

CLERK'S OFFICE

APPROVED

Date: 2-12-02

Submitted by: Chair of the Assembly
at the Request of the Mayor
Prepared by: Office of Planning, Development
and Public Works
at the request of the Mayor

For Reading:

January 29, 2002

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

AR NO. 2002-34

1 A RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE
2 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN TO INCLUDE A KNIK ARM CROSSING
3 STUDY AREA.

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6 THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY RESOLVES:

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8 Section 1. Planners, engineers, and the community have seriously
9 studied and discussed the Knik Arm Crossing for well over 20 years; and

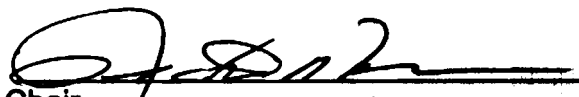
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11 Section 2. A Study is needed to further refine the purpose and need for
12 a Knik Arm Crossing; and

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14 Section 3. The study should examine reasonable alternatives and
15 modes that could serve to meet the identified transportation needs between Anchorage
16 and the Mat-Su Valley.

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18 Section 4. The Anchorage Bowl Long-Range Transportation Plan
19 should be amended to include a Knik Arm Crossing Study area in order to facilitate
20 funding of the study, and

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22 Section 5. This resolution shall become effective immediately upon
23 passage and approval by the Anchorage Assembly.

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25 PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Municipal Assembly this 12 day of
26 February, 2002.

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31 Chair

32 ATTEST

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36 Municipal Clerk
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MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE

ASSEMBLY MEMORANDUM

No. AM 19-2002

Meeting Date: January 29, 2002

From: Mayor

Subject: Amend the Anchorage Long-Range Transportation Plan to include a study of the Knik Arm Crossing.

The Port of Anchorage has requested that the 2001 Long Range Transportation Plan be amended to authorize the investigation of the feasibility of a possible Knik Arm Crossing in the vicinity of Cairn Point. The study would include appropriate connections to the Anchorage and Mat-Su transportation systems.

Planners, engineers, and the community have seriously studied and discussed the Knik Arm Crossing for well over 20 years. There was considerable effort expended during the 1980's on engineering and social-economic studies of the crossing. The project was found to be feasible from an engineering viewpoint, and would provide economic and social benefits. However, the interest in the crossing waned by the end of the decade, probably due in part to the very high cost, and in part to the recession of the Alaska economy and the consequent decline in population.

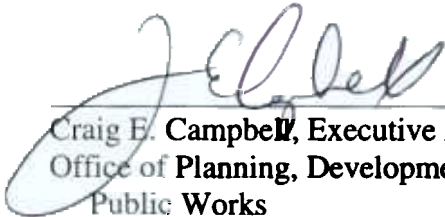
Recently, interest has been renewed. Congressman Don Young is the Chairman of the House of Representative's Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and has expressed strong support of the project as well as other transportation priorities for Alaska. Both the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce and Wasilla Chamber of Commerce have adopted resolutions that support the Knik Arm Crossing.

On a Statewide level, Senate Bill 45 "An Act making an appropriation (\$1 million from the general fund) for the design of the Knik Arm crossing; and providing for an effective date" has passed Senate Transportation Committee and has been referred to the Finance Committee.

The proposed Knik Arm Crossing at Cairn Point has major implications for the regional transportation system which the Municipality of Anchorage, the Mat-Su Valley, and ADOT&PF are just beginning to address through their regional planning efforts. Any study of a Knik Arm Crossing will probably require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Once the EIS is initiated, all viable alternatives will need to be addressed. The potential crossing at Cairn Point is just one of several bridge alternatives that will probably be considered. Other non-bridge options such as a ferry and commuter rail will also be looked at.

As a result of the above considerations, the Planning and Zoning Commission has forwarded a recommendation to the Assembly and AMATS Technical Advisory Committee to expand the proposed study area to include other locations and modes.

Concurrence:



Craig E. Campbell, Executive Director
Office of Planning, Development, and
Public Works

Prepared By:



Lance R. Wilber, Director
Traffic Director

Concurrence:



Harry J. Kieling, Jr.
Municipal Manager

Respectfully Submitted,



George P. Wuerch
Mayor

Attachments:

- Planning & Zoning Resolution 2001-112 , Recommending approval of an amendment to the Long-Range Transportation Plan to include a Knik Arm Crossing Study Area.
Planning & Zoning Meeting Minutes of December 10, 2001.

