



FAST POLICY BOARD

Meeting Minutes

July 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: 870-8901-4872

1. Call to Order

Mayor Bryce Ward, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:00 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
*Chandra Clack	Mayor, City of North Pole
*Scott Crass	FNSB Assembly
*Joe Kemp	Director, DOT&PF Northern Region
*Jason Olds	Director, DEC Air Quality
*David Pruhs	Mayor, City of Fairbanks
**Jackson Fox	FAST Planning
**Olivia Lunsford	FAST Planning
**Corey DiRutigliano	FAST Planning
**Randi Bailey	DOT&PF Planning
**Don Galligan	FNSB Community Planning
+Kellen Spillman	FNSB Community Planning
+Brett Nelson	DOT&PF Planning
Ben White	DOT&PF Planning
Judy Chapman	DOT&PF Planning
Al Beck	DOT&PF Preconstruction
Adam Moser	DOT&PF Program Development
Kim Sollien	MatSu MPO (MVP)
Jack Barnwell	Fairbanks Daily News-Miner
Patrick Gilchrist	KTVF
Marie Heidemann	FHWA
Sarah Schacher	Michael Baker
Elise Blocker	RESPEC
Evee Rynish	Participant

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

3. Approval of the July 17, 2024 Agenda

Motion: To approve the July 17, 2024 Agenda. (Crass/Kemp).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

4. Approval of the June 19, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the June 19, 2024 Meeting Minutes as presented. (Crass/Clack).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

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

- Mr. Fox held a coordination meeting with the DOT Acting Preconstruction Engineer, Al Beck, and Randi Bailey, DOT Planning, to look at the status of all of the projects within the Metropolitan Planning Area boundary. These meetings will be held monthly on the last week of each month prior to the Technical Committee Meeting.
- Mr. Fox had a meeting with the Alaska Bowl Company on a proposed new non-motorized project nomination for Old Airport Way. This nomination was in consideration of the fact that there are two hotels along Old Airport Way and no safe facility for pedestrians to walk to and from Fred Meyer and other businesses in the area. They are looking to have a widened shoulder on that road.
- The third Steering Committee Meeting for the Electric Vehicle Plan was held. The Needs Analysis was reviewed. The next step will be to develop a prioritized list of locations for charging stations.
- Mr. Fox drafted a comment letter for the Draft FFY2024-27 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program Amendment #1. The Amendment was posted online after the last Technical Committee Meeting.
- Mr. Fox attended the ribbon cutting for the new MACS Transit Maintenance Facility on south Lathrop.
- Bike Valet events were held at the Midnight Sun Festival as well as every Thursday at Music in the Garden at UAF Botanical Gardens.
- The public comment period closed for the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and revisions were made to the document based on comments received. The UPWP is up for adoption under Item 8a of the agenda.
- Mr. Fox and the new MatSu MPO Director met with the Alaska Railroad Corporation. They are looking at a potential split in 5307 Transit Funding between the Railroad and our respective transit agencies. Mr. Fox will meet with MACS Transit and Mayor Ward to discuss this.
- At the **July 3, 2024** meeting, the Technical Committee recommended approval of the Unified Planning Work Program as revised.

6. Updates from Alaska DOT&PF on Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

- Mr. White commented that they have seen the draft comments from FAST and the other MPOs and appreciated the work that went into putting those together. DOT wanted to update everyone that Draft STIP Amendment #1 has been published and is out for public comment. It is posted on the DOT website. Either he, the DOT&PF Planning Section, or Jackson Fox can provide links for them to comment on the web portal. The public comment deadline is August 5, 2024.

7. Public Comment Period (Non-Action Items)

- **Evee Rynish**: I live in Fairbanks and I am a year-round bike commuter. How would you get to work if you suddenly found yourself without a car? As a person who does not own a car, I commute by bike. As a daily commuter, I have ridden over 1000 miles on Fairbanks roads, bike paths, and sidewalks since April of this year. While riding, it is tough to not notice where the gaps are in the bicycling infrastructure. What concepts exist to help fix these?

