

**ANCHORAGE METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**City Hall, Room #155
Anchorage, Alaska**

**November 17, 2014
6:30 p.m.**

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee members Present:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Karol Fink	State of Alaska/ Division of Public Health
John Weddleton	Business Seat / Anchorage Chamber of Commerce
Brian Litmans	Bike Anchorage
Tina Tomsen	Public Seat
Tim Kosednar	Public Seat
Matt Johnson	Public Seat
John Miller	Anchorage School District
Darrel Hess	Public Seat
Brendan Babb	Alaska Center for the Environment

Also in attendance

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Craig Lyon	MOA/Community Development Department (CDD)
Joni Wilm	MOA/AMATS
Aaron Jongenelen	ADOT &PF
Brian Looney	CRW Engineers
Nichole Rehm	PTS
Scott Thomas	ADOT&PF
Jim Amundsen	ADOT&PF
Steven Rzepka	ADOT&PF
Colin Singleton	CRW Engineers

1. CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR Karol Fink called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

All members were present except HEATHER PHILP and ERIK GURLEY. A quorum was established.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CHAIR FINK inquired with the group about approving the agenda for this meeting. CRAIG LYON requested adding an informational item at the end of the agenda about members on the BPAC. JONI WILM stated that she would be giving the update on the informational item d. Trails Initiative Update. *Hearing no objections, the revised agenda was approved unanimously.*

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

CHAIR FINK inquired about approval of the minutes. TIM KOSEDNAR made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. *Hearing no objections, the revised minutes were approved unanimously.*

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

There were no business items on this agenda.

6. INFORMATION ITEMS

a. Update on Bicycle Plan/Pedestrian Plan projects (PTS/CRW)

BRIAN LOONEY presented on the status of these projects. He stated that CRW had looked at the AMATS priority for these projects as well as the BPAC priority for these projects and weighed which projects could be completed with the available funding and would have the best value for the community. CRW also looked at creating the best connectivity to the existing bike system. The projects were grouped into two groups. Group 1 projects are opportunity projects that can happen in conjunction with ADOT&PF resurfacing projects that are slated to begin in the summer of 2015. C Street resurfacing project is one of the biggest projects in this group. MR LOONEY stated that most of these projects do not involve acquisition of new ROW and will involve relatively simple restriping and signage implementation. MR LOONEY provided a map of group 1 (red) and group 2 (green) projects. BRIAN LITMANS inquired as to where the implementation funding was coming from for 2015-2018 bike projects since the 2013-2014 money was used primarily for design. NICHOLE REHM stated that if there is striping involved or if there is a fog line or shoulder striping line, that will be covered by the associated ADOT&PF project. Symbols will also be covered by these projects. JIM AMUNDSEN stated that resurfacing projects will be replacing what's already out there today. He stated that because of the type of funding that is being used, ADOT&PF cannot add bike lanes to roads that do not already have them. He stated that these are simple 1R resurfacing projects and that ADOT&PF is required to only replace what is currently on the road.

