

Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System
POLICY COMMITTEE
Fairbanks City Hall, 800 Cushman Street, Council Chambers
2301 Peger Road Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Meeting Minutes – May 19, 2010

1. Call to Order

Chair Steve Titus called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

2. Introduction of Members and Attendees

The following were present:

- * FMATS Policy Committee members
- ** FMATS Staff members
- *** FMATS Technical Committee members

Name	Representing
* Steve Titus, P.E.	DOT&PF
* Mayor Terry Strle	City of Fairbanks
* Mayor Luke Hopkins	Fairbanks North Star Borough
* Bill Butler for	Mayor Isaacson (absent), City of North Pole
* Guy Sattley	Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly
* Chad Roberts	Fairbanks City Council
* Cindy Heil for	Alice Edwards (absent) ADEC, Air Quality Division
*** Donna Gardino	FMATS, Coordinator
** Margaret Carpenter	DOT&PF, Transportation Planner
** Todd Boyce	FNSB Planning
** Tara Callear	FMATS, Planner
Dave Bloom	DOT&PF
*** Bruce Carr	Alaska Railroad
*** Jonathan Shambare	University of Alaska Fairbanks
*** Bernardo Hernandez	FNSB Planning Department
Tonya Lan	Resident
Michelle Renfrew	Resident
Lisa Gambardella	Downtown Business Owner, Gamberdella's
Phyllis Kraft	North Pole Resident
Tiffany Roberts	Resident
Dorris Allen	North Pole Resident
Jessie Allen	North Pole Resident
Eric Breitenberger	Resident
Shandra McAbee	Resident
Ingrid Nelson	Resident
David van den Berg	Fairbanks Downtown Association
*** Mike Schmetzer	City of Fairbanks, Public Works
*** Bob Pristash	City of Fairbanks, Engineering
Natalie Howard	FNSB Assembly
Marilyn Romano	Fairbanks Daily News-Miner
John Jackovich	Big I, Owner
Joel Buth	Fairbanks Cycle Club
Chris Broda	Fairbanks Cycle Club
Rep. Tammie Wilson	District 11
Sheri Olesen	Downtown Business Owner
Sen. Joe Thomas	District D
David Hayden	Downtown Business Owner
Scott Wilkes	Big Rays, Downtown Business
Buzzy Chiu	Bridgewater Hotel
Michelle Roberts	Festival Fairbanks
Meadow Bailey	DOT&PF, Public Information Officer

Jan Roth	Resident
Gary Roth	Resident
Brian Lindamood	Alaska Railroad
Jerry Rafson	DOT&PF
Hans Meyer	Fairbanks Shakespeare Theater (Downtown)
Amy Geiger	Downtown Association of Fairbanks
Karen Farel	Vision Fairbanks
Lissa Hughes	Northern Alaska Environmental Center
Janet Brown	DOT&PF
Sue Sprinkle	Downtown Business Owner
Frank Eagle	Downtown Business Owner
Maryanne Nickles	Resident
Marilyn Russell	Resident
Janet North	Resident

3. Public Comments

Ms. Gardino reported having received 20 comments from the public and that they are included in the meeting packet.

