



POLICY BOARD

Meeting Minutes

July 15, 2026 • 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: 840-4224-1413

1. Call to Order

Mayor Hopkins, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

2. Introduction of Members and Attendees

Attendee	Representative Organization
*Scott Crass	FNSB Assembly
*Nick Czarnecki	DEC Air Quality
*Grier Hopkins, Chair	Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough
*Lauren Little, Vice Chair	DOT&PF
*Mindy O’Neall	Mayor, City of Fairbanks
*Larry Terch	Mayor, City of North Pole
*Crystal Tidwell (absent)	Fairbanks City Council
**Corey DiRutigliano	FAST Planning
**Jackson Fox	FAST Planning
**Olivia Lunsford (absent)	FAST Planning
**Deborah Todd	FAST Planning
**Randi Bailey	DOT&PF Planning
**Don Galligan	FNSB Community Planning
+Brett Nelson	DOT&PF Planning
+Kellen Spillman	FNSB Community Planning
Albert Beck	DOT&PF Preconstruction
Ivet Hall	DOT&PF Preconstruction
Gabriele Larry	Alaska Fun Center

****FAST Planning Policy Board Members, ** FAST Planning Staff Members, +FAST Planning Technical Committee Members***

3. Approval of the July 15, 2026 Agenda

Motion: To approve the July 15, 2026 Agenda. (Little/Crass).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

4. Approval of the June 17, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the June 17, 2026 Meeting Minutes. (Crass/Terch).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

5. Staff/Working Group/Chair Report

- FAST Planning hosted the Statewide Quarterly MPO Meeting in Fairbanks. Present at the meeting were the FHWA Administrator, Deputy Administrator, and MPO coordinators from each of the regions. The second day of the meeting included site visits to some of the projects.
- A second subcommittee meeting was held for the FFY27-28 FAST Improvement Program.
- Mr. Fox had a few meetings with MatSu MPO staff regarding the development of their new Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Mr. Fox created a new FAST Planning Policy and Procedure for the TIP to replace the current policy.
- TIP Amendment #3 is out for 30-day public comment from June 21-July 24, 2026.
- An Interagency Consultation Meeting was held on July 13, 2026 to review the MTP Transportation Plan Conformity Checklist to update the model for different base years in the Travel Demand Model.
- A free bike valet was hosted by FAST Planning at the Midnight Sun Festival event on June 21, 2026. A little over 200 bikes were parked during that event. The valet was located at the new starter block location rather than at the downtown parking garage.
- A Girls Who Weld Program luncheon was held for the North Pole High School bike rack welding project.
- The Trainor Gate and F Street Intersection Paint Day was held on Saturday, July 11, 2026 from 11am-6pm.
- The draft Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) was released for public comment from June 21-July 24, 2026. No comments have been received to date.
- Mr. Fox met with Alaska DOT&PF Project Managers on the status of FFY2026 obligations and received a list of TIP revisions.

6. Public Comment Period (Non-Action Items)

Gabriele Larry, Alaska Fun Center: There's a lot of things going on and I really appreciate everyone. I'm Gabriele Larry. People refer to me as Gabby. I'm with Alaska Fun Center today representing a little bit of College Road history. My husband grew up on College Road when it was a dirt road and lived there all his life. He built a cabin. His dad was a carpenter, so he built a cabin there, so he knows a lot about College Road. I've been around the College Road area since I was fourteen and I'm way past most of you guys with the history on that road. I heard a little bit just from the paper with the soundbite about proposing changing it back to a three-lane. We went around this, what, years ago when Grier Hopkins'

