

Public Transit Advisory Board  
December 10, 2015, 5:30pm-7:00pm  
*ASSEMBLY CONFERENCE ROOM SUITE#155*

***PTAB PRESENT:***

Jay Dulany  
Carlette Mack  
David Levy  
Jed Smith  
Andrew Ooms  
Kevin Jackson  
Samuel Moore  
Felix Rivera

***Absent:***

None

***STAFF:***

Jody Karcz  
Michelle Felix  
Bart Rudolph  
Whitney Tillman  
Abul Hassan

***Citizens Present:***

Lenora Morford  
Hans Thompson  
Andrew Halcro /ACDA

***I. CALL TO ORDER***

The meeting was called to order at 5:31pm by Chairman Jed Smith.

***II. ROLL CALL, INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS, STAFF, AND GUESTS***

After roll call and introduction of guests, quorum was present.

***III. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT***

An announcement was made to those attending by Chairman Smith that there will be a public comment period in which those wishing to make comments will be allowed two minutes.

***IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA***

Mr. Moore made a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Mack seconded the motion. Mr. Levy moved to amend motion to add item "IV.1. Introduction of New Board Members." The amended motion was approved 7 to 1, with Mr. Moore voting in opposition.

***IV.1 INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS***

Mr. Moore introduced himself as bus rider who is legally blind and is able to offer a rider's standpoint to help make Anchorage better.

Mr. Rivera introduced himself as a People Mover bus rider of 4½ years and is on the board to help explore ways to expand bus service in Anchorage.

***V. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES***

Mr. Levy moved to approve the minutes from November 12, 2015. Mr. Dulany seconded. The minutes from the November 12<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved unanimously.

***VI. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY***

Hans Thompson – Mr. Thompson passed out a flyer to help describe Code for Anchorage's SMS texting application. He described that riders can text bus stop locations and receive detailed information on when the bus is projected to be there based on existing People Mover data. Mr. Thompson also announced a new project that is underway in partnership with Code for

Anchorage, People Mover, MOA IT Department, and Google to present real time information through Google Maps capabilities. The testing phase is underway now and once complete it will be rolled out to the public. Mr. Thompson then expressed Code for Anchorage's plans for what's next. They want to work with the other transit agencies to provide similar data to Google Maps that will allow for routing from Anchorage to Talkeetna, or Copper Center to Talkeetna. He also suggested that People Mover make ridership data, in its rawest form, available in advance of the What Works initiative being rolled out by the Mayor's office.

Mr. Moore mentioned that AMATS is working a similar routing program and suggested that Mr. Thompson contact AMATS for more information.

Mr. Levy suggested that Mr. Thompson contact the Mat-Su Health Foundation for valley related transportation information and potential partner for the project.

Mr. Smith recommended that Mr. Thompson and Code for Anchorage continue to work with the Board and staff to help market their initiatives.

Ms. Karcz inquired about the testing that is required for Google Transit and requested that staff be involved during the testing phase.

## *VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS*

### *a. None*

## *VIII. NEW BUSINESS*

- a. Downtown Transit Center Update from Anchorage Community Development Authority (ACDA) –*Mr. Halcro provided an update on the improvements being made at the Downtown Transit Center (DTC). He mentioned that over the past 3 months they have added new paint, additional lighting and interactive video monitors. Several weeks ago they hired RIM Architects to develop conceptual designs to address the challenges of the building. The goal has been to propose something dramatic, realizing that the "building is broken." He mentioned the building is 31 years old and ACDA is losing about \$500,000 a year, in part because 16,000sq.ft. is public open space that ACDA is paying for heating, lighting, security and janitorial services. Also, rental rates within the building are about 45-50% below market rate. This year ACDA has removed over 5,000 "transients" violating the code of conduct. They predict they will call the APD/AFD over 500 times this year, over 900 alcohol containers will be confiscated, and the Anchorage Community Service Patrol will be called over 1,700 times.

Mr. Halcro noted that the conceptual improvements to the DTC address 3 key arguments; (1) The DTC is an old facility and is costing the tax payers too much in regards to public safety due to the amount of time APD/AFD spends there. (2) Redevelopment can provide economic benefits not only for ACDA, but improve the value of the building resulting in more property tax dollars for the MOA. (3) Redevelopment can create a modern and innovative transportation footprint, as well as, provide retail offerings that the public needs.

ACDA has been working with People Mover to provide a space that is safe, promotes transit and meets the needs/improves the space for transit. Conceptually, the transit

space inside the building will have a reduced footprint and be consolidated to one side of the building. Security will have clear sightlines throughout and new technology will be integrated into the transit center. He mentioned that the improvements will be designed to move people in and out and the indoor lobby will be designed to serve transit passengers only. The designs provide for more natural lighting and cleaner sightlines for more natural surveillance. The remainder of the building will be designed to attract one major anchor tenet, like Walgreens, in hopes to draw more people and change the demographic and atmosphere of the building. Overall, he concluded that the building will have a reduced amount of public space.