Phyllis Kraft, North Pole read and submitted the following testimony, "In 2007 I started to inquire about a bike path for Plack Road. I spoke to a number of people at DOT who said they only real way to get a bike path is to get a petition started and get some interest. It was also affirmed to me in a joking manner that the surest way was if there was a fatality. Isn't that how Hurst Road obtained a bike path I asked after a young girl crossed the road on her bike and was hit by a car. Is it not the way the Badger Road over pass was put in after a many were killed in a traffic accidents on the Richardson Highway after trying to turn onto Badger Road, is it not the reason for the Lawrence Road Mission Road reconstruction and overpasses. The answer was yes. I figured I'd get a petition started since I didn't think there would be any volunteers for the fatality. In a two week time period we accumulated 1200 signatures of registered voters who were all for having a bike path put in. You didn't need registered voters said Luke Hopkins after brining the petition in. I could have had hundreds more. Others attended this meeting with concerns. Mike Vansikle of Century 21 stated the growing rate of homes being built and subdivisions being put it would add to the number of people moving into the area. Other builders and developers with forty-acre subdivisions (Greg& Renee Sikorski & Ed Daml) helped me with the petition as they knew the concern for the need of a bike path is evident and necessary. Ok this seemed to get a little response 1200 signatures and a few meetings with people attending telling their concerns of a population growth, new subdivisions and safety issues for families. The next year 2008 surveyors began to show up. Awesome!! Now I go in for meetings to see what the plan is. The new problem there is no money for the project! Ok so we wait again. In the spring of 2009 I drive by North Pole High School with Tami Sams and see that Homestead gets built with a beautiful new bike path separated and joining with a shoulder. Was this in the plans? Where did the money come from? There are barely any homes in the same area. No traffic at all. This made me and others mad. I keep going to meetings now it s all about the money or is it? One meeting I attend there is a conversation about Chena Pump road having a project in the books. Now it was canceled, not enough interest and the money needs to go somewhere. Is the money assigned to something else? If you are trying to find a project, why not choose Plack Road Bike Path? Now the hold-up is should it be a separated bike path or a widened shoulder as well as no money. ROW will cost money. In 2011 maybe something will happened. Why can t the money for the canceled Chena Pump road project be used for a part of this project. Haul some fill in, use it for ROW, use it for the cost of drawing the plans up use it for some part of the Plack Road bike path. North Pole Christian School is moving from Newby to Badger road and Plack. There will be more children using the road to get to school, and more cars traveling Plack road for school. This time of year it is even more dangerous with all the children on vacation, visiting friends on foot or bike;

and families wanting to spend time at Chena Lakes traveling with little kids on their bicycles have an extremely hard time riding down Plack Road. Let's not wait for a fatality."

John Jackovich, Big I, complimented FMATS work on the two-way streets issue and the Downtown Association for their work on the catalyst for Vision Fairbanks. He has a good working relationship with the Downtown Association on creating excitement downtown, but does not believe that two-way traffic will bring revitalization. His business is up 20% currently and it is one of the ugliest downtown buildings on the north side of the river. It's not the road or the new bridge that changed his business. It is his hard work and energy that has revitalized the Big I. He hopes other downtown businesses will use their energy to revitalize their businesses and their sidewalks and their street. His concern is the traffic by the Bentley Trust area. He encouraged the Committee to spend their money wisely.

Joel Buth, owner Goldstream Sports and President of Fairbanks Cycle Club, spoke in support of a long range non-motorized plan. He sells 200-300 bikes a year to people specifically for commuting to work. The problem is that although people have access to great bike paths, the paths are only in spots. There is a lack of connectivity and individuals often have to cross fields at UAF, cut across parking lots or travel on the Richardson, to name a few examples. He recommended using bike lanes where they make sense citing that they are cheaper to maintain and cheaper to build. Without the interconnectivity, the money spent on these facilities is wasted. He said that prioritizing building bike facilities only based on road construction leads to dead ends where the road project ends. He said that an example of poor planning is the Geist Road bike path. It is dangerous and he would rather ride in the road. The vehicle traffic crossings are dangerous and frequent which requires users to stop every 20-30 feet. He said if the paths can be connected in ways that make sense; there are people who want to commute. Many are motivated by health, money or the environment. Biking is beneficial to the community. A plan will help pull the pieces together.

Chris Broda, Fairbanks Cycle Club, leads 2 women's biking groups with 80 participants at all different levels and abilities. Many beginning bikers are afraid to be on the road due to safety concerns. She works with them to help them learn to ride in the road and on the paths safely. She read quotes from women who have found biking to be a valuable part of their lives. She said biking is energy efficient, reduces road wear, increases mobility for people with disabilities and for those without motor vehicles, reduces stress, is therapeutic, is good exercise, can help improve health and reduce health care costs. She said Fairbanks needs to be more bike-friendly and needs bike lanes, swept shoulders and more paths and better maintained paths. Her goal is to get more people biking which in turn will make for a happier place to live.

Marilyn Russell, Wells Street resident, said she believes in Vision Fairbanks. She wants to see revitalization, particularly benches, walk ways and places for people to talk. She is in support of Alternative 1 in the Kittleson report. She said that a 5-way intersection would be fine.

Representative Tammie Wilson, District 11, said she encouraged a constituent to build support for the Plack Road bike path and 1,200 signatures were collected. The price tag on the project is \$8 million, but she cannot find any documentation on this. She asked if the price is for a separated path or for an adjacent path. She also asked why this did not get done when Plack Road was upgraded, because it would have been cheaper to do it then. She said it is difficult for even her, as a Representative, to get answers out of DOT&PF on these types of projects. What needs to be done to get this project going?