MS REHM stated that the Abbot Road rehabilitation project will be 100% done at that point and will be pulled off of the list of projects. She stated that her goal was to get the 1R projects done first thing and get them out on the roads in the summer of 2015. The next goal will be to focus on the group 2 and group 3 projects and get them shelf ready so that when funding becomes available, these projects can be implemented. MR LOONEY stated that the group 2 projects include Arctic Boulevard (Benson to Fireweed), Wisconsin Street, Peterkin Street (bike boulevard through Mountain View), and Eagle River Loop Road. MR LITMANS inquired as to what signage would be included for Peterkin. MR LOONEY stated that new traffic signs would be included to make bicyclists and drivers aware of the new bike boulevard status of that street. He also stated that there would be a focus on creating connectivity throughout the bike network and that as they work their way down the list of projects, they would discover which important links are missing. He stated that incorporating projects that improve pedestrian connections as well would be a priority. Northern Lights and Benson Blvd were identified in the bike and ped plans as priority projects but this is really a special study area. This will not be a cheap fix and these are ADOT&PF roads. 5th and 6th avenue are also identified as priority projects in the plans but should also be considered special study areas that will require a very expensive fix. MR LOONEY stated that these lists are not set in stone. If the BPAC notices that important projects have been left off of this list, please let Joni Wilm know and CRW/PTS can take another look at the project prioritizations. MR LITMANS stated that just to clarify, all of the funding for 2013-2014 went towards design only. This has appeared to result in the design of 9 projects. Bike Anchorage fought pretty hard for these allocations and thought that this money would result in actual projects on the road. Will there be more design work? MS REHM stated that the funding that has been received by the project management team (PTS) via the Memorandum of Agreement with the Municipality has actually been in the amount of 1 million dollars. A portion of that goes towards design management and overhead and the rest goes toward CRW for design. At this point in time, CRW has been allocated \$500,000 for design of these projects. PTS has not been given the authority to proceed yet on the additional 1.3 million dollars for bike plan implementation. This is the 2014 money and will not be given by ADOT&PF immediately. They will parcel it out. This contract is 2 years with the option to renew for another 2 years so the contract with CRW could be extended to 4 years if necessary. PTS will also be managing the ped projects and the trails rehabilitation projects under the same contract. PTS will be monitoring the money expenditures very carefully to make sure that bike infrastructure money is allocated correctly and spent on appropriate projects. The pedestrian plan projects come with their own funding source as do the trails rehabilitation projects. MS WILM inquired as to the status of the amendment to the Memorandum of Agreement awarding CRW the pedestrian project design. MS REHM said she had a copy of the amendment and could provide that to MS WILM. She said that this amendment incorporates the ped plan projects and the Areawide trails plan projects. She stated that this amendment needs Assembly approval and is

scheduled to go before the Assembly on November 18th, 2014. MR LITMANS stated that he understands that the additional 1.3 million will go towards design work but he did not understand the process by which that happens. MR AMUNDSEN stated that once the design team has designed the aforementioned projects, they will know how much was spent and the team can figure out how many more projects can be designed with the remaining money. MR LYON inquired that the money obligated from 2013-2014 was obligated for design only. MR AMUNDSEN acknowledged this. MR LYON stated that his sense of the AMATS Policy Committee and the AMATS TAC was that some of the money was to go towards design and the rest was to go towards actual project implementation. He stated that there was nothing in the TIP that limited the projects to design only. MS REHM stated that however the request went into the TIP, this was not made clear. She stated that once the money has been obligated for design that there is not much that can be done about changing that. MR LYON restated that the 2.3 million obligated in the TIP was for bike plan "implementation." It did not specify design. MR AMUNDSEN stated that the only way he could obligate the money without designs ready to move to construction was to obligate it as design phase II money. He emphasized the importance of having bench ready projects so that more money can be put toward these projects as it becomes available. MR LYON stated that one reason AMATS did not have any bench ready projects was because the Chester Creek improvement project needed to be completed and it was nearly 6 million dollars, so it ate up the entire budget for these types of projects. JOHN WEDDLETON inquired if there was money to build the projects that MR LOONEY described in his group 1 list of projects. MR AMUNDSEN stated that there was about \$600,000 available to go toward construction of these projects. MR LOONEY stated that this was correct and also stated that the DSR phase to look at the NEPA process should not be an issue with these projects due to their ability to qualify for categorical exclusion so they should move quickly from preliminary design to the third and final design stage, after which you can obligate construction money. MR LITMANS inquired that if 9-12 of these projects had completed the DSR phase of prelim design and it was the 2018 TIP (a whole new TIP cycle) would that be enough to obligate construction money towards these projects? MR AMUNDSEN stated that it was ADOT&PF's goal to put this benchmark of projects together so that whenever ADOT&PF discovers it has extra money to throw towards a project, they can easily put money towards these bike implementation projects that have already been designed and are ready to go. MS REHM explained that PTS and CRW would present the preliminary design for selected projects to the BPAC in the form of the preliminary design study report. After that report has been approved by the BPAC and other committees, PTS and CRW will move forward with 65% and 75% designs. Those will go out for agency review and a copy will be submitted to the BPAC. After that, a 95% design review will be ready to be sent to ADOT&PF for a check set. BPAC is the projects' number one public review agency as well as all of the community councils. MR LITMANS inquired as to the level of public involvement. MS REHM stated that this would be