dad was mayor and it was proposed then. There is nothing that has changed in our determination and we, when I speak of we, I speak of the merchants of College Road and those of us that live near, or on, or use that road; that we would ever want to see that changed to a three-lane road. There's a lot of backup to what I say because there's a lot of people in the neighborhoods. I live on Aurora right off of College Road as well. I saw the upgrades finally done to Aurora Drive for the bridge and that took some years. I've seen College Road impacted off and on during highway upgrades, sidewalk upgrades which were definitely needed especially on our side of the road because there wasn't a sidewalk. I watch the flow of traffic daily. I watch bicyclists. I've watched some pedestrians. It's not used as much as a bicycle route as I've seen in other areas of the world or in the countries that I've visited. It's just there's a bicycle route and I'll be, "Oh look, there's finally a family on College Road that are using the path." But it's not a highly used bicycle route. There are bicycles out there, but the main users of that road are vehicles. So, whatever the reason that someone has discussed this in the past, maybe it's the speed, or maybe it's something else but there's very few troopers or police officers. I frequently use the road every day, five-six times running up and down. I very rarely see any law enforcement on that road. Very rarely. So, I think law enforcement would be one step in the right direction. When I was a kid and I was sixteen, I got my first ticket on College Road, and it did slow me down but if you don't use the road and that could be Johansen for example. I'm coming back off of Johansen one evening and I hate merging because people are so detriment to race around you. They won't let you through. They want you to do what? I don't know what I'm supposed to do. Stop and let you go around me at 80 miles an hour? So, people need to be adjusted to the traffic, and I think law enforcement is the way to do it. If you don't get a ticket, you're not going to realize the consequences. College Road has a good flow to it. There are a lot of users. The fairgrounds are right across the street from us. Over the weekend it was a very busy impact. We have a lot of rodeos. We have a lot of music festivals going on over there. The fair is coming up, and the traffic would just come to a standstill, and we are at a dangerous corner to begin with. We have a lot of motorcyclists coming up and down that road for business purposes not to mention they like to use the road. It would be very dangerous to turn it into a three-lane. In winter months, you would encounter traffic that would be backed up because literally it's a three-lane anyway in the winter because of the way the snow conditions are. I mean I could go on and on. We just need to sit down and have a conversation about this. I would be very strongly impacted because I'm on the corner. Our driveway is near the corner and then we have access points. The fairgrounds is right here. They have their access point right at the intersection, but we would all be very well come to a standstill, and you'd see more traffic hazards

and more traffic accidents. I've been on that road traveling in and out of the same driveway for years and years and years and bicyclists have as much responsibility as automobiles as far as watching for traffic. Whether you're on a bike or walking, you still have to watch for traffic. That was how I was brought up. Okay. When I'm on my bike going the other direction, I still have responsibilities. Everybody has their responsibilities. Nobody wants to see an impact. Nobody wants to see any casualty on that road. I would honestly say this winter, I was surprised. The drivers were doing great. I didn't have an incident right on the corner. Usually there are three or four. I was surprised at how well everyone did. We can discuss this, but I can tell you that there's a lot of pushback to this. A lot of pushback. I'm just one person. The big deal is nobody knows about it. Nobody on College Road knows because nobody reads the paper. The paper is like obsolete anymore and nobody knows. When I bring the topic up to people, they're like, "Oh, we didn't know this." "We didn't know this." But there's a lot of people that are totally not engaged because they don't know but once they're engaged, they would come out and speak just like I am, against this proposal. Okay. So, that's literally why I'm here. You're going to have a lot of pushback against this proposal. I don't know why it was proposed, or who proposed it, or what happened. I don't know. Where it's in the TIP, I don't know. I don't know where it came from. We just dealt with this fourteen years ago, and it was not just one person that came out. This whole room was packed, and a lot of business owners came out, and a lot of individuals.

Ms. Little: I just wanted to clarify a couple of really important things. This project came out of the Highway Safety Improvement Program screening. So, this was a high crash area not specific to bicycles. It was vehicular crashes, severe crashes both motorized and non-motorized. So that's where the project idea came from. It's not a project start yet. It is simply before we knew of both this and also what came out of the HSIP screening such as roundabouts on Badger Road. We recognize that both of those are big changes for those roads in those communities. So, we wanted to understand FAST Policy Board's perspective on it before we even began public involvement. So, there's a whole public involvement period before we would even put forward a project start. These are not funded transportation projects yet. They're simply numerical solutions to the crash patterns we're seeing out there. We do have project managers assigned, and we are working on a public involvement strategy before these projects even become projects. So, there will be time to talk about the projects, there will be public notices, all of that stuff, before they even were to become projects. So again, they are not projects at this time.

Ms. Larry: I see that. Yeah. There is no project. But, again, this is the community's feeling on this road. Okay. So, you could put your efforts into

something like this, or I feel like there's a lot more to put effort in. And we, the College Road merchants and those of us that live on the road, just got wind of it because it was in the paper and now this is where we start. If we don't start now to express ourselves, I think by the time you make it a project, it's a little too late. So, we just generally wanted to be involved but I think the community needs to be notified before this goes to a project. I think you would be impressed by the number of people who come out against it; and maybe come up with some other solutions. If they're looking for a way to reduce the crashes, I honestly think, again, its law enforcement. Law enforcement has not been traversing that road. I traverse it all the time from one end to the other and there isn't anyone there. I have a trooper that lives next to me but he can probably vouch for what I'm saying as well. Thank you all.