Mr. Titus said that she can call him for answers anytime and that he will work on getting the answers to her current questions.

Michelle Renfrew, Vue Crest resident, testified about Birch Hill Bike Path. There is a lot of community support for bike paths and there needs to be a bike path accessing one of the largest recreational trail systems in the Interior. It is used by many different user groups, skiers, runners, and bikers. As a resident, she is looking for an avenue for herself and her two small children to access the trail system and to get down the hill to connect to the Farmers Loop bike path. There is no shoulder on the road and there are a lot of different types of traffic using the road. This forces pedestrians and cyclists into the ditch and this is a safety concern. It is an accident waiting to happen. She encouraged the Committee to read all the public comments that they have received on the Birch Hill bike path. She restated the need for connectivity between bike paths.

Sheri Olsen said she lives on Plack Road and also supports the bike path. She said she is testifying today about downtown revitalization. She is working with other downtown business owners to start a non-profit organization to help with the revitalization of downtown Fairbanks. Her interest is the arts and entertainment aspect. She would like to bring the University influence downtown for this purpose as well. Additionally, she supports bike path connectivity.

David van den Berg, Executive Director Downtown Association of Fairbanks, complimented the change in venue stating that it was nice to be able to see the faces of all the Committee members. He said that infrastructure plays a large role in bringing people downtown. The roadways orient people and help the visitors. He said it is nice to see a crane downtown and nice to see a bridge going in. This presents extra capacity and extra options for the community which is beneficial to the downtown. He referenced the document he handed out, pointing to the benefits of First Avenue becoming two-way as a result of the Barnette Street Bridge. He said one-way streets, particularly on First Avenue, tend to divide the downtown and make it hard to get around. The other one-way streets downtown are the only one-way streets within the City limits and the only one-way street network in the entire FNSB. If the downtown is struggling in terms of its economic investment competitiveness, the infrastructure needs to be reexamined, especially the remnants of the one-way street system. It is a remnant because the system is not whole and functioning, pointing to the two-way section on the south end of Cushman just north of Airport Way as an example of the problem. Rather than having the two one-way bridges reinforce a system that is indecisive, it would be better to revisit the decision of August 18, 2009. He encouraged the Committee to be open to the suggestions of the Kittelson study because there are some solutions in there for two-way traffic and to help resolve the issues caused by the remnant one-way street system.

Eric Brightenberger suggested that the transportation system should better accommodate the needs of bikers in the community. Access should be provided to everyone who wants to use the road. He said he just returned from a 10,000 mile road trip in the Lower 48 and had the opportunity to bicycle in a number of different cities. It is amazing what has happened in these cities over the past 10 years to provide for bicyclists. He cited examples such as Boise, ID, Bend, OR and Portland, OR. You can ride almost anywhere, there are bike lanes, and alternate routes that avoid main drags. The systems are efficient and Fairbanks needs to consider solutions like this. He said some projects in Fairbanks do the opposite and put up impediments to cycling to benefit the motor vehicle. He noted that bike paths are often not the preferred facility of a cyclist. He encouraged the Committee to more comprehensively incorporate bicycles in the planning process.

Frank Eagle, co-owner of Lavelle's Bistro downtown, presented the analogy of the Vision Plan: the downtown as a patient going to the doctor. The City of Fairbanks has gotten the opinion of the experts and now they need to decide what level of treatment that has been recommended by the doctor. Dr. Kittelson has given the prognosis for the ailing patient. There are the three scenarios:

1) with one-way bridges and one-way streets, Dr. Kittelson says that the patient will live, but the chances for a vital, energetic life is limited. It will basically mean a vegetative patient in a bed, it will be comfortable and will be dressed well, but the chances for mobility are fairly limited; 2) two-way streets with one-way bridges mean the patient will be up out of bed, limping and having a hard time getting around and probably in 6 years another operation will be needed and the same decisions will need to be faced once again; 3) two-way streets and two-way bridges promise long life and vitality, great aspects for future growth and families. The downside being that we'll have to shoot your brother. It is a difficult decision. He recommended to the Committee going with the two-way streets and one-way bridges and revisiting the issue in 6 or 7 years. It is the only chance for a revitalized downtown without sacrificing other things that we love about downtown.