dependent on each project and that details of this are still being determined. MR LOONEY stated that new bike facilities would need additional awareness and education programs to help educate the public. MS WILM stated that AMATS is partnering with other agencies to begin an educational and awareness campaign. TIM KOSEDNAR asked what else would be needed for educational and awareness. SCOTT THOMAS stated that there is a safety problem building bike lanes through intersections. He stated that he was here to answer questions on the technical memo that ADOT&PF submitted to the BPAC at the last meeting. CHAIR FINK stated that there would be time at the end of the meeting to discuss this if the BPAC wished. She asked MS REHM to discuss the Fish Creek project. MS REHM stated that the Areawide Trails Rehabilitation project was recently approved to add to CRW's contract. She stated that the Fish Creek Trail is about a half mile long project that will include 4 bridge upgrades. Lori Schanche has an engineer on contract to look at the upgrade.

b. Update on Spenard Corridor Strategic Plan (Joni Wilm)

MS WILM provided an update on this plan. She stated that the RFP was completed and reviewed by John Weddleton. She stated that the RFP had been sent to purchasing for review and that she did not have a good idea of how long that would take but estimated a January time frame for release of the RFP. She also stated that a committee was being set up to review the proposals once they come in.

c. Update on Bicycle Safety Awareness Campaign (Joni Wilm)

MS WILM stated that AMATS met with several different agencies that included MOA Parks and Rec, Anchorage Parks Foundation, MOA PM&E, MOA Health and Human Services, State of Alaska Health and Social Services, MOA Traffic, MOA People Mover, APD, Bike Anchorage. She stated that at this meeting issues about current challenges and opportunities were discussed. MS WILM stated that one example of some of the ideas discussed included an idea for a public awareness campaign that includes local Anchorage residents and celebrity Anchorage residents such as Kikkan Randall and Mark Mew. She handed out examples of a similar campaign begin done by a national bike organization. She stated that AMATS could emulate these posters and encouraged the BPAC to send in suggestions of people who might be good campaign bike poster advocates. MS WILM stated the BikeLife Anchorage publication was underway and that AMATS was waiting on approval from the MOA purchasing department to allow Catalyst Communication to begin contract work on this publication. This publication will include two yearly issues (May and September) and help to promote bike advocacy, bike safety, and help form a network of businesses and agencies that support bike safety. AMATS is also thinking about more public service announcements to release on radio and television for 2015. MR WEDDLETON asked if there would be any kind of awareness and educational campaign going into this effort. MS WILM stated that all ideas are welcome at this point and AMATS will certainly try to incorporate an educational