Mayor Hopkins: Thank you for coming in. I'm still trying to figure out my thoughts on it as well. The public open houses that will be held before anything happen will be really interesting and I'll certainly be there. I bet most of us will be as well considering the input and the votes twelve or fourteen years ago. So, thank you for that. The last time I got stopped was on College Road.

Ms. Larry: Were you sixteen?

Mayor Hopkins: No. It was last year.

Ms. Larry: Yeah. You know. We just need people in certain areas and in any conditions. I can hear the traffic from my house literally on College Road from where I live. So, I hear the traffic when it's expedient or I know the vehicles by their muffler sounds, literally, and there are those that should slow down. I appreciate it. Thank you.

***Note:** Mayor O'Neill joined the meeting at 12:15 p.m.

7. Old Business

a. Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) Boundary Update

Update on Governor's Approval of New MPA Boundary

The Metropolitan Planning Area Boundary Update was signed by the Governor on June 18, 2026.

8. New Business

a. FFY2027-28 FAST Improvement Program Project Selection (Action Item)

Consideration of Approval of Project Selections for 2027 and 2028

Mr. Fox explained that Page 15 of the meeting packet showed the list of projects that were selected for inclusion in the FFY27 and FFY28 FAST Improvement Program.

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Motion: To approve the [FFY2027-28 FAST Improvement Program] Subcommittee recommendations. (Crass/Terch).

Discussion:

Mr. Crass: I really appreciate the work that was done on this. I think they did a good job splitting this. It's a difficult process but it seems like a fairly equitable split. There are a lot of important projects to move forward on here. I don't have any big edits that I want to see on this. This looks good to me.

Mayor Hopkins: On Page 15, the gray on there is the placeholders. Are they ready to make available if the funding becomes available?

Mr. Fox: Yes. Let me explain each one of these individually. These were late nominations in our process for which DOT had not done a site visit; they did do a site visit on one of them and prepared estimates for us. For the City of North Pole, in particular, Andrea Drive was on there for a gravel to pavement project. What we learned from Mayor Terch was that there might be an ice lens under the road where it's sinking and it wouldn't be a good candidate to pave if you keep filling dump truck after dump truck in the hole. So, we wanted to afford the opportunity for the City of North Pole to replace that Andrea Drive nomination with another road project. So, currently it's a placeholder until we hear back from Mayor Terch. Then underneath the Fairbanks North Star Borough, we had a couple of nominations at our last subcommittee meeting for the School District. Right above the gray is the handmade Randy Smith School Paths Mill and Pave project. These are the paths behind the schools that connect into the Aurora Subdivision to refresh the asphalt on those important connections to the neighborhood. A simple project at Ticasuk Brown School to repave their driveway apron. So, a low-cost project out there. This last one is a little bit different. I'm not sure what we will actually do with this. The North Pole Transfer Site Road. Ron Davis with DOT M&O indicated that the pavement is in really poor condition but it's not a street that he maintains. I don't believe it's a street that the City of North Pole maintains either. I believe it is actually a Borough road. I don't know if it's maintained by the Solid Waste Department. It's not in a road service area.

Mayor Hopkins: How long is it? Is it the driveway?

Mayor Terch: Half a mile.

Mayor Hopkins: So, it's a decent road.

Mr. Fox: It may be an expensive project, and this wasn't nominated to us by the right-of-way owner. It's on the list. Everybody thinks it's a good idea but also who pays for the match on it. Is it the Borough without road powers, maybe the Solid Waste Department. We've got to look into that one a little bit more, but everybody agreed that it was still a good project. So, that explains the gray ones. We just don't have numbers yet.

Mayor Hopkins: Okay. I'm reaching out to Public Works and Solid Waste Departments to see where their responsibilities start and end. I know we have a contractor that repaves potholes and things like that in our Solid Waste Transfer

Sites and the entrances to them but that's fifteen feet from the road for the most part. They might have an answer. Otherwise, it's an orphan road and who knows. Speaking of orphaned roads and opportunities for road services areas, with the boundary expansion that was just signed, would that open up new road service areas that could be considered within this TIP plan?

Mr. Fox: Yes. We're taking in more of Farmers Loop Road. So, there's multiple road service areas that are now eligible to apply for funding through this program and I've been working with one off of Summit Drive. Their commissioners have been talking with me over the past year, and they've been waiting for this boundary to get approved. We can't do all of Summit Drive, but we can do it all the way up to the edge of our boundary.