4. Approval of the May 19, 2010 Agenda

- **MOTION:** To approve the May 19, 2010 agenda. (Strle/Hopkins)
No opposition. Approved.

Comments: NONE

5. Approval of April 21, 2010 Minutes

- **MOTION:** To approve the April 21, 2010 minutes (Strle/Hopkins). No opposition.
Approved.

Comments: NONE

6. Committee Reports

a) FMATS Staff Report / Technical Committee Action Items

Ms. Gardino referenced the complete report in the packet and discussed the highlights.

Mayor Hopkins asked about the Phillips Field Road Open House and if anyone submitted comments about the lack of bicycle facilities. Ms. Gardino said one comment was received and that there was not a good turnout at the Open House meeting.

7. Old Business

a) Cushman/Barnette Two-Way Study Update

John Ringert and Phill Worth, Kittelson & Associates joined the meeting via teleconference to give a brief presentation of the study findings and answer questions.

Purpose of the Study:

1. Provide a second opinion/confirm the traffic findings from the Vision Fairbanks Downtown Plan and recent study by Kinney Engineering of one-way bridges and two-way Cushman Street
2. Compare the traffic growth assumptions with the most recent modeling for the LRTP
3. Help the City of Fairbanks and FMATS answer the following key questions:
 - a. Are there any fatal flaws or significant constraints that result from the one-way bridge configuration combined with the two-way street conversions?
 - b. Will the "target" average daily traffic (AADT) for Cushman Street to function as a "Signature Street" as proposed in the Vision Plan?
 - c. Will Barnette Street function as a "mobility street" as proposed in the Vision Plan, if northbound traffic is forced to travel onto 1st Avenue then turn left onto the Cushman Street Bridge?
 - d. What are the impacts of this proposed street configuration on the east-west streets planned for two-way conversion, specifically on 1st Avenue

Study Alternatives

In order to adequately understand the benefits and the drawbacks of two-way Cushman/Barnette and one-way bridges, it was necessary to look at all of the alternatives:

Alternative 1: Two-Way Cushman & Barnette

Alternative 2: One-way Cushman & Barnette (assumes all the improvements are made on Cushman→ on street parking, two-lanes)

Alternative 3: Two-way Cushman & Barnette with one-way Bridges

Evaluation Criteria

- Traffic Operations: LOS and Queuing/Congestion
- Target ADT Traffic Level for a “Signature Street”
- Pedestrian Environment
- Storefront Exposure
- Access to Businesses

General Review Observations

- ❖ The 2025 Traffic Forecasts in the Vision Plan are similar in magnitude to the level of growth being projected for the LRTP update.
- ❖ Cushman Street has a greater percentage of “through” traffic than Barnette Street during the p.m. peak hour.
- ❖ The east-west streets have relatively low volumes under all the alternatives.
- ❖ Traffic heading for downtown from the west on Airport Way already uses Barnette Street and Gaffney Road to continue northbound on Cushman Street.

Study Findings

Alternative 1 Benefits

- Provides for the greatest flexibility for traffic to distribute between the two streets. As development occurs and traffic patterns begin to change as a result, it allows the necessary flexibility for this to occur.
- This is the best traffic pattern for business exposure and accessibility from either direction, it reduces trip length, and balanced traffic flow at different times of day

Alternative 1 Potential Issues

- Likely requires additional widening and an additional lane on the Barnette Street Bridge to operate acceptably in the long term; this is not certain, but if the projected traffic volumes for 2035 are reached, it would be necessary. Bridge life expectancy is typically 50 years, and therefore it may not function optimally.
- Cushman Street still requires two northbound lanes between Airport Way and 10th Avenue. There is a lot of demand currently and in the future on Airport Way, so these two lanes are necessary to avoid congestion at the Cushman/Airport Way intersection.
- The Terminal Street right-in, right-out is too close to the proposed roundabout. Terminal Street will need to come into the roundabout or further north on Illinois Street.
- A traffic signal instead of a roundabout could be designed to operate acceptably

Mayor Hopkins referred to the potential issue of Cushman requiring two-lanes northbound and asked if this is assuming Gaffney went away. Mr. Ringert said yes, but even if Gaffney does not go away, there is still a need for a double left off Airport Way onto Cushman, so there is still the need for receiving lanes, and then you add traffic again at Gaffney. There is just a high volume until it begins to split off at 10th Avenue.