element into this campaign, especially where new bike treatments are being introduced to the public. MR LYON stated that one campaign that he had seen was in Texas and involved a weatherman informing people how to ride safely. He stated that Title 9 was rewritten recently and there are various educational opportunities related to new treatments from that legislation. CHAIR FINK inquired as to where the money for this campaign was coming from. MS WILM stated that the money for this campaign was coming from AMATS funds that included Non-motorized, Bike Plan Implementation and Pedestrian Plan Implementation. MR LYON stated that AMATS basically has two pots of funding to pull from. He stated that there is TIP money (typically capital projects) and they have planning funds (used to pay staff). The planning funds can also be used to fund smaller projects such as this. MR LITMANS inquired if it was possible in a future TIP that BPAC request an allocation be used for safety and education. MR LYON stated that yes, that was possible and that there was currently a project in the CMAQ program that was dedicated to education and safety for air quality. AARON JONGENELEN inquired if it would be possible if part of this safety awareness campaign could focus on pedestrian safety because bike and pedestrian safety go hand in hand. MR LYON stated that this was stated at the BSAC meeting and was already being looked into. TINA TOMPSEN inquired how the BikeLife Anchorage publication would be distributed. MS WILM stated that the contract included 10,000 copies of each issue and when the contract is approved, AMATS will work with the consultants to devise a mailing list. She stated that she would like to reserve some of these issues to give to local businesses. She also stated that Catalyst Communication will be collecting money for advertising to cover the cost of printing and publication design. MS TOMPSEN stated that making the publication available at various events throughout the year such as the run for women would be a good use of the magazine as well. MS WILM agreed and stated that a good idea would be to have a group meeting to decide key businesses and events that we should make sure the publication gets to.

d. Trails Initiative Update (Anchorage Parks Foundation)

MS WILM stated that the Anchorage Parks Foundation has created a trails initiative to promote trails in Anchorage and access to trails in Anchorage as an economic asset for the city that encourages people to not only move to Anchorage but to stay and raise families etc. AMATS would like to set up a 1:1 match with them so that they can contribute to the bicycle safety awareness campaign. They also just released a really nice video to kick off this campaign. She stated that she would send out a link to the video to the BPAC the next day.

Side discussion about BPAC appointments

MR LYON stated that Darell Hess will soon be a member of the BPAC and that we are very lucky to have him. He also stated that John Miller will be replacing Heather Philp. AMATS still has one empty seat, the social services seat. Two

members will be up for renewal in February 2015. AMATS will put nominations through for Tina Tompsen, Matt Johnson, and Eric Gurley. CHAIR FINK asked MS WILM to send an email to these three members to ask if they wish to be reappointed.

e. Scott Thomas Update on ADOT&PF issues with bike lanes through intersections.

MR THOMAS stated that there are at least 3 safety problems created by upgrading to bicycle lanes from the engineering side. Problems are created if ADOT&PF is not able to follow best practices or recommended practices. The memo is a technical memo that addresses these issues. He explained that he has worked in traffic and safety for 25 years and has looked at a lot of traffic crash data. The problem is bigger than can be handled with one project. ADOT&PF agrees that biking behind a curb is not the only way to go. Biking with traffic is actually the safer way to go for higher speed and skilled drivers. This is a status report at this time for what we can engineer. The three big problems are:

1. Best practices show that in order to put bike lanes through intersection signals, they need a detection device. ADOT&PF does not have the tools to do that.
2. In order to put bikes across heavy right turn volumes (Elmore Road southbound at Dowling road and MLK heading north there as well) the dilemma is proper yielding, respect for motorists and cyclists (both ways). Current best practices say there are better ways to do it than what ADOT&PF did on Elmore road. This memo says that I don't have a solution that is complete. I have other options for right turns that are heavier speeds instead of straight through bike lanes. These are weaving bike lanes. These are in the standards that are in the ASHTO guidelines and the ITD Best Engineering Practices. It is difficult when we can see that in the national literature that they are wrestling with solutions to right turns and signals.
3. ADOT&PF has to balance other users when there is pavement and sidewalk and widths behind the traffic lane we sometimes have too many things going on to make it a bike lane. Looking at the Connor's Bog area, it has many users who are on one side of a median separated highway with no walking facility, there are off road trail users coming from adjacent neighborhoods, we feel that this area is not ready yet. So there are some specific areas where the balance of facilities is not going to work out at this time. That is the key stated in the top of this memo is "current possibilities of what we can use at this time."