Complete Streets is an approach to designing and building streets to enable safe access for ALL users. All meaning motorists, transit riders, AND bicycles and pedestrians.

Several roads have been designed with these concepts in mind but fall short of being "complete" Take College Road for example. It has wide sidewalks that are designated for use as a bike path, therefore it accounts for travel of everyone, right? Wide roads with long sight lines encourage drivers to go faster. How often do you see people exceeding the speed limit on College? Speed is the biggest factor in bicycle and pedestrian fatalities, with an 85% chance of fatal accident at 40 miles per hour. High speeds and frequent driveway crossings make College Road a less desirable choice for commuting by bike. Although I work off of College Road, I personally take the Johansen path across town, University to College, then cut back about a half mile on College to avoid riding 4 miles on College Road.

Shifting to the downtown business district, we have Cushman Street. If you were on a bike, where would you ride? If you picked the sidewalk, you would be breaking the law. Per state law- Section 13AAC 02.400 "Riding bicycles on roadways and bicycle paths" Section D: 'No person may ride a bicycle upon a sidewalk in a business district or where prohibited by an official traffic control device.' This leaves bicyclists to ride in the lane of traffic, with no visual indication to drivers, this is where bikes are supposed to be. This is a challenge cyclists face; you can see how the lack of infrastructure dissuades folks from riding downtown. Cushman is one example. You could also look at Barnett, Cowles, or Lacey streets and find the same visual example. Sidewalks that are designed for pedestrians,

and no clear visual information for bicyclists or drivers on where bicyclists are supposed to ride.

What keeps a city strong? Is it single use transportation systems? Or a system that drives spread and sprawl so you can only rely on a car? Strong Towns is another platform and strategy catching on around the nation. This platform looks at the impacts on a city from having complete streets.

What helps drive, no pun intended, folks to small businesses, say in the downtown core of Fairbanks? Available parking spaces for cars? Studies have shown more car parking actually hurts small businesses. Cities, or blocks in a city, with better walkability or bike infrastructure thrive in comparison. A person walking or riding by is significantly more likely to spontaneously drop in. Folks walking or riding are generally moving at a slower speed, giving more time for a window display to catch someone's eye. Stopping to shop while riding is simple compared to driving. Thinking about parking, did you know you can fit 8-12 bikes in a single car parking spot? Wouldn't you want 8 times the number of potential customers walking by your store front? And, as policy makers, if we are increasing spending potential by 8 times, what could that mean for your jurisdiction's bottom line? Could downtown begin to thrive again if it was connected to the existing cycling infrastructure? Although putting bike infrastructure into downtown might seem like a gamble, there are examples of this working here in Fairbanks.

FAST Planning has put together the Bike Friendly Fairbanks map. One of the features enjoyed by local riders are the bike friendly businesses. These owners know bikes have impact. They host repair kits and offer incentives for folks who bike to their shop. There has been a level of relief in knowing there are repair kits around town, in safe locations, and accessible for the majority of the day with each person I have talked to about the map. HooDoo and Black Spruce are bike friendly business examples. They each host a repair kit and have safe bike parking available. Bankstown Bike and Ski has put the pieces together of safe infrastructure, safe parking, ability to fix a bike, and a social activity to create the "Friday Ride", bringing an average of 40 people by bike every Friday to these locations. Safe infrastructure promotes ridership, which in turn leads to positive economic impacts. Though commuting by bike is not the norm, infrastructure needed for bike commuters requires extra attention. This infrastructure is one way to build Fairbanks stronger. Complete Streets are designed to include bicyclists and pedestrians in the infrastructure. Strong Towns encourages the building of complete streets as an economic driver of cities. HooDoo and Black Spruce are excellent examples of bike infrastructure working for businesses.

Fairbanks can be a strong town, where no car is no problem. You have the power and influence to make it happen. Thank you.