Alternative 2 Benefits

- Greatest overall capacity; more efficient movement of the most cars
- Fewest conflicts between autos and pedestrians at crosswalks; this is not to say that it is the best environment for pedestrians because there are numerous factors.

Alternative 2 Issues

- Not as good for business exposure, all the exposure is in one direction
- Lower level of accessibility for businesses; all traffic comes at one point in the day
- May require more effort to manage travel speeds during off-peak times; this can effect pedestrian environment if speeds are excessive
- Greatest impact on the Cushman Street/Airport Way intersection if Gaffney Road is closed between Cushman Street and Barnette Street

Alternative 3 Benefits

- Can maintain the design of the signalized intersection at Illinois Street/Terminal Street as proposed in the Illinois Street Reconstruction Project;
- Could be an interim configuration until the Illinois Street/Terminal Street intersection is modified to allow two-way traffic on the bridges (Alternative 1); the effective lifespan of this intersection was not examined in this study

Alternative 3 Potential Issues

- Does not meet the goals for the Vision Plan:
 - Not as good for business accessibility
 - Difficult to understand and navigate for visitors
 - Not as good for pedestrians in the vicinity of 1st Avenue and 2nd Avenue
- Significantly reduces corridor mobility
 - The “zig-zag” increases delay in the area around 1st and 2nd Avenue
 - Creates a worse situation than the current Cushman-Barnette traffic pattern at 1st Avenue
- Creates significant congestion at the 1st/Barnette intersection
 - Possible Mitigation: Extend the one-way section of Barnette Street southbound to 2nd Avenue and force northbound Barnette Street traffic onto 2nd Avenue

Summary of Key Findings: General

- Alternative 1 provides the simple street network for downtown and will have little or no influence on business location decisions.
- Alternative 2 provides the best vehicular mobility but has the potential to influence business location decisions.
- Alternative 3 creates the highest levels of congestion, a more confusing street network for motorists to navigate, and will influence business location decisions to a greater extent than Alternative 1.
- All the east-west streets will operate acceptably as two-way and should be converted where it makes sense from a right-of-way, parking and cost perspective.

- The roundabout is not a necessity of Alternative 1. A four-legged traffic signal at the Illinois Street intersection could operate acceptably with Alternative 1 but would require a redesign. It would have a different footprint and therefore could possibly require more right-of-way than the signal anticipated in Alternatives 2 and 3.

Mayor Hopkins asked if Crandall & Arambula provided the information about retail development. Mr. Ringert said that Kittelson's opinion was based on business exposure and business accessibility. They did not look at all that Crandall & Arambula did in studying redevelopment. Exposure to traffic was a key consideration. Factors such as uneven traffic flow throughout the course of the day also affect this.

Mr. Worth spoke to store front exposure. When the streets are one-way, for example northbound Cushman, you cannot see businesses on the side streets that are on the south side of the street without looking over your shoulder and behind you. These businesses lose the potential for exposure. He also talked about the issue of uneven traffic flow throughout the day. The motorists that travel Cushman northbound in the morning and southbound in the evening may not get exposed to a restaurant serving dinner on Cushman. This may affect business location decisions.

Mayor Hopkins asked if it had been discussed with DOT&PF Planning Department about the potential need for a redesign of the Terminal Street intersection and the possible need for more ROW. Mr. Ringert said no and that they are aware of the history of the Illinois Street Reconstruction project. He said that the purpose of including this as a Key Finding was to take the roundabout out of the equation because people have opinions about roundabouts.

Mr. Titus said that a similar presentation was given to the Technical Committee and the action to recommend was delayed for further review of the study.

b) Public Participation Plan Approval

Ms. Gardino said that the Public Participation Plan was open to public comment for 45 days, closing on May 3. No comments were received.

- **Motion:** To amend the Public Participation Plan, Goal 2, to include: "Provide ample opportunity to the public to provide project nominations to FMATS to be forwarded to the Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) Project Evaluation Board for funding consideration." (Hopkins/Sattley) None opposed. Approved.

Comments: Mayor Hopkins explained that this goal would give the public an opportunity to submit projects to the Project Evaluation Board for scoring consideration.