**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 2001-112**

A RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN TO INCLUDE A KNIK ARM CROSSING STUDY AREA.

(Case 2001-196)

WHEREAS, the Port of Anchorage is requesting that the 2001 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) be amended to authorize the investigation of the feasibility of a possible Knik Arm Crossing in the vicinity of Cairns Point, and

WHEREAS, the request to include the Knik Arm Crossing study area in the LRTP is a major amendment and consequently requires a minimum 30-day public review period with a concurrent public hearing, and

WHEREAS, the Planning and Zoning Commission serves as the citizen advisory committee for AMATS, and

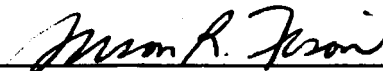
WHEREAS, notices were published and a public hearing was held at the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting on December 10, 2001.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Municipal Planning and Zoning Commission that:

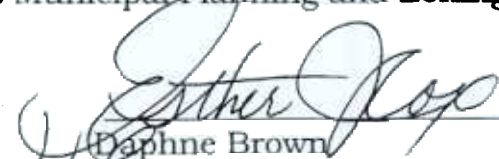
- A. The Commission makes the following findings of fact:
1. The proposed Knik Arm Crossing study has major implications for the regional transportation system which the Municipality of Anchorage, the Mat-Su Valley, and ADOT&PF are just beginning to address through their regional planning efforts.
 2. A Knik Arm Crossing study is needed to investigate the purpose and need for such a crossing.
 3. The study should examine reasonable alternatives and modes that could serve to meet the identified transportation needs between Anchorage and the Mat-Su Valley.
 4. Alternative corridors and modes should be evaluated in terms of benefit/cost, environmental factors, and other relevant criteria.
 5. The study should incorporate an early and continuous public involvement process.

- B. The Commission recommends to AMATS that the Long-Range Transportation Plan be amended to include a Knik Arm Crossing study area.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Municipal Planning and Zoning Commission
on the 10th day of December 2001.



Susan R. Flson
Secretary



Daphne Brown
Chair
(Case 2001-196)

AYE: Karabelnikoff, Jones, Penney, Adams, Killoran, Klein, Cox, Brown
NAY: None

PASSED

G. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. **2001-183** Chugiak Volunteer Fire Department. A Public Facility Site Plan Review to allow the deposit of mixed fill on the property with the intent of creating additional land at grade located to the south of the CVFD building in the PLI Zone (Public Lands and Institutions) in accordance with AMC 21.40.020.N and 21.15.015. Latimer Hall Subdivision, Tract A. Chugiak Volunteer Fire Department (CVFD). Located at 17124 Old Glenn Highway.

POSTPONED TO JANUARY 14, 2002

2. **2001-150** Mel Tipton. A Public Hearing Site Plan Review for a restaurant(International House of Pancakes) to evaluate the landscaping and tree replacement plan, and the sewer/water extension plan. DTC Subdivision, Lot 2. 515 East Tudor Road.

POSTPONED INDEFINITELY

3. **2001-196** Port Authority Municipality of Anchorage. A request to Amend the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) to include a Cairn Point Study Area. (Proposed Knik Arm Crossing.

Staff member JON SPRING explained the Port of Anchorage asked the AMATS Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to amend the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) to include a study area that would examine a bridge across the Knik Arm from the general vicinity of the Port in Anchorage to the port across the Arm. The TAC initiated the public review process in response to that request. That public review includes review by the Planning and Zoning Commission serving as the Citizens Advisory Committee to AMATS. It is hoped that the Commission will provide

comment or a recommendation regarding this proposal to forward to the AMATS TAC.

The public hearing was opened.

GOVERNOR BILL SHEFFIELD, representing the Port of Anchorage, explained this amendment request began with his realization of the need for a road and a rail behind the Port. This road would go behind the Port along Terminal Road and would be an extension of the existing highway behind the valve yard. Money is allocated to do a study on a Knik Arm Crossing, which might be a bridge. The likely location of the crossing would be Cairn Point at the north end of the Port. He discovered this road was not included in the LRTP and there was nothing in that Plan that encompassed the area from Gambell/Ingra (the old Alaska Native Medical Center) through Ship Creek to the Port area. He explained it is necessary to have a road behind the Port in order for it to be a true marine facility and to make it more convenient for loading cars onto flatcars. The Port has been working with Elmendorf AFB to use military land for right-of-way to accomplish this and has been tentatively granted right-of-way by the military. He clarified he was not advocating a Knik Arm Crossing as much as a road and rail extension.