8. Old Business

a. Draft FFY2025-26 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) (Action Item)

- **Opportunity for Continued Discussion on Draft UPWP Released for Public Comment May 19 to June 19, 2024**

Mr. Fox explained that the UPWP was released for 30-day public comment and 12 comments were received and revisions were incorporated in the document.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To approve the amended UPWP [FFY2025-26 Unified Planning Work Program] as presented. (Crass/Olds).

Discussion: **Mr. Cleworth** commented that one concern the City of Fairbanks has is Task 300(b), the Complete Streets Prioritization Plan. The prioritization part is what we have a concern with. At the last meeting, Mr. Fox gave everyone copies of the Complete Streets Policy. This is a policy we adopted back in 2015. When the City has to do a project, they have to follow the Complete Streets format. It is five pages long, but it also has a nine-page addendum checklist that has to be followed for every project. Mr. Cleworth read an excerpt from the Policy that states "Considerations in regard to all modes and all users shall be documented in the project development process scoping documents." It is a long process that we have to go through. Mr. Cleworth commented that their concern is the prioritization plan. Mr. Cleworth read a letter that the City Engineer wrote: "The prioritization of projects is first done through scoring by the Technical Committee. The Complete Streets Prioritization Plan is redundant. As applicable, Complete Street features are considered during design. Selecting the Complete Street features to incorporate into the project is best done by the engineers and design team working on the project during the design phase. Each project has its own setting lending it to certain complete street features that can be applied for the maximum benefit and efficiently maintained. Recommend you delete the development of a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan on Page 14." Mr. Cleworth commented that he did not know where their Mayor was today but he was concerned about that too.

Amendment to the Motion: On Task 300(b) eliminate verbiage regarding the [Complete Streets] Prioritization Plan – "development of a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan...", "...but has not developed a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan.", and "Following updates and amendments to this policy, FAST Planning will develop a Complete Streets Prioritization plan utilizing existing staff resources at FAST Planning, Alaska DOT&PF, and Fairbanks North Star Borough. The work on

the Plan will largely be accomplished in late FFY2024 and early FFY2025.”
(Cleworth/Kemp).

Discussion: **Mr. Cleworth** commented that there is another concern that in utilizing the resources, FAST Planning would be Alaska DOT and the Fairbanks North Star Borough, and City of Fairbanks are not included. He does not know if there are funding limitations but since two of them have an engineering department, to him that is a major oversight. He would have to agree with Mr. Pristash that it is redundant. The Complete Streets Project is very comprehensive and for every project we have to look at all facets of transportation. It is already on the books, so he does not know why we are going any farther than that. It is not mandated in the Federal law. It says, “you may consider these things” and they give you a list of many.

Mr. Kemp commented that he thinks the Department, the City, and the Borough struggle with a lot of redundancy and doing things over and over again because it is either intentionally or unintentionally mandated, we go through things more than once or in different ways that can hinder the project progress in a timely manner. In reading through this, he thinks this is probably one of those things where if we are already doing the Complete Streets Development Plan, either through the City or through the Department, why are we adding it again here and then what benefit does that get us if we do add it here? We are not skirting the system. We are not doing anything that we should not be doing. We are studying all that stuff. It would just add another gate to get through. We already struggle to try to get simple projects out the door in a timely manner. This is just one small thing in many things that we do to ourselves, and others do to us, to make those timelines on those projects get extended even more. Mr. Kemp commented that he is very sensitive to things that keep putting more hurdles in our way.

Mr. Crass asked if this would put us in any danger of being out of compliance? Are we going to face issues with our Federal partners if we adopt this amendment?

Mr. Fox responded that the simple answer is “yes.” Development of a Complete Streets Policy and Prioritization Plan, and there are some other alternatives as Mr. Cleworth stated, is a new Federal planning requirement underneath the Infrastructure Bill for MPOs. Every MPO in the nation has to meet this requirement. We already have a Complete Streets Policy, but we do not have a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan in place. There are three other alternatives to doing a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan. One is developing a plan and policy that supports transit-oriented development. We do not have enough ridership on MACS Transit to look at land use and zoning changes to try to steer development for transit. Another alternative is regional and mega-regional planning efforts to