Mayor Hopkins: So, there's some really bad spots that are going to be impeding emergency access soon on Senate off Summit.

Mr. Fox: Yes. There are some other needs that the road service area has for Summit Drive as well like pushing the mailboxes back from the edge of the road. So, as I'm looking at the scope that they're describing to me, it could be a standalone project in the TIP, and it may be not part of the FAST Improvement Program but I'm working with them to identify what they're requesting.

Ms. Little: If there's something where we can get some economy of scale to keep going with state money, just make sure you coordinate that with Randi [Bailey]. We're probably not talking millions and millions, I'm sure we could find a way to get something concrete.

Mr. Fox: Can I ask you John [Netardus]? I talked to you about this last summer when they initially contacted me. Did you do a site visit with some of the commissioners?

Mr. Netardus: I did a site visit but not with the commissioners.

Mr. Fox: Okay. So, maybe you and I can talk offline later on and see what you think about that.

Mr. Netardus: Okay.

Mayor Hopkins: I'm pretty sure our Rural Services has a number of ranked projects too. Not that there's a whole bunch of funding but if there's a standalone, maybe we can combine that.

Mr. Fox: This round, the only ones they gave us were three roads in the College Road Service Area for gravel to pavement. The one thing about the College Road Service Area is they have the money to pay for the match. A lot of road service areas don't but the folks on Summit Drive have been saving money so they can get Summit Drive done. So, financially they're positioning themselves to be able to access this money.

Mayor Hopkins: So, they just raised the mill rate.

Mr. Fox: Yes.

Amendment to the Motion: To mill and pave Finnel Road from behind Hotel North Pole down to the intersection at Cross Way. (Terch/Little).

Discussion:

Mayor Terch: That section of road we've patched, repaved, filled in, dealt with. It is a much-traveled access to get into the new Ford Subdivision as people come off the roundabouts either down Cross Way or Park Way to access the new Ford Subdivision where brand new houses are being built back on First or Second Avenue there.

Mr. Crass: Is there any estimate of what the funding would look like for this project?

Ms. Little: Mr. DiRutigliano, could you get an estimate for what the length would be for that project?

Mr. Netardus: For 1,000 ft. I think for a fifth of a mile, it would be \$250K off the top of my head, back of the envelope.

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

Discussion:

Ms. Little: I do appreciate that you guys allow Alaska DOT&PF to participate in this program because we realize that you don't have to, and we appreciate that so, thank you.

Mayor Hopkins: So, the percent shares on here would be the local match? So, for example, the 59% that goes to Tanana Lakes Recreation Area gravel to pavement would be the Borough would pay 59%? No. The opposite?

Mr. Fox: No. That percent is how big of a slice of the pie is each member agency getting.

Mayor Hopkins: Oh. Okay.

Mr. Fox: So, in 2027 with these calculations, the Borough across various departments is getting 60% of the pie of both programs. And this fluctuates each year. We're not trying to do 20% for everybody. Sometimes we have a large project in a road service area that takes up \$2M by itself. And then 80% of the program goes to one road service area. Then the next year we're like how about you don't nominate anything and give the whole pie to the other member agencies. So, it's all a very open discussion about who gets what share.

Mayor Hopkins: Thank you.

Mr. Fox: And it changes year to year. Just like 2027 and 2028 are very different from each other.

Mayor Hopkins: I want to say that I was not personally a part of many of these. I think I had some discussions with some of my staff if I remember correctly. A lot of these are going to be some really nice quality of life improvements, especially the Tanana Lakes one, the Lions Club Rec Area, and the South Davis Park. Those are going to be really nice for improvements to people's lives. The paved area of

Tanana Lakes has had huge improvements so seeing the rest of those going in is going to be really nice. So, thank you very much. Now we just have to figure out how to slow people down on them.

Amended Motion: To approve the [FFY2027-28 FAST Improvement Program] Subcommittee recommendations and to mill and pave Finnel Road from behind Hotel North Pole down to the intersection at Cross Way.

Vote on Main Motion as Amended: None opposed. Approved.

b. FFY2023-27 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Administrative Modification #9 (Action Item)

Mr. Fox explained the specific modifications that were made to specific projects.

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Motion: To approve TIP [Transportation Improvement Program] Administrative Modification #9. (Crass/Terch).

Discussion:

Mayor Hopkins: My question is on the Chena Riverwalk Stage III, is that delaying the purchase of the right-of-way from the Railroad that we discussed or did I misunderstand that?