Mr. Halcro stated that the ACDA will be assembling downtown stakeholders and social services to address what happens when they close the DTC public space and discuss where that population goes and how the community will continue to reach the people who need those social services.

In the end, he noted that (1) this remodel will not happen if it doesn't pencil out financially and (2) it won't cost the taxpayers a dime.

In response to Mr. Moore's question, Mr. Halcro stated that the ACDA will be keeping and incorporating the public art and flag poles into the new design.

In response to Mr. Levy's question regarding what attracts the behavior at the DTC, Mr. Halcro responded that most of downtown, like the mall, has private open space, whereas the DTC has a large amount of public open space and there is no law against loitering in public open spaces.

In response to Mr. Moore's question, Ms. Karcz noted that People Mover can't add more busses to the H Street side of the DTC and there is limited amount of curb space overall. She said that the amount of space available now works well and the key to a successful transit center (with 60 minute headways) is the pulsing of busses to allow for transfers. The DTC will need to continue to stage busses and allow for pulsing.

Mr. Ooms noted that loading on the east end of the block with the transit space on the west end, may provide some operational challenges that will need to be addressed, as well as, ensuring adequate sidewalk space for loading and unloading passengers in front of the anchor retail tenant.

## *IX. STAFF REPORTS*

- a. UPass Program, January-November 2015 Ridership - The UPass Program Report was provided for PTAB members and the public to review. The report detailed monthly ridership for each program (UAA, Conoco Phillips, Charter College, Alaska Career College, Alaska Pacific University, and the Anchorage Schools District) as well as MOA employee ridership.

Mr. Levy suggested that the Board discuss ways to help market the MOA employee free ride program to MOA employees.

Mr. Smith suggested that he would be interested in hearing if staff had plans to expand the Anchorage School District program beyond Bartlett, Benny Benson and East High. He would also be interested in exploring ways to partner with the school district.

## *X. BOARD COMMENTS*

Mr. Jackson expressed his excitement for the plans to improve the DTC.

Mr. Dulany was pleased that ACDA has now changed their position that the DTC has “perceived problems” to “real problems” and is taking steps to improve it.

Mr. Moore stated that he had the opportunity to travel to Fairbanks and ride the Max system. He encouraged other members to explore the transit systems in other cities when traveling. He also expressed an interest to see more of the Board members ride the bus.

Ms. Mack mentioned that the Mayor had reinstated the Youth Commission and had received more applications than seats available. She advocated that the vacant seat on the PTAB be given to a young person between the ages of 14-22. She also suggested the board consider gender diversity when selecting another member, noting that she was the only female on the Board.

Mr. Ooms expressed his appreciation for the thoughtfulness and speed regarding the DTC improvements. He also mentioned that he was pleased with the new member appointments, noting that the majority of the board is now made up of regular riders.

Mr. Levy mentioned that the DTC remodel raises some concerns about displacement of the people there now, but also allows People Mover to provide a vision for where it wants to be downtown. He also mentioned the “quirky” video he forwarded from Fairbanks MACS and hoped the marketing plan would reflect some similar styles.

Mr. Rivera hoped that the Board stay involved in the DTC remodel discussions and was favorable about a youth member. He noted that he is examining board member gender equity throughout the MOA in his role in the Mayor’s office.

Mr. Smith commented on the bus notices for PTAB meetings and conveyed the importance of timely notifications. He also mentioned that he would be meeting with the Eagle River Community Council in January to see what they want from a transit system. Additionally, he mentioned that he would forward the responses from an Anchorage Citizen’s Coalition informal survey to the Board regarding transit discussions. Lastly, he requested that staff provide relevant updates on AMATS or have a Board Member attend or sit on some of the AMATS advisory committees.

Ms. Karcz mentioned that negotiations are underway for the Transit Visioning project and that staff just finished preparing the initial documentation required for the upcoming FTA Triennial Review. She also stated that the 2016 municipal bond package will not have a bond for transit. Since fuel prices have been low, she mentioned that the plan will be to use those savings for capital projects typically covered by a bond package. Lastly she mentioned the staff is working with ACDA to allow access for ACDA to actively monitor the cameras People Mover has installed in the Transit Center.

Mr. Smith gave special recognition and thanked Stephanie Cornwell-George for her time on the Board.

Mr. Levy made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Ms. Mack. The meeting adjourned at 7:05PM.

Next Meeting Date:

- a. PTAB regular meeting: January 14, 2016