address travel demands and capacity constraints, which means congestion, through alternatives to highway use. An example provided is inner-city passenger rail. This is typically intended for communities that are over a million in population. And the last alternative is developing a new non-motorized transportation plan. This is something we adopted in 2021. We do not plan on updating that until closer to 2030. The requirement is that we use 2.5 percent of our planning funds, which means 2.5 percent of our staff time working on Complete Streets initiatives. Of the list that is provided in the Infrastructure Bill of what is eligible and what we are required to spend this 2.5 percent of our money and our time on, the only two things that make sense are the update to the Complete Streets Policy and development of a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan. Mr. Fox explained that his intent for the Complete Streets Prioritization Plan is to develop and utilize in-house staff to prepare a short and concise plan simply identifying streets in Fairbanks and North Pole that would be good opportunities to take a Complete Streets look at. One example would be Barnette Street in downtown Fairbanks because there is adequate right-of-way and additional travel lanes that are not necessarily needed for that roadway. Mr. Fox explained that if we develop a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan and that street comes up as the #1 project in the Plan, it gives it a better opportunity to get funding in our TIP through FAST Planning. Also, if it is in a Plan, you can use that Plan to say that this is the #1 project in our Complete Streets Prioritization Plan, and you can apply for U.S. DOT Discretionary Grants. I do not see any reason why we would not do this, but I fear that if you remove this from that section of our UPWP we are basically showing that we do not intend to comply with the new Federal planning requirement. We have options of things that we can pick. What we wrote there would meet the requirement. We already have it on our timesheets. We have had it there for a few months now. We have a new category for any time we are working on Complete Streets stuff. We have to track every hour, and every dollar spent on that, so that we meet this 2.5 percent threshold. Just by updating this Complete Streets Policy, we will not be able to spend enough time and money to meet that requirement. You can request to opt out of this requirement. That requires approval from the Secretary of Transportation, Pete Buttigieg. To be able to opt out, you must show that you have a Complete Streets Policy in place, and you have developed a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan. We have not done the latter yet. Mr. Fox commented that he wanted to raise his concern that the UPWP is a required plan for the Federal program and this particular task is one of those new Federal planning requirements that we are trying to meet.

Mr. Crass commented that it outlines the people who are going to roll the boulder down the hill as FAST Planning, DOT&PF, and the Borough. A representative from the City Council mentioned concern that they were not listed

as a resource. Did that come up at all in developing this document? Who had the resources to work on this?

Mr. Fox commented that he believed, for this section, it would be very appropriate to add both cities.

Mr. Crass commented that given what Mr. Fox just said, he cannot support this. He did not want to find us biting the hand that feeds us and being out of compliance with our Federal partners so he would recommend voting this down. He would be interested in an amendment. He would be open to having the cities added to that line of resources.

Mr. Olds commented that he was also sensitive to redundant requirements. It seems like there may be some sort of middle ground or some other language through amendment. If we consider the edits proposed by Mr. Cleworth that we could add in that stop short of adding a redundant requirement but makes it clear of our intentions to follow the Complete Streets Analysis that is done by either municipal or state entities and consider those in making recommendations through this Policy Board. Something that if we do fall short of that requirement, our intentions are made clear. It may not be that we are adding a full prioritization plan. If that is indeed the hard stop risk that we face, he wondered if we could further adopt policies or make changes that would fix that if that were indeed borne out. He would propose to add further language that says, "FAST will carefully review Complete Streets Analyses done by municipalities or state, follow its policies for complete streets prioritization, and make recommendations to its Policy Board accordingly."