Mr. Fox: That's my understanding. I think the environmental document needs to get reevaluated.

Ms. Little: Yes. Correct. Before we can turn on the next Authority to Proceed (ATP) from Federal Highways, we have to have an updated environmental document. We have been in touch with the Railroad. There's no conversations about value change or anything like that. It's just that we have to check those boxes for the Federal ATP before we can actually go complete that purchase with the Railroad. So, it's just a delay in time, not changing the agreement or anything like that.

Mayor Hopkins: Do you expect it to hopefully be done by next summer?

Ms. Little: Oh yes. Yes.

Mayor Hopkins: Okay. I guess my other question is looking at some of these increases, are they also due to, as far as we know, the price of oil when it comes to repaving for asphalt or anything like that?

Mr. Fox: I don't know the answer to that question. My guess would be that for some of these we had a construction estimate that's two or three years old. They're getting to the final design stage to get these things out to bid and they have a brand-new estimate based on current bid price units, so I'm not really concerned with the increases. It's just that we have a new, fresh estimate that is a little closer to reality.

Ms. Little: Some of the things we have seen some escalation on but for the most part it hasn't been like it was with Covid. In fact, we've had some bids come in below the Engineer's estimate as well, so it's nothing of alarm.

Mayor Hopkins: Okay. We had a project bid a couple months back where there was a 20% increase in the project because of the oil so I was just wondering if it was that.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

c. Traffic Impacts Planning

Ms. Little provided a presentation on traffic impacts planning as requested by Mr. Crass.

9. Informational Items

a. FFY2026 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

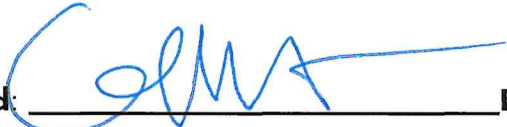
Mayor Terch: I'd like to thank Mr. DiRutigliano, Girls Who Weld, and Instructor Daly for that program and kicking those out around the North Pole area. I'm glad to see one here as a showpiece. It's pretty exceptional the work that they've done to bring that out. I would like to thank Gabby Larry for coming and talking about her concerns with College Road and thank you Mayor Hopkins for bringing up the speed reduction down on Chena Pump. I don't know if 15[mph] is appropriate but certainly bringing that down from 35[mph] is very much needed to keep our folks safe. So, thank you for that.

Mayor Hopkins: We worked on some road service area legislation as a legislative priority that the Assembly passed. That miraculously made it through in the 75% of the Bills that did not get vetoed. That hopefully will allow us more flexibility to get neighborhoods serviced who want to tax themselves and get that service. That's been one of our biggest obstacles right now when getting better maintenance on the orphan roads is it's been difficult to get those orphan roads into existing service areas. This current legislation is only for new service areas. It allows us to make new service areas easier than it used to. No existing ones will be directly impacted. So, we'll be rolling out an ordinance in the next six plus months, but we'll be working on it. I was going to bring up maintenance on Chena Hot Springs Road. I've gotten a couple emails about it. It sounds like it's been really bad out there but thank you to DOT for getting back to them yesterday. Ron Davis emailed them yesterday afternoon so, thank you for that. He says he's spent more time on that than the other 130 state-maintained roads in the Fairbanks area so, I believe it. Some of these roads deteriorate really fast and in very complicated ways so, thank you. The other

one was the Ester Dome, mostly the St. Patrick's Road. I've had a number of conversations about the new mining trucks that are going in the development out there, specifically on St. Patrick's Road. It's a hairpin after hairpin turn, maybe not hairpins, but very sharp blind turns. The community out there is trying to get that speed reduced as well. I think they've been in touch with maybe you, Ms. Little, or some other people about what a petition looks like to lower that. They have a lot of concerns about the speed that potential work on a lodge out there would do to the road for trucks driving faster than what is recommended and what the community feels and then the mining exploration trucks and potential expansion of some of the mines out there too. So, I urge you to listen to them and look at lowering that and take that seriously and not just the recommended speed limit reduction but the actual posted speed limit reduction for the entire area for St. Patrick's Road. I am happy to provide some more information. I ask you to take due diligence to listen to them as well as they have concerns about the safety of their road because a lot of people bike, walk, walk their dogs, and ride horses on that road and it's hard when you've got big trucks driving that aren't necessarily familiar or live in the area.

12. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned by Mayor Hopkins at 1:40 pm. The next Policy Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 19, 2026.

Approved:  Date: 8/19/26
Mayor Grier Hopkins, Chair
FAST Planning Policy Board