One thing we have done is to try to get all of our engineers working off of the same general principles when we are retrofitting roads and I reviewed this within

our department and talked with our city traffic engineer and city staff and what we are trying to do is take the roads like Raspberry and O'Malley and get them ready for added features, put in what we can and then what we have not been able to do we then take away space, generally shoulder room, to keep them retrofittable for when future budgets allow some of these problem with signals and right turn lanes can be fully solved. I can tell you about examples if you like but I wanted to boil it down to the three problems I have stated. Basically the full features of bicycling are not available to us. AASHTO should be providing more than just signing and striping and there is a safety risk in not providing the full features and there is a safety risk in all three of these issues. These very same standards say that there are increased conflicts and increased crashes if I don't implement more than just signing and striping. If I carry bikes straight into Elmore or Dowling, that conflict is being called into us pretty frequently and what we are seeing nationally is there is another way to do it and it is to create a zone where the bike lane ends and there is a weaving area. The lane goes into a dashed line bike lane that has an open zone that is then picked back up after the intersection. If you pick that lane back up and it was a signal you would have to pick it back up with detection. This includes video detection. The problem for engineers is that they need to sign off on these for safety, knowing the crash history and we have a lot of pedestrian facilities where we have had to change our standards because if we give a false sense of security to users we have to answer for additional crashes. We have had to take cases to court and defend why we chose to do something that wasn't fully retrofitted. So we are basically evolving as more features go in and it will take more resources to evolve with these features. MR THOMAS passed around a sketch of a weaving design for bike lanes feature. He stated that nowhere in the memo does it say bicycles cannot travel with traffic, but all of the engineering features are not place. It is about more than capitol spending. With 60 million you could put in a lot signal detection but we don't have the staff and the annual maintenance fund to run all of the electronics associated with this and that's a budget that the city would have to look at because it is above and beyond what we are currently getting for state funds today for state funds. It is in the city plan that if you want more signals you have to have more funds and more people fixing pedestrian detection breaks. It takes constant detection. Those are the three main issues. Detection causes several safety issues as well. MR WEDDLETON inquired about the intersection issues at Elmore and Dowling. MR THOMAS stated that ADOT&PF had received lots of complaints about lack of respect and close calls. Cars are turning in front of bicyclists at a pretty good speed. MR WEDDLETON stated that he hears complaints from drivers that don't appreciate when bicyclists jump on and off the road, but you are saying to do this. MR THOMAS stated that until we solve these issues, yes. The weave lane does not make cyclists leave the lane but gives them a choice and also serves as an exit if you want to go to parallel facility. He stated that Mr. Weddleton had hit on the number one issue in Anchorage and that is that people think we built these bike

paths and that drivers think bicyclists should stay on these separated paths. Most motorists don't understand this distinction. ITE published a study that stated bicyclists are a twice the risk when they bike behind the curb against traffic. You need to go with traffic and be in the road. This is the best place for cyclists. This is the list of problems we face and as engineers have a responsibility to answer for crashes that result. MR LITMANS inquired as to why there was no reference to NACTO in the memo. MR THOMAS stated that the state standard is AASHTO. He said he did not know the degree to which they are dissimilar but NACTO is generally a city standard and if the city wanted to ask for more features, the city could do this. ADOT&PF's standard is to follow AASHTO at the state level. He stated that he also has a lot of respect for ITE best practices and they are not represented by vendors and people trying to market things its really just about crashes and results. MS WILM stated that AMATS had provided the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide to MOA Traffic staff as well as ADOT&PF staff and perhaps the BPAC could submit a formal letter asking for review of this issue. MR THOMAS stated that he had met with Stephanie Mormillo to figure out what are the biggest problems we face and its stamping plans and defending the designs most often in court too. When we met on Elmore Road with the city were open to other ideas if the city could just find them in AASHTO or some other best practice publication that we use and if the city used NACTO. If there is a better answer out there than what we have listed here, we are interested. MS WILM stated that it was her understanding AASHTO endorsed the NACTO guide as an additional tool to use for bikeway design. MR THOMAS stated that he was finding conflicts between guides and that appear to be struggling with right turns. MR LITMANS stated that he recognizes that the state is following AASHTO. The Federal Highway Administration endorsed NACTO and recommended to states that they actually consider NACTO in addition to AASHTO and ITE in a memorandum. MR LITMANS quoted as much from the online version of this memo from the FHWA website. He encouraged ADOT&PF to consider NACTO because it is a city guide that is written by transportation professionals who have struggled with the same issues that Anchorage is struggling with and have learned best practices through over 10 years of experience. NACTO won't be right for every scenario every time. But if there are FHWA memorandums that are encouraging states to use this document, that it should at least be included in the list of guides that should be considered. MR THOMAS stated that FHWA has recommended a lot of things that sometimes come into conflicts with other guides such as ITE. We are often forced to balance recommendations with funding and retrofit abilities. MR LITMANS asked what the state's position was on painting the weaving portion of the bike lanes. MR AMUNDSEN stated that it won't last and that the state cannot afford to maintain it. MR THOMAS stated that they are working on a design currently but painting wears out by Thanksgiving. MR LITMANS stated that if ADOT&PF is serious about reducing crashes and collisions, especially with right hook issues, striping the intersection green, even