Mr. Cleworth commented that in reading the Federal law, it says "*Activities Described – An activity referred to in subsection (b) is an activity to increase safe and accessible options for multiple travel modes for people of all ages and abilities, if permissible under applicable State and local laws, may [not will] include adoption of a Complete Streets standards or policies; 2) Development of a Complete Streets prioritization plan that identifies a specific list of Complete Streets projects to improve the safety, mobility, or accessibility of a street; 3) Development of transportation plans*". How this would put us out of compliance when the language is very clear? I do not understand. Mr. Fox talks about Barnette Street. As we speak, the City of Fairbanks is designing a bike path for Barnette Street. This lady here talked about Cushman Street. We looked at that extensively, but we did not have the right-of-way to put one in safely. Engineering has to look at all facets that we did on Cushman Street to expand the sidewalks to make it safer for pedestrians. Then to reduce it from three lanes down to two lanes to provide a wide shoulder for snow storage and things like that. For Barnette Street, which is part of the process we are currently going through. I do not see how this puts us

out of compliance with anything. Mr. Fox said at a prior meeting that these were not mandatory items. I would ask that we put this out to City Engineering or at least postpone it and let us work on language. Mr. Cleworth commented that brought this up two meetings ago and said that he had concerns about it.

Mr. Kemp asked Mr. Fox if that was correct or if he was interpreting it differently because he wanted some clarity.

Mr. Fox commented that in the Infrastructure Bill, if you read the language, it provides a list of five things that an MPO may do to spend this required 2.5 percent of your planning funds on.

Mr. Kemp asked Mr. Fox if have to spend 2.5 percent.

Mr. Fox explained that you are required to spend 2.5 percent of your planning funds on Complete Streets activities, and they give you a list of five options. The two that made most sense for our small MPO are the first two: Updating our Complete Streets Policy and putting together a Prioritization Plan. The other three activities that you may do in lieu of those other ones, do not make sense for our small MPO. Mr. Fox explained that he is trying to put work into our staff work plan that will enable us to meet that 2.5 percent requirement. In the list it seems that the first two are the only relative ones to work on for our small MPO.

Mr. Kemp asked Mr. Fox what happens if you work on the first two and complete them and spend 1.5 percent?

Mr. Fox explained that he did not know the answer to that. One of the things that Mr. Cleworth referred to was that for the Complete Streets Policy, we have to develop and consider it. But the Board can say, "No. We do not want to have a Complete Streets Policy," at the end of that process and we have still met the requirement. So, you can spend time on this and at the end of the process if the Policy update or the Prioritization Plan is not adopted by the Board, that is still okay. You still made an attempt. So, there is no penalty for not adopting these items. But again, we are required to spend 2.5 percent of our time and money working on these Complete Streets initiatives and the first two out of the five made the most sense for us.

Mr. Olds paraphrased that we were now saying that we need to spend 2.5 percent on these things. We have these two eligible activities we can spend time on. We can do that. We do not have to adopt this. We can bring it before the Policy Board. But if we do not have it in our work plan, we may not adequately meet the need to spend that amount of time on these types of tasks.

Mr. Fox stated that was a good summary.

Mr. Kemp asked what the timeline was for completing this plan.

Mr. Fox explained that he did not believe it was stated in the Infrastructure Bill, but he thought the intent was to have these activities completed prior to the end of the Bill. There is no year or date that he found listed for a deadline.

Mr. Kemp asked Mr. Fox if it was 2.5 percent annually?

Mr. Fox stated that was correct. They had already started tracking their time for working on this.

Mr. Kemp asked if they had already started working on a plan.

Mr. Fox explained that they had not started a plan but were researching other types of plans used across the country.

Mr. Crass stated that he appreciated the staff's clarity on this that there is a requirement that this money be spent to develop this plan. He would vote against this amendment so we can allow our staff to get to work on it as they are required to do.

Mr. Cleworth asked Mr. Crass if he had looked at all five (inaudible).

Mr. Crass commented that he had not, but as Mr. Fox explained it, three of them do not meet the criteria for it.

Mr. Cleworth commented that this goes pretty deep. (inaudible) There are a lot of things that you could spend 2.5 percent of that money on. (inaudible).

Mr. Crass responded that he appreciated what Mr. Cleworth was saying but our Federal partners have outlined what we can spend this money on.

Mr. Fox reiterated the other three of the list of five options in the Complete Streets Plan and why they were eliminated. Mr. Fox commented that he thought the first two items on the list made the most sense for our size MPO.

