

Public Transit Advisory Board
September 8, 2016, 5:30pm-7:00pm
ASSEMBLY CONFERENCE ROOM SUITE#155

PTAB PRESENT:

Carlette Mack
Britta Hamre
Jed Smith
Samuel Moore
Jay Dulany
Kevin Jackson
Andrew Ooms

STAFF:

Bart Rudolph
Abul Hassan
Collin Hodges

CITIZENS PRESENT:

Hans Thompson
Xefirah Pepek

EXCUSED:

David Levy
Felix Rivera

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:28pm by Chairman Jed Smith.

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

After roll call a 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. Dulany made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Moore seconded the motion. The agenda was approved unanimously.

V. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Moore moved to approve the minutes from May 12, 2016. Ms. Mack seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

- a. Xefirah Pepek – Ms. Pepek mentioned she was thankful for the Anchorage Talks Transit process and the City’s commitment with following it through. She loves the texting tool and Google app. She is concerned about pedestrian safety at the Dimond Blvd and Old Seward Hwy intersection. She mentioned it is difficult to cross Old Seward Hwy from the bus stop on the west side of the street south of the intersection, noting she had several instances where she was almost hit by vehicles. She also noted that is near impossible to cross Old Seward Hwy and the 88th Ave intersection due the frequent U-turns being performed and the inattention of drivers towards pedestrians.
- b. Hans Thompson – Mr. Thompson from “Code for Anchorage” noted that the Google transit feed had some temporary outages during the schedule change. Code for Anchorage tried to overlay the two schedules during the transition and encountered

some errors. He confirmed that they have since removed the old schedule and everything should now be working correctly. He also mentioned that he working on generalizing those types of feeds in conjunction with GPS feeds and hardware on the buses. He suggested that People Mover work with Code for Anchorage to implement a GPS tracker with a hot spot technology to push location information to a server that would help track delays; it would also provide on board Wi-Fi.

Mr. Moore added that he had noticed that multiple stop information is sometimes consolidated into one stop in Google maps. For example, an inbound stop on the east side of the street is shown as the same stop as the outbound stop on the west side of the street. He also mentioned that GCI is exploring the possibility of using their free TurboZone hotspot technology on buses.

VII. BUSINESS / INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. **Anchorage Talks Transit** – Mr. Hodges provided an overview of the Anchorage Talks Transit project and the activities that have taken place over the summer. He noted the public involvement activities and summarized what we've heard from the public and stakeholders. Furthermore, he summarized the results of the two-day workshop with Jarrett Walker & Associates where the consultant and staff developed three concept scenarios focused on (1) spending 60% of the available resources to develop a system focused on increasing ridership and 40% of the resources providing some coverage to areas that would attract less ridership, (2) 80% of resources devoted to increasing ridership and 20% providing coverage to other areas, and (3) 100% of resources devoted to increasing ridership and 0% resources providing coverage to other areas. He also summarized the presentations and discussions that took place at the two Assembly workshops, one of which focused on the three concepts.

Chairman Smith suggested that Hal Hart and the MOA Planning Department should be invited to present on the Land Use Plan Map update given how closely related the two projects are.

Public Comment – Ms. Pepek asked if there were any routes where the frequency would change based on ridership or time of day. Mr. Hodges explained that all concepts have the same frequency throughout the day. He said that People Mover currently has peak service during rush hour, but more people are riding during midday and evenings. In an effort to not underserve those times where service industry workers need transit, no peak service is being proposed.

Ms. Mack asked if there was any intent to re-engage the public or stakeholders to show how their input was used and to get their buy in. Mr. Hodges and Mr. Rudolph both confirmed that would be the case.

Mr. Hassan noted that any major change would be intended to last a decade or two. He also noted that this effort was a way to avoid making future continuous and incremental cuts to service; as have happened in every year in the past due to small budget cuts.

- b. **Downtown Transit Center** – Mr. Rudolph gave a brief update on the status of the Downtown Transit Center (DTTC) remodel. ACDA is awaiting the results of Anchorage Talks Transit before moving forward with any plans. All of the tenants, except People Mover, will be moving in the next couple months and a temporary wall will be constructed to shrink the public space to the area just in front of the customer Service

windows. People Mover has also asked ACDA to hire a transit consultant to determine the added operating expenses People Mover will occur during the temporary relocation of the Transit Center during the remodel.

Mr. Hassan noted later in the meeting during a different agenda item that the travel training and AnchorRIDES Eligibility assessment center may be moving from the DTTC to the transit administration building because it is cost prohibitive to have a large footprint in the new building.

Public Comment – Ms. Pepek noted that it is difficult to get to the admin building on the bus. Mr. Hassan mentioned that he reached out to the partner agencies that use the Assessment Center the most and two had some concerns. He is meeting with them to address those concerns. He stressed that People Mover is still exploring this idea and all the logistics have not been decided.

In response to Chairman Smith’s question, Mr. Hassan noted that there are typically no more than two appointments per day using the Assessment Center. Chairman Smith also suggested taking the trainings to various locations and providing “mobile training” where applicable.

c. **MOA Operating Budget** – Mr. Hassan noted that budget submittal from the Administration to the Assembly will happen in the next three weeks. The narrative is about the same as previous years and he does not feel we are at a point to talk about cutting service, although cuts may happen. It’s important to continue the conversation about our system so that we don’t keep having continuous budget cut discussions in the future. More definitive answers will come between now and October and we will share information as it becomes available.

d. **May/June/July 2016 Ridership Report** – Mr. Hodges provided copies of the Ridership Reports for the three months the Board did not meet. He noted the continuing trend of declining ridership. He also noted that July had one additional weekend and two fewer weekdays in 2016 that make the comparison to July 2015 appear more dramatic.

Mr. Moore explored the idea of using other metrics to show this information. He suggested looking at ridership as a percent of the population over the years or presenting the information as dashboard..

VIII. BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Jackson thanked staff for the update on Anchorage Talks Transit.

Ms. Hamre noted that she was excited to see the results of the stakeholder’s meeting and eager to get their feedback as we move forward with the plan.

Ms. Mack thanked staff for the presentation on Anchorage Talks Transit and noted she was excited about the new direction we are heading.

Mr. Moore mentioned he had a great summer on the bus and thanked staff for the Anchorage Talks Transit presentation.

Mr. Ooms reminded the Board that is the representative for the AMATS Air Quality Committee which meets next week and he'll provide an update at the next PTAB meeting. He also inquired about the status of the sub-committees.

Mr. Dulany mentioned that next month would be his last meeting. His term is over in October and he will not be seeking re-appointment. He mentioned it has been a pleasure to serve on the Board and looks forward to seeing progress made in the future.

Chairman Smith noted that Mr. Dulany had served on the Board since 1998 and thanked him for his service. He also welcomed Mr. Hassan as the new Director and thanked him for his attendance. He then mentioned that the Board was there to help and asked staff if there are ways to support the work being done to let them know. He mentioned that his term also ends in October and would like to stay involved, but if there was someone who would like to take over as chair the Board should consider.

IX. NEXT PTAB MEETING DATE

Next Meeting Date: October 13th, 2016

X. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Moore made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Mack seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 6:36pm.