CHAIR BROWN noted the Port prepared a study on north Port access in the recent past, which was a rail and roadway study through Elmendorf AFB. GOVERNOR SHEFFIELD explained that study put the access to Cairn Point from the north through Elmendorf AFB. The military did not favor that concept. The current proposal would bring the road from Gambell/Ingra with a fly over of the Ship Creek railyards and an off-ramp at Ship Creek Avenue and Whitney Road. He noted the Port owns the tidelands along the Air Force Base to and beyond Cairn Point.

COMMISSIONER ADAMS asked how this proposal relates to the Ship Creek Multi-Modal Transportation Study. MR. SPRING responded that Study was aware there was the possibility of a Knik Arm Bridge, but the location was uncertain. There were also other possibilities. MR. ADAMS understood the Governor was addressing the road and rail in particular, not so much the Knik Arm Crossing. GOVERNOR SHEFFIELD responded that Tidewater has been vacated and the property will be replatted. MR. SPRING explained the Ship Creek Multi-Modal Study did not deal with internal circulation issues within the Port. MR. ADAMS referred to a memorandum from Tom Davis, which indicates this proposal is premature, although it does not state that in Mr. Davis' conclusion. He remarked that he did not understand the position of the Planning Department in this request. MR. SPRING indicated the Traffic Department had not issued an opinion on this yet; Mr. Davis is with the Planning Department. He remarked that it is difficult to formulate a position without more information. MR.

ADAMS asked whether the TAC should come to Commission first. MR. SPRING explained the established process is to come to the Commission for input and then forward that input to the TAC. He noted the AMATS Staff viewed this as an external project that is being submitted by someone else. MR. ADAMS asked whether the Study area was defined sufficiently for the Commission to vote on the request. MR. SPRING thought the definition may be too restricted in terms of what will be studied, in that the EIS process opens up the investigation of all alternatives, not just the one alternative of Cairn Point. He explained this action would amend the LRTP to allow the EIS to happen and this particular alternative would be a part of the EIS.

CHAIR BROWN noted the North Access Study was done as an independent study by the Port, not as a part of the LRTP. She felt there is nothing to preclude the Port from doing a study of this alternative without going through the LRTP process. She explained the concern is that eventually an EIS will need to be done, so perhaps this approval being requested this evening is premature. GOVERNOR SHEFFIELD noted that, in order for federal dollars to be expended on this project, it has to be on the LRTP. MR. SPRING noted that the North Corridor Study would be considered a reconnaissance study.

DON SMITH, representing Senator John Cowdery, expressed appreciation for this project being brought into the process. He indicated that several hearings had been held on this project and there has been strong support for it. He stated Senator Cowdery is in support of getting this process going in order to secure dollars for the project.

STEWART HALL, representing the Government Hill Community Council, indicated the Council had taken no official position on the study or the project, but concern has been expressed that this be a comprehensive study that looks at all options and all corridors, including the Boniface corridor. He also asked that the study ensure there is maximum public participation in the process. He stated his neighborhood is potentially the most impacted by this project, depending on the option selected. He remarked that today's Anchorage Daily News indicates the money for the Knik Arm Crossing is in jeopardy in the near-term, but he was certain funds would be found at some point in the future.

COMMISSIONER KLEIN asked whether the proposed study would address the possibility of ferry access across Knik Arm. MR. SPRING replied the EIS would require investigation of all viable modes of transportation, so a ferry system would be considered.

BILL BREDESON, resident at the north end of Bootlegger's Cove, stated he has heard discussions about the Knik Arm Crossing since moving to Anchorage 30

years ago. He believed that, with the shortage of land in the Municipality and other factors, it is time to begin planning for the possibility of this connection.

COMMISSIONER JONES noted that typically the Commission has received work done by the TAC or Staff prior to receiving an item for consideration and recommendation. She was concerned that the Commission did not have guidance on this item that is sufficient to take action. MR. SPRING stated a regional planning organization is going to be formed to deal with issues that are regional in nature. This policy body would make recommendations to AMATS and to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. The Alaska Department of Transportation is putting out a contract for a consultant to help put together this body. MR. SPRING recommended that this issue go forward to that regional policy making body. He noted it appears from an article in today's Anchorage Daily News that the funding for this study will not be available until next year, in any. MS. JONES noted concerns were expressed by Governor Sheffield that, if this issue is not dealt with now, it could not be dealt with for three years; however, it was her experience that amendments to various AMATS documents are put forward periodically. MR. SPRING confirmed Ms. Jones' understanding and indicated an amendment could occur when the project is ready to go forward.