Mr. Olds commented that to answer Mr. Cleworth's question. Yes. It would make more sense. If we could do that. I think the intent here is to find ways in which the MPO needs to spend 2.5 percent. It is not that the cities, municipalities, or states are not doing that through considering Complete Streets. It is that the MPO is going to be required, through which they have a variety of options to do that, and this is the only place where they can see spending that 2.5 percent. I am not saying that the edict makes sense that they have to spend 2.5 percent, but that seems to be clear. How they do it is the 'may.' I think that what Mr. Fox is presenting is a logical reason for "why" this. Ultimately if they produce that prioritization plan, if we feel that it adds additional undo restrictions, we have the choice not to adopt it. That is not something that we do that would further delay projects, it is something for his staff to meet this 2.5 percent threshold.

Mr. Cleworth commented that it says in here "to increase public transportation ridership." Is that correct? Am I reading it right? Some time ago, we looked at a

line item for advertising on Borough buses. Is that something that we could look at?

Mr. Fox responded that he could not answer that question.

Mr. Cleworth commented that is what they do. He did not think they were getting very creative here by just saying two. Spending government money to do another task is one reason that he ran for office here was because he finds the craziness of this that he finds a bit appalling. We are taking that off there as the only option on this list that we could do, and I think there are some other options here.

Mr. Olds added that as a representative for air quality, in his experience the redundant requirements that the Federal government may make us do and the amount of time and money that we spend those being crazy, he agreed completely. If he had the power to change that, he would be doing things differently, but he thinks we are trying to meet the need. He thinks the Federal government is pushing out a lot of money conspicuously before a Federal election. I think Mr. Fox seems to be proposing something that meets the requirement where typically there might be more guidance or time for creativity. I have no problem if we want to postpone this, but I think it is unlikely that we will see more guidance from the Federal government on this topic.

Mayor Ward commented that what we are talking about here is the work plan for the MPO over the next two years. At this point, we are not talking about any specific projects. There are ideas or concepts here which are outlined. He looks at this from a bit of a different perspective. He understands the concerns around Complete Streets. He thinks our Complete Streets Policy has tried to accommodate the concerns of Maintenance, Public Works, whether it be from the City or the State. He thinks we can address those within those respective documents but as far as outlining the work we are going to do really it is how are we going to meet that 2.5 percent threshold. What he looks at is updates to the Complete Streets Policy and doing a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan as maybe some of the cheapest options we can do within existing staff time of stuff that we are already somewhat working on. So, without starting a whole new plan or doing new documents that take hundreds of thousands of dollars, he thinks staff has found a way to meet the requirements, check the box, and give us a work plan that is sufficient to check these boxes. Taking these sections out limits and if the intent is to have a wider aperture, it is actually more restrictive. By taking this language out, we would restrict it even further as to what we can say that our staff time is working on. I think to the degree of the concerns that I have heard addressed, I think we can deal with those within our budgetary windows, but I think that a work plan as it is presented is sufficient to move forward and check the boxes as a compliant plan.

Mr. Cleworth asked if Mayor Ward thought that it would be a wiser use of money to actually do something correct which is to build the bus ridership instead of doing something that is redundant? Would that make a better use of money?

Mayor Ward responded that he would not argue that he was not an advocate of money for the transportation system. He is not sure that would be eligible for these requirements.

Mr. Cleworth commented that it is in the Federal requirements.

Mayor Ward commented that he would advocate that we add that in, not take it out.

Vote on Amendment to the Motion: Three in Favor. (Cleworth, Kemp, Pruhs). Three Opposed. (Crass, Olds, Ward). Mayor Clack was absent for the vote. Motion Failed.

Discussion:

Mr. Crass asked Mayor Pruhs about discussions to add the City of Fairbanks to the resource line and whether he would be open to a motion to do that.

Mayor Pruhs commented that he would be thankful for that.

Amendment to the Motion: Add the City of Fairbanks and City of North Pole to the existing staff resources line. (Crass/Cleworth).

