fox explained that there is a U.S. DOT Discretionary Grant opportunity open to large organizations across the country. The DOT&PF intends to apply for this grant to update their project scoring process, project prioritization, and public engagement. He added that this was timely since many public comments received by DOT&PF on the Draft STIP asked for more public input in the process. FAST Planning staff would also love to participate in this and be part of that process for our community.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To forward the letter of support for the Alaska DOT Grant Application for the PPPP [Prioritization Process Pilot Program]. (Welch/Crass).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

9. Informational Items

a. Obligations and Offsets

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

10. Other Issues

No other issues.

11. Policy Board Member Comments

- ☞ Mr. Cleworth commented that he serves on a local bank board, and they have a compliance committee with a cheat sheet for all the rules and regulations the Board was under. There are over 2,000 pages of the rules. It is physically impossible for banks to be in compliance with all that, so they have to contract that out to other agencies. Mr. Cleworth commented that he thought about the rules that FHWA puts on the State and thought that, at a local level, we should write a letter to them as well. Mr. Cleworth commented that we spend so much time being in compliance that could actually be spent on projects.
- ☞ Mayor Pruhs commented that it was a good meeting.
- ☞ Mr. Crass told everyone to have a wonderful spring.
- ☞ Mayor Welch commented that he had solicited speed studies in the City of North Pole. In May, they will be deploying five radar signs. Mayor Welch commented that they have about \$15,000 into those signs. Two of the signs will go on St. Nicholas Drive near Barbara Lee Lane, one in each direction. Two

signs will go on Santa Claus Lane somewhere close to Wells Fargo. Those signs will flash at you when you go above the speed limit. On Barbara Lee Lane they had people that were averaging speeds as fast as 63 mph. The portion on Santa Claus Lane has people going as fast as 42 mph in a 25-mph zone. They are not necessarily doing this for enforcement purposes, but just to let people see their speeds. The mobile signs will be moved around every few months. Mayor Welch commented that he was happy to see that they were finally going to do this before he left office.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at **1:36 p.m.** The next Policy Board Meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, May 15, 2024.**

Approved:  _____ Date: 5-15-24
Mayor Bryce Ward, Chair
FAST Planning Policy Board