COMMISSIONER PENNEY understood the requested action would simply make the Knik Arm Crossing eligible for federal funds. MR. SPRING confirmed this. MR. PENNEY also understood this had to either be dealt with now or it would have to wait three years. MR. SPRING responded that, according to an article in the Anchorage Daily News, no money is available this year. GOVERNOR SHEFFIELD noted that Congress will be in session until December 20, 2001 and three or four more bills will be brought forward during that time period. He felt it would be remiss to not allow the study to take place. He agreed with the need for regional planning. He commented that Fairbanks has large projects that go nowhere because they have projects ready when ADOT needs to spend money and Anchorage does not. He stated the Railroad would have funding this year to do the road and rail beginning next year with engineering. He did not want that project held up by this Commission's vote.

MR. WEAVER explained that timing is of the essence with this item; he recommended that this request be forwarded to the TAC for analysis, as well as to the regional planning group. CHAIR BROWN asked if the Planning Department recommended that an EIS be done or that the Cairn Point be studied. MR. WEAVER replied the process is a generic one that identifies all the options and issues.

COMMISSIONER PENNEY noted the Commission's recommendation could be to amend the LRTP to incorporate the Knik Arm Crossing and the process that

comes out of that would be an EIS. MR. WEAVER indicated this was correct. CHAIR BROWN noted the Commission could alternatively recommend that an EIS be done, rather than supporting the Knik Arm Crossing. MR. SPRING noted that, typically, when an LRTP is amended to designate a study area, that is the language of the amendment, not that an EIS be done.

COMMISSIONER KARABELNIKOFF asked if the issue before the Commission is either a study of Cairn or of the Knik Arm Crossing. MR. WEAVER recommended that any action taken be generic, such as approval of the concept of the crossing; the EIS and process that follows will decide alternatives and process.

COMMISSIONER KLEIN asked whether the Airport supports the concept of this study. MR. POTTER indicated he was not prepared to speak on behalf of the Airport or the State. He stated he personally felt it was appropriate to recommend a generic study because it allows a study to happen, although it does not guarantee that a study will happen.

COMMISSIONER KILLORAN believed there was an immediate need to build the multi-modal corridor, whereas the possibility of a Knik Arm Crossing is a longer term issue. MR. WEAVER stated there is a highway system that stops on the Port's east boundary and the Governor wants the possibility of extension of that system in the future. GOVERNOR SHEFFIELD clarified that he wants a road and rail extension to the north end of the Port, not north of the Port.

COMMISSIONER PENNEY asked if the Commission's action would appropriately be a resolution supporting the Knik Arm Crossing as a study area for the LRTP. MR. SPRING replied the action would be to approve a study area amendment to the LRTP.

The public hearing was closed.

COMMISSIONER KLEIN moved for approval of an amendment to the Long-Range Transportation Plan to include a Cairn Point Study Area, which would require a plan amendment to the Official Streets and Highways Plan.

COMMISSIONER KARABELNIKOFF seconded.

COMMISSIONER KLEIN felt it was obvious that the city would grow in this direction at some point in the future and a connection point will be needed at some time. He felt there was a need to start planning now for the future and, to that end, there is a need to put the study on the LRTP so it can be done and various options can be evaluated.

COMMISSIONER KARABELNIKOFF was not sure the motion makes it clear that this study would include multi-modal accesses to Point McKenzie.

COMMISSIONER ADAMS suggested the Commission's intent language could explain Mr. Karabelnikoff's point by including the following: A reconnaissance-level study is needed to: 1) identify corridor purpose and need as part of the larger Knik Arm Crossing Project; 2) determine mode use feasibility for the crossing; 3) initiate public involvement; and 4) locate feasible corridors based on conceptual engineering, environmental issues, and costs." MR. SPRING felt this would help clarify the scope of the study.

COMMISSIONER PENNEY moved a substitute motion to send the AMATS Technical Advisory Commission a resolution recommending the Knik Arm Crossing be included in a Long-Range Transportation Plan study area.

COMMISSIONER KARABELNIKOFF seconded.

COMMISSIONER PENNEY noted this language does not restrict the study area to Cairn Point and conveys the intent that this area be included in the LRTP so that, if funding becomes available, it may be used on this study.