Discussion: **Mr. Crass** commented that Mr. Cleworth identified that he felt that the City of Fairbanks was not there, and he was not sure if it was due to a lack of staff resources or if it was just the folks that were doing the existing work.

Mr. Kemp commented that he thought they should add the City of North Pole even though they were not here to vote.

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

Discussion:

Mr. Olds asked if there was language that would allow staff time in the work plan to focus on advertising for transit.

Mr. Fox commented that he had no problem adding that language.

Amendment to the Motion: Include language that staff may also use time to work on advertising for transit options. (Olds/Cleworth).

Discussion: **Mr. Cleworth** commented that the language that we have here has a lot of options. I think this one popped because we have discussed it before, so it is good to highlight it. This is a lot of things. This is just one of many.

Mayor Ward asked Mr. Fox if in that section that Mr. Cleworth is referring to there is a broader category that would capture all of these, that would be a more appropriate way of classifying that work?

Mr. Fox commented that the broad category is Active Transportation Plans. Then it has a list of four or five options of what those could be. Some relate to transit, some relate to bike/ped facilities and ride shares. If we want to throw in something that is related to transit, he thought this was good.

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

Discussion: No discussion.

Amended Motion: To approve the amended UPWP [FFY2025-26 Unified Planning Work Program] as presented, add the City of Fairbanks and City of North Pole to the existing staff resources line, and include the language that staff may also use time to work on advertising for transit options.

Vote on Amended Motion: Five in favor. One opposed. (Cleworth).

9. New Business

a. Draft FFY2024-27 STIP Amendment #1 Comment Letter (Action Item)

- **Open for Public Comment July 3 – August 5, 2024**

Mr. Fox briefly explained the comment letter he drafted on Page 47 of the meeting packet.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To refer this [Draft FFY2024-27 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program Amendment #1 Comment Letter] to a special meeting of the Technical Committee and back to the Policy Board. (Crass/Pruhs).

Discussion: **Mr. Crass** commented that he appreciated the staff's work and Mayor Ward's work on this getting together in this short time frame, but he thought it would be to get the Technical Committee's input on this.

Mr. Kemp commented that we have a bit of a problem with this letter. What he would like to do instead of sending this letter forward was to make a motion to not send this letter at all, and instead, have another workshop meeting with FAST Planning staff to go over all the concerns that Mr. Fox has. The majority of these concerns are the dollar amounts are wrong, or there is something inaccurate here that Mr. Fox is not seeing, or they have put it somewhere that might not be right. He did not know if Mr. Fox could not see it or if it was actually wrong. He wondered if that would be a better use of our time to say that we are not going to send this letter at all. Then, Mr. Fox and his staff could set up a meeting with Mr. Moser and Deputy Commissioner Keith and the rest of the folks that are spearheading this amendment and sit down and get the questions answered that way so that they are resolved, and Mr. Fox understands what is going on. Then making sure that if there is an inaccuracy, they can have something changed then. Or maybe a new letter comes out of it after the workshop that says, "Here is our remaining seven official comments." There are comments in here that stretch way beyond the MPO boundary. I think it is inappropriate for this body to be speaking

to the State about fiscal constraint on a PM Program that spans all three regions in the entire state. We keep that program very fluid because when a road blows up on us and we have nine miles of road to go pave, and we find out about it in the fall, we can do it next summer. We do not do enough STIP amendments to be able to keep up with that in a timely manner and keep up with the change. We are allowed that freedom by FHWA to be able to use that as long as the project meets the criteria that is set in the PM Program, then we can go ahead and do these projects, and they happen very quickly a lot of times. We do \$30M a year in M&O work around the region. Some of it inside the boundary and some of it outside. To do asphalt patching, crack banding, minor guardrail repairs, and things like that. To put anything in there, it gets pretty extensive. Lastly, I would like to say that since April 3rd, the Statewide DOT has met with FAST Planning seven times between staff meetings, the Policy Board, the Technical Committee, there have been seven different meetings where we have given some sort of update on either the STIP and one of the meetings was an all day workshop to go over all the projects with FAST Planning. I think it is a little disingenuous to say that we are not meeting the requirements of working with FAST Planning. I am going so far as to say, okay, we should have one more staff meeting to sit down and talk about this. The reason I am doing this is because I think by generating all of these comments and then going back, we are going to have a response to it because there is no clarity between Mr. Fox and his folks and what is being said.