Ms. Gardino responded to Mayor Strle's question stating that it is a good idea because this makes it clear that the public can come to FMATS with these projects, although the projects are not in the TIP, but rather the STIP.

Mayor Hopkins said that it would be on pages 5-6 that the goal would be added. There are methods for ensuring that the SAFETEA-LU requirement for more public participation is met.

- **Motion:** To approve the Public Participation Plan, as amended. (Strle/Hopkins) None opposed. Approved.

Comments: None.

a) 2010 - 2013 TIP Amendment/Obligation Update

Ms. Gardino reported that 45% of the Federal funds are obligated to date. Several projects have recently requested authority to advertise so it is moving forward. Additionally, FMATS has not gotten confirmation on the amount of the additional allocation to be received. \$1.5 million is anticipated and she referenced a sheet in the meeting packet that illustrates potential uses for the additional funds. This also includes the available deobligated funds to date, and an additional \$700K is to be added to that from Nordale Road.

Ms. Gardino explained that University Avenue is in need of funds and there is not a solid utility phase estimate, but it has been speculated to be \$15 million. This would be a good use for any extra funds.

Ms. Gardino informed that the Technical Committee has approved \$245K change order request for the LED Streetlight Conversion project. Once the proposals were received, the actual need was determined to be only \$175K. The Technical Committee also approved \$135K for Phillips Field Road upgrades for guardrails and inlaid methyl striping.

Ms. Gardino referenced the other recommendations for the use of these funds, found in the Technical Committee action items included in the meeting materials. There will be another opportunity to make decisions on what to fund before the TIP is approved for public comment.

Mr. Roberts asked for an update on the South Cushman Street: 15th to Mitchell project. Ms. Gardino said that the match agreement has just been signed with the City of Fairbanks. It is a shared match between the COF and the DOT. The project start will occur soon after and then the City will negotiate an MOA with the DOT to design the project and then the City can get started on the design.

- **Motion:** To add the project funds to initiate design for the Gillam Way Upgrades Project in the next TIP Amendment. (Strle/Hopkins) None opposed. Approved.

Comments: None.

- **Motion:** To include the design start funds of \$400,000 for the Birch Hill Bike Path in the 2010—2013 TIP Amendment #2. (Hopkins/Sattley). Six approved. One opposed (Roberts). Approved.

Comments: Mayor Hopkins said that the safety concerns have been voiced repeatedly over the past year. This is an opportunity to start the planning process.

Mr. Roberts said that this has been discussed. One of the issues was maintenance that the DOT&PF would be responsible for and they have said that they do not have the funds for this maintenance. He would like to see the service area be involved with paying for this. He said they would be the ones primarily using it so they should be the ones paying for it.

Mayor Hopkins said he is uncomfortable with saying that it is the responsibility of the service area when it is a DOT owned and maintained road. He asked Mr. Titus to discuss the DOT&PF position on maintenance of a Birch Hill bike and pedestrian facility.

Mr. Titus said that they have a choice as to whether or not to maintain these facilities. These are federal funds and maintenance of infrastructure constructed with federal funds is required. At the time of this discussion, the DOT&PF does not get the maintenance funding that they need to be able to go out and do the maintenance that needs to be done, for example on the Farmers Loop bike trail. He said DOT&PF tries very hard to upkeep their facilities. If this motion to start the Birch Hill Bike Path is approved, he would submit that the DOT&PF should reopen the issue of the maintenance. The type of facility determined as the best alternative, whether it be a widened shoulder, separated path, etc, would affect the DOT&PF decision on maintaining it due to difference in cost.

Ms. Gardino said that although currently classified as a local road, the project to update the functional class of the roads in Fairbanks reclassifies this road as a collector.

Mr. Butler said that the City of North Pole does not get any funding for a project unless a maintenance agreement is signed first.

Mayor Strle said that the road is not just used by that neighborhood. She said it is used by a large part of the community. She said she will support this because the public will come out and demand that this be maintained.

Mayor Hopkins said that the last time this was discussed it was different than it is now. He asked if there is a way forward for this. Mr. Titus agreed that he believes there is a way forward for this project and said he is in favor of the project. He said it is difficult to accept the maintenance right here and now. He said they probably will do the maintenance. But they cannot always be expected to do so because the funds are not there.