COMMISSIONER KLEIN noted the clarification language offered by Commissioner Adams refers to the Knik Arm Crossing.

COMMISSIONER ADAMS asked if the intent language carries to the substitute motion. With this understanding, COMMISSIONER KLEIN had no objection to the substitute motion.

COMMISSIONER JONES feared the language proposed by Commissioner Penney assumes that the Knik Arm Crossing will go forward. COMMISSIONER PENNEY clarified that his intent was simply to amend the LRTP to include that concept into a study area. He understood the EIS would examine various alternatives.

Motion to Substitute

AYE: Karabelnikoff, Jones, Penney, Adams, Killoran, Klein, Brown, Cox

NAY: None

PASSED

COMMISSIONER JONES was supportive of the motion and was pleased this item came to the Commission at this point in the process.

COMMISSIONER KARABELINKOFF stated transportation links from the Port of Anchorage to Point McKenzie have been discussed for 40 years. He felt it was time to study this issue and make a determination whether a Knik, Arm Crossing will be built in the first half of this century Anchorage run out of places to house its residents.

Substitute Motion

AYE: Karabelnikoff, Jones, Penney, Adams, Killoran, Klein, Brown, Cox

NAY: None

PASSED

C. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS (continued0

2. Other

- a. **2001-106** A resolution regarding the proposed relocation of the Planning Department to the permit center

CHAIR BROWN noted this item was reconsidered last week and postponed to this point on the agenda.

CRAIG CAMPBELL understood the Commission had been using the report prepared by the Planning Department as a basis for their decision, however, there was much more information of which the Commission should have been aware before taking action. He stated he had completed a report approximately one month ago that had now been supplied to the Commission. He explained that, approximately one year ago, he mentioned to the Commission that Planning, Development Services, and Public Works were being reorganized into one organization in order to better serve the public. Much had improved in terms of communications between these entities, but he felt a location problem remained. He explained he has seen two departments that need to work together that were not working together effectively. He stated Planning does not get the respect it deserves in terms of providing policy decisions to the Mayor, Assembly, and citizens at large. He noted that Planning's budget was increased last year and there were no cuts to the Department's budget this year. The issue of location and coordination remained.

MR. CAMPBELL stated he, Ms. Fison and Mr. Mee visited three locales to see how their functions were organized. Planning was a division of the development department in Reno, Nevada. These functions were divided in Phoenix, Arizona. All functions were combined into one department in San Diego, California and

MUNICIPAL CLERK'S OFFICE
Agenda Document Control Sheet

12 2002-34

(SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION)

1	SUBJECT OF AGENDA DOCUMENT Resolution adopting recommendations regarding an Amendment to the Anchorage Long-Range Transportation Plan to include a study of the Knik Arm Crossing.	DATE PREPARED 1/09/02
		Indicate Documents Attached <input type="checkbox"/> AO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> AIM
2	DEPARTMENT NAME Traffic Department	DIRECTOR'S NAME Lance R. Wilber, Director
3	THE PERSON THE DOCUMENT WAS ACTUALLY PREPARED BY James J. Armstrong, Trans. Plng. Mgr.	HIS/HER PHONE NUMBER 343-8406
4	COORDINATED WITH AND REVIEWED BY	INITIALS DATE
4	Mayor	
	Heritage Land Bank	
	Merrill Field Airport	
	Municipal Light & Power	
	Port of Anchorage	
	Solid Waste Services	
	Water & Wastewater Utility	
3	Municipal Manager	m 23
	Cultural & Recreational Services	
	Employee Relations	
	Finance, Chief Fiscal Officer	
	Fire	
	Health & Human Services	
	Office of Management and Budget	
	Management Information Services	
	Police	
2	Planning, Development & Public Works	C&C 1/17/02
	Development Services	
	Facility Management	
	Planning	
	Project Management & Engineering	
	Street Maintenance	
1	Traffic	JTW 1/10/02
	Public Transportation Department	
	Purchasing	
	Municipal Attorney	
	Municipal Clerk	
	Other	
5	Special Instructions/Comments	
	P.F. Introduction	
6	ASSEMBLY HEARING DATE REQUESTED January 29, 2002	7 PUBLIC HEARING DATE REQUESTED No later than Feb. 14, 2002
		2/12/02

M.D.A.
 2002 JAN 28 AM 10:47
 CLERK'S OFFICE