Mayor Ward commented that this may be able to be directed to the Technical Committee.

Mayor Pruhs commented that by sending it to the Technical Committee you are creating time. With that time, you can get together with staff, edit, reinvent, and rewrite prior to the Technical Committee and have the Technical Committee Review. This should have DOT's name all over it and what you believe it should say or be amended to say.

Mr. Kemp asked Mayor Pruhs if he was proposing sending this to the Technical Committee and having a Special Technical Committee and then having a Special Policy Board Meeting.

Mr. Pruhs commented that we could have a Special Technical Committee before.

Mr. Kemp commented that he thought they should definitely have another workshop in the next week or two and then he would be fine with that motion to have the Technical Committee look at it. It would all have to happen before the 5th so that if we modify or change it at all, Mr. Fox would have time to submit it.

Mayor Ward commented that he thought that if there was a chance for staff to sit down and go over some of these details, he thought that would be amazing. So, it

could be referred to the Technical Committee and then back to the Policy Board to have more refined comments to send back to us.

Mr. Crass commented that he was not sure how much headway was made on the coordination of planning process activities, but that was definitely one piece that he was hoping to see fleshed out before.

Mr. Fox commented that the next meeting for Policy and Procedure was not until August 6th, the day after the public comment period closes.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

b. Office Lease Amendment #5 (Action Item)

• **Consideration of Approving Lease Amendment for Storage Room Space at \$72/month**

Mr. Fox explained the proposed amendment to the FAST Planning office lease to secure one room of storage space for the bike helmets and public outreach materials.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To approve the storage room agreement [Office Lease Amendment #5] for \$72 per month for 380 square feet for storage of bicycle helmets. (Crass/Kemp).

Discussion: **Mr. Crass** commented that his family is in the storage business, and this is a screaming deal.

Mr. Cleworth asked if this was just primarily for storage of bike helmets.

Ms. Lunsford explained that they had several other items from outreach efforts that could be stored there and that would help to clear up space in our office.

Mayor Pruhs asked if there would be easy access to the storage facility if they were working on weekends.

Ms. Lunsford explained that the storage space is just out the back door of our office and down the stairs and they have a key for the room.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved by consent.

10. Informational Items

a. Obligations and Offsets

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

11. Other Issues

No other issues.

12. Policy Board Member Comments

- Mr. Crass commented that his wife sent photos to him of kids riding four-wheelers on their local bike path at Chena Pump. He knew there was an issue in other places too. It is a huge safety issue. Earlier this spring he saw some teenagers in a smart car on the bike path and called the Troopers at that point,

but enforcement clearly is not doing anything. He is hopeful that maybe they can look at some engineered solutions or access restrictions, to keep motorized use off our bike paths. It is constant and it is just a matter of time before somebody is going to get killed.

- Mayor Pruhs commented that it was good to see Mr. Olds here. He thought he would take this opportunity to bring up the Chevron deference since we have Mr. Olds., Mr. Kemp, the Borough Mayor, and the head of FAST Planning here we have the opportunity to address EPA and what could happen. I hope you do it. PM2.5 can be addressed.
- Mr. Cleworth asked the name of the new MPO Director of MatSu and where she came from.
- Mr. Fox explained that Kim Sollien was formerly the Planning Director at the MatSu Borough.
- Mr. Cleworth commented that with regard to ticketing cyclists on sidewalks, he knew of no circumstances where that had ever been done.
- Mayor Ward commented that he appreciated all the work that was being done out there. He wanted everyone to be mindful of the workers out there and be careful, so they all get home safely.

13. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at **2:03 p.m.** The next Policy Board Meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, August 21, 2024.**

Approved:  _____ Date: 8/21/24
Mayor Bryce Ward, Chair
FAST Planning Policy Board