

MVP for Transportation Pre-MPO Steering Committee Meeting

MEMBERS

Ben White, ADOT&PF
Brad Hanson, City of Palmer
Erich Schaal, City of Wasilla
Brian Winnestaffer, Chickaloon Native Village
Jim Beck, Health and Human Services
Bob Charles, Knik Tribe
Tom Adams, MSB
Kim Sollien, MSB
Brad Sworts, MSB
Jillian Morrissey, MSB TAB
Joshua Shaver, AK Pioneer Homes
Brian Lindamood, ARRC
Jennifer Busch, Valley Transit



NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Adeyemi Alimi, ADEC
Jackson Fox, FAST Planning
Aaron Jongenelen, AMATS
Josh Cross, TAB
Vacant, City of Houston
Vacant, LRSAAB
Adam Bradway, ADOT&PF

Minutes

Tuesday, June 13th, 2023
2:00 - 3:30pm

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 2:09pm with quorum.

2. Introduction of Pre-MPO Steering Committee Members and other Attendees

Members in Attendance:

Kim Sollien, MSB
Ben White, DOT&PF
Adam Bradway, DOT&PF
Brian Lindamood, ARRC
Adeyemi Alimi, ADEC
Erich Schaal, City of Wasilla
Josh Shaver, AK Pioneer Homes
Brad Sworts, MSB
Bob Charles, Knik Tribe

Members Absent:

Brad Hanson, City of Palmer
Brian Winnestaffer, Chickaloon Native Village
Jim Beck, Health and Social Services
Tom Adams, MSB
Jillian Morrissey, MSB TAB
Jennifer Busch, Valley Transit

Visitors Present:

Natalie Lyon, RESPEC
Elise Blocker, RESPEC
Donna Gardino, Gardino Consulting Services
Gerrit Verbeek, MSB
Clint Adler, DOT&PF
John Linnell, DOT&PF
Edna DeVries, MSB Mayor
Glenda Ledford, City of Wasilla Mayor
Kelsey Anderson, MSB
Maija DiSalvo, MSB

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Jackson Fox, FAST Planning

3. **Approval of the June 13th, 2023 Agenda – (Action Item)**

*Motion to approve the June 13th, 2023 Agenda (**Sworts**), seconded. No edits. Approved unanimously.*

4. **Approval of the April 11th, 2023 Minutes – (Action Item)**

*Motion to approve the April 11th, minutes (**Shaver**), seconded. No edits. Approved unanimously.*

5. **Committee/Working Group Reports (Including the Staff Report)**

a. **Staff Report**

Two resolutions of support for MVP to be the MPO for Mat-Su have been received, one was from Knik Tribe and the other from the City of Wasilla. Both Knik Tribe and the City of Wasilla have nominated someone to serve on the Policy Board and the non-profit Board of Directors. An MPO quarterly meeting was held at Mat-Su Borough last month. The bulk of the conversation was about how funding will be distributed among the three MPOs, more discussion on that under New Business. There is \$ 1 million dollars pending approval by the governor's office to support MVP and the remainder will be used for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan development. Comments from the AG's office for the bylaws and the operating agreement are still pending. There is an additional FAQ being finalized for Mat-Su specific concerns.

Natalie Lyon presented the Mat-Su Community Concerns FAQ.

Kim Sollien: If we didn't form an MPO, would we have access to funds?

Adam Bradway: Ultimately FHWA's power is in giving money. If something were to pause the MPO more conversations would have to occur and an answer likely wouldn't be provided until that situation occurred. The biggest risk is that the funds get frozen.

Ben White: The MPO provides Long Range Transportation Plans and other plans that allow us to justify to FHWA the need. If there is no MPO and no plans, then it gets difficult to program funding, and many times, it gets defaulted to an area-wide plan and it is more difficult to program funding to specific locations.

Donna Gardino: The new Federal Highway Bill requires the MPO to create a complete street policy and what that means is to accommodate all users as long as it is economically and financially feasible. The MPO is a planning organization, and it will look at how people are moving which could mean more sidewalks, bus shelters, or LED lighting but does not dictate how people will move.

Kim Sollien: If we are unable to form the MPO within the time allowed, the Governor has the authority to form it without us. The hope is that we have a solid plan for how we operate and that we have a say in how we are formed so we all have a voice.

Adam Bradway: The process under which MPOs operate at their core is the three C's: Continuing, Comprehensive, and Cooperative. The idea is that we all work together so things run as smoothly as possible. The whole point of the MPO is to have local governments controlling the decision-making.