Ms. Gardino said that the last time this was discussed she was tasked with finding a solution to this maintenance issue. As a solution, FMATS has took part of the Preventive Maintenance (PM) program and created a Bike Path Rehabilitation project. This includes Farmers Loop and Steese Paths, both which are DOT&PF maintenance responsibility. This was intended to alleviate the DOT&PF maintenance burden. Ms. Gardino added that the maintenance engineer estimated that the cost of maintaining this path would be no more than \$10K a year.

Mr. Sattley disagreed that maintenance should be a road service area responsibility. It is used by people going to the recreation area.

Mayor Hopkins asked if the scope is for a widened shoulder. Ms. Gardino said it includes the flexibility to be either a widened shoulder or a separated path.

8. New Business

a) 23rd Avenue Improvements – ICAP funding

Ms. Gardino said that the City of Fairbanks received a Community Development Block Grant to be used on the 23rd Avenue Improvements project, which has requested authority to advertise. Part of the project will be funded with \$500K from this grant, and it does not allow for the DOT to use grant funding for the ICAP charges. She recommended using 381 funds totaling \$16,900.

- **Motion:** To approve the use of 381 funding for the ICAP associated with the CDBG Grant on the 23rd Avenue Improvement Project. (Strle/Heil). None opposed. Approved.

Comments: None.

b) Leasure Subdivision PH7 Increase

- **Motion:** To approve an additional \$140,000 for PH7 on the Leasure Subdivision Improvements project, using de-obligated funding. (Strle/Hopkins) None opposed. Approved.

Comments: Ms. Gardino told the Committee that there is a gas line in the ROW that needs to be relocated.

c) Non-Motorized Transportation Plan Project

- **Motion:** To approve \$100,000 for the development of a Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, using de-obligated funding. (Hopkins/Strle) None opposed. Approved.

Comments: Ms. Gardino said that there will be a Technical Subcommittee involved in the development of this plan.

Mayor Hopkins asked if the funds are for just the plan or if funds are included for the public process and necessary materials. He asked if it would be enough funds. Ms. Gardino said it would create a blueprint of where connectivity doesn't occur so projects could be started. It would allow FMATS to fund non-motorized projects more efficiently. Mayor Hopkins asked if there was a timeline on the plan. Ms. Gardino said it will likely take a year.

Mr. Roberts asked if it is a mapping effort. Ms. Gardino said it will include an inventory and evaluating necessary improvements.

d) Phillips Field Road Upgrade PH4 Increase

- **Motion:** To approve \$315,600 for the Phillips Field Road Upgrade of the existing ARRC crossing as presented. (Hopkins/Heil). Five approved. Two opposed (Sattley, Roberts). Approved.

Comments: Ms. Gardino said that this was originally in the Design Study Report of the project but was eliminated from consideration for construction due to funding constraints. It is to replace the existing road crossing with upgraded concrete modular road crossing panels.

The crossing accesses the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner. This is in the area between the Phillips Field Road Project and the Illinois Street Project.

Mr. Sattley said he talked with the Publisher at the News-Miner and she said one boxcar a month accesses this segment of rail which dead-ends at the warehouse. Ms. Gardino said there were 44 crossings in 2009. Mr. Sattley said he will not support funding \$315K for a project for 44 crossings. He asked if there is a problem with the crossing or is it just a project to link Illinois Street and Phillips Field Road projects.

Ms. Gardino said it would be smoother for general traffic, improve visual recognition of the crossing, and would improve maintenance at the crossing.

Mayor Strle said it seems like a lot of money for this project. She also said that it makes her nervous that is said that it is "because we had extra money". She asked if there are any other projects that the funds could go toward.

Ms. Gardino said University will be in need of funds for PH7, if it is ready in time to be obligated this year. If it is not ready in time, the fall back option is to transfer these excess Federal funds to DOT&PF, Northern Region and then they would make those funds available for FMATS in FY2011.

Mayor Hopkins asked if this project would include improvements to the Driveway Street intersection, where a lot of patching and pothole work is needed. He asked if it would be more appropriate to postpone the action to hear more about the potential for including some of this work in the project, in case it requires additional funds. Mr. Schmetzer said that the City has a Legislative grant to improve some streets associated with Illinois Street, which includes upgrading Driveway Street and possibly realigning it.