if the paint wears out, there will be an awareness there from cyclists and drivers that was not there before. MR THOMAS stated that durability is a question and slipperiness is also a factor. The green painted section that you are talking about we have never done. We are still working with a new spec downtown that we are seeing if we can get really gritty that will provide better traction. We will know a lot more about this type of treatment once we have had a chance to see how this section is working. MR LITMANS stated that infrastructure helps to change behavior. Cities that have painted bike boxes have done so in places that get a lot of rain and moisture and that slipperiness has not been an issue. MR THOMAS stated that if the city would like to do this treatment then they can propose that to the state. MR LITMANS stated that ADOT&PF is imposing the burden of creating a safe bike environment onto the city when in fact, we should work collectively to make sure people have the safest riding environment possible. MR THOMAS agreed but did not know where the maintenance money will come from. The ultimate design is a detected bike lane, maybe even colorized, but the price tag of that in Anchorage Alaska is pretty big. He stated that he was already experimenting with this downtown. MS WILM stated that one great thing about the NACTO guide it had examples of all of the different places where these treatments were being implemented and she knew that there were several winter city locations included in these, such as Minneapolis Minnesota. These treatments are working in these cities and not only do they show which treatments they are using, they show the materials and chemicals being used and discuss maintenance of these treatments. MR AMUNDSEN stated that the difference between NACTO and AASHTO is that NACTO does not have a solid track record of implementing these treatments and legitimately reducing the crash rates. The science has not actually been proving to reduce accident rate. MS WILM stated that she believed this data has actually been documented already. MS TOMPSEN stated that crash rate data has a lot to do with bike volume, and that when the bike volume goes up, so does the crash rate. She stated that it was her feeling that the ADOT&PF memo was perhaps a CYA document for that organization. She stated that BPAC should not feel pressured to agree with this memo and it was the job of the BPAC to advocate for more bike infrastructure and safer bike infrastructure. Part of what we all want to do is to increase bicycle volume and we want to increase driver awareness. If bicyclists don't sense that it is safe to ride, then we won't increase our ridership. But if we can all work together toward this goal we can hopefully achieve something better for Anchorage. MR THOMAS agreed and stated that this is just where we are today with engineering resources. MS TOMPSEN stated that she was in Denmark this summer and she took pictures of through roads between towns. She saw heavy striping for bicyclists and more minimal striping for cars. The message basically said that bicyclists and pedestrians were a priority and cars were secondary. We have not seen that in America yet but she encouraged ADOT&PF to put some of that here in Anchorage. CHAIR FINK asked if the BPAC wanted to take a formal

action on a letter regarding NACTO. MR LITMANS volunteered to draft a letter. MS WILM stated that she would assist with the formulation of the draft.

7. ADJOURNMENT

MR KOSEDNAR made a motion to adjourn the meeting. MR LITMANS seconded.
Hearing no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

DRAFT