6. **Voices of the Visitors (Non-Action Items)**

None

7. **Old Business**

- a. **Policy Board Membership & Dues Structure discussion**
 1. **MPO Development Timeline**

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Kim Sollien: The City of Palmer is not sure if they want to be part of the MPO. They are voting tonight on whether they want to participate. The membership and dues structure is on hold until Palmer determines whether they are in or out as their participation changes the amount each organization would be responsible for.

Josh Shaver: If Palmer decides they don't want to participate, would they miss out on transportation funds and plans around them?

Donna Gardino: They miss a seat at the table with the Policy Board. Not having a seat would impact which projects are represented in the area. It would be a disadvantage for Palmer. Palmer will still be part of the MPA so they would be eligible for DOT funding for areas outside of an MPA so they would lose their ability to call for projects directly through DOT. Other areas outside of the MPA will be able to submit projects to the state but Palmer will not. Palmer will not have a voice in how the money is spent.

The City of Palmer has invited Jackson Fox, FAST Planning, and Adam Bradway, DOT&PF, to represent the MVP MPO and to answer questions at the council meeting tonight.

Donna Gardino: the City of North Pole has been a part of the Fairbanks MPO for 20 years. One of the most valuable programs is the Improvement Program. It allows all the entities to nominate strictly rehab projects to the TIP to maintain what we have. The City of North Pole has gotten all its roads paved in the last 20 years. It allows areas to greatly improve and maintain the current infrastructure and not just build new roads.

Jackson Fox: Did the resolutions of support include an agreement to pay the membership fee and dues?

Bob Charles: The Tribal Council wants to see a projected amount and proposal before they commit.

Donna Gardino: A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been drafted which outlines the duties of each entity that participates on the Policy Board. Each entity will commit to the dollar amount that will be outlined in the MOU. It would be the final document that everyone signs off on.

Erich Schaal: the City of Wasilla has the seed money under the approved CIP and then the yearly dues will be taken care of in the next yearly cycle.

The MVP 2023 Adjusted Timeline was presented. Documents from the Governor are pending which pushes out other documents. The MPO needs to establish an office by October to receive funds. A physical address is required.

b. Boundary development update

Gerrit Verbeek presented an update on the boundary development process.

Brad Sworts: We were cautioned not to go too big on the boundary as the areas would not be eligible for CTP funding once inside the boundary. Is that still the case?

Adam Bradway: The boundary line on the map is what is projected to become urbanized within the next 20 years. For CTP and TAP, that is correct. The areas would not be eligible once inside the boundary. The funding for CTP and TAP is competitive. The MPO funding is provided every year.

Ben White: CTP and TAP are statewide competitive programs. Once the MPO is established the MPO will be forming its own plans and TIP. DOT would be working together with the MPO. There will be other opportunities to participate in other federal funding programs that are not available now. There is already a push to move CTP and TAP funding to other locations.

Donna Gardino: There are a lot more discretionary funds that would be available to the MPO.

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The boundary update will be presented to the Pre-MPO Policy Board next week. If there are no other changes, a packet will be put together detailing the methodology used for population projections, public comments, and GIS maps. The packet will then be provided to the Steering Committee and Pre-MPO Policy Board to review with the intention to have any other comments by July 21st, 2023.

8. New Business

a. MPO Funding and Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) update

MVP funding is in the amended budget which the Governor still needs to sign off on. The PL funds will now be distributed among three MPOs with 20% that was originally used by the state now provided to the MPOs. The state and MPOs have had conversations on how that money will be distributed. MVP is looking at \$413,000 for the first year which still needs to be finalized. The official memo is expected by July 1st. The UPWP will have to be amended since we now know the amount of PL funds and will have to go out for public comment.

9. Other Issues

None

10. Informational Items

11. Steering Committee Comments

Ben White: DOT&PF is working on wrapping up CTP and TAP for the last call for projects. We are anticipating an adjusted timeline and it will soon be available for public comment. Currently in the holding pattern from headquarters but expecting something this week. Working on the next four-year STIP, it will be going out for public comment for 45 days. Wolfgang Junge is retiring, John Binder is filling in until the position is filled.

12. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn (Shaver), seconded. Meeting adjourned at 3:21pm

Next Scheduled Pre-MPO Steering Committee Meeting – **July 11th, 2023, from 2:00pm-3:30pm** to be held via Microsoft TEAMS Meeting