Mr. Sattley asked if it could be squared off without getting involved with this quarter of a million dollar railroad crossing. Mr. Schmetzer said he does not know. They have only done initial survey.

Mayor Hopkins asked if the funding would be able to stretch onto Phillips Field Road. Mr. Schmetzer said that there is only \$130K and it may not finish Terminal Street. He is considering approaching the City Council and requesting capital money be spent to do Driveway Street as well.

Mr. Titus said that it is not new that this work was considered. It was removed from the project because they did not know if there would be adequate funds. Mr. Sattley asked what the initial engineering estimate was on the project. Mr. Titus said he does not recall.

Mayor Hopkins asked if an improved crossing would have lights and gates, out of concern for traffic. Mr. Carr said that this is not a signalized crossing upgrade. It is a standard upgrade and it is based on the amount of traffic that will crossing. From a safety perspective, the appropriate level of protection will be applied. The traffic count here will not require the next level of protection. This crossing should last 20 or more years based on the current traffic

counts.

Mr. Roberts asked what if there is any chance that the AKRR will, in the future, not use this crossing to access this one customer. Mr. Carr said that the News-Miner has reconfigured its receiving warehouse to accept railcar deliveries. There was a discussion to determine if there was a way to work with the News-Miner to receive delivery by another mode of transport. He said that the rolls of paper being delivered by railcar to the News-Miner are very expensive and fork-lifting them more than once increases the risk of ruining this paper; therefore they have continued to have railcar delivery of the paper. The AKRR will continue to deliver as long as the service is needed.

Mayor Hopkins asked when this bid was opened. Ms. Gardino said it was last fall.

9. Public Comments

Janet North, was thankful for all the discussion of bicycling and the funding of the Non-motorized plan. She spoke about the difference between bike paths and the facilities needed for bicycle commuters. The paths are for shared uses: rollerblades, strollers, walkers, bikers, etc. The paths are good for recreation. Anyone who is a bike commuter, has a hard time with these paths. They also struggle with east west routes. She said crossing the river is limited and even dangerous/narrow at University and at Illinois. The options are limited. She said she would like to see the roads open to more bikers, so that commuting is possible. She recommended bike lanes on Illinois.

Mr. Titus said that there will be bike facilities on the Barnette Street Bridge. Ms. North said that there is a difference between separated paths and having bikes on roads with traffic. This requires designated lanes.

10. Other Issues

a) Plack Road Project Update

Mayor Hopkins requested an update. Mr. Bloom said that the Engineering Manager is getting typical sections together and is preparing for a public scoping meeting for June 2010. He will show the public the various alternatives. The ROW is going to be an issue regardless of what alternative is chosen. It will be a fairly involved process.

Mayor Hopkins asked and Ms. Gardino confirmed that the reason Plack Road is not on the list for funding in FY2010 is because it is not at the point where it could be obligated before the end of the fiscal year.

Ms. Gardino said that the project is currently in the environmental phase and that it will not be complete in time to obligate the next phase this year. There were funds in the TIP for this next phase, but they had to be moved to 2011 for this reason.

b) Illinois Street Reconstruction ROW

Mayor Strle said that it is her understanding that because all of the ROW has not yet been acquired for the Illinois Street Reconstruction Project and for that reason modifications can still be made to that project. She asked if the ROW has to be complete before the project can go to construction.

Mr. Titus said it is a bit of both. Ms. Brown said that not all the ROW has been acquired and they will finish that process before proceeding to construction. Legal issues may linger afterwards.

11. Informational Items

a) LED Street Light Presentation

Mr. Schmetzer and Mr. Pristash gave a brief informative presentation of LED Street Light technology.

b) Access to Joint Tanana Military Training Complex

Mr. Carr and Mr. Lindamood gave a brief presentation. A summary of the presented slides is included with the meeting materials.

c) State Capital Budget Update

Ms. Gardino said that the Governor has until June 9, 2010 to approve the budget.

d) August Technical Committee Meeting Change

Ms. Gardino said that the meeting will be moved to July 28, 2010.

12. Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn Adjourned at 1:02 p.m.

Next Scheduled Policy Committee Meeting, 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, June 16, 2010 at DOT&PF Main Conference Room

Approved:


Steve Titus, P.E., Chair
FMATS Policy Committee

Date:

