



MEETING SUMMARY

Non-motorized Plan Community Advisory Group Meeting #1: 26 September 2017

Meeting Objective: Introduction to the Anchorage Non-Motorized Plan

INTRODUCTIONS

Craig Lyon, the Municipality of Anchorage AMATS Coordinator, welcomed the group and gave a brief overview of AMATS, the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions program. Every metropolitan area with a population of 50,000 or more residents must have a designated Metropolitan Planning Organization or MPO to qualify for federal highway funding and/or transit assistance. AMATS is the MPO for the Anchorage Bowl and Chugiak-Eagle River when federal transportation funds are used. Some requirements of this program include:

- Policy Committee
- Freight Advisory Committee
- Air Quality Committee
- Citizen Advisory Committee
- 20-year plan, 4-year plan, annual workplan

Additionally, AMATS has added the following to the program even though not required:

- Technical Advisory Committee
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- Bike Plan (2010)
- Pedestrian Plan (2007)
- Areawide Trails Plan (1997)
- AMATS Public Involvement Plan

Funding for this project comes from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) dollars through the Transportation Alternative Program, which supports transportation safety and recreation enhancements.

PROJECT TEAM

Municipality of Anchorage, AMATS

Joni Wilm, Senior Transportation Planner

Craig Lyon, AMATS Coordinator

Alta Planning and Design: Seattle, WA

Fred Young, Project Manager
Steve Durrant, Principal
Jessica Szelag, Anchorage-Based Project Manager

R&M Consultants: Anchorage, AK

Mark Frutiger, Transportation Engineer
Van Le, Planning, Stakeholder Engagement

Huddle AK: Anchorage, AK

Holly Spoth-Torres, Stakeholder Engagement
Chelsea Ward-Waller, Stakeholder Engagement

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Fred Young, Alta Project Manager provided a project overview and information about Alta. This project will update and combine the Bike Plan, the Pedestrian Plan and the Trail Plan into one, comprehensive Nonmotorized Transportation Plan for Anchorage.

Alta has completed plans like this all over the United States and Canada including many winter cities. Over the past 5 years Alta has been working on a variety of projects in Alaska including the Spenard Corridor Plan, the MOA 27th Ave. Bike Boulevard and the State of Alaska Pedestrian Plan. Additionally, Alta has given multiple presentations at local conferences and provided technical trainings to agency staff and the public.

Alta's plans typically include the following planning and analysis:

Analyze Level of Travel Stress for Non-Motorized Transportation: Are there bicycle and pedestrian facilities? How fast does vehicular traffic travel? Are facilities accessible?

Crash Analysis: Includes where collisions are occurring, why and displays using a heat map.

Public Health: We will use the new 500 cities data (Anchorage is one of the 500 cities) from the CDC to analyze 30 health indicators. We will analyze the dataset as it relates to non-motorized transportation infrastructure, programs and policy in Anchorage. We know that increasing the percentage of people that use non-motorized transportation decreases health care costs.

Demand Analysis: We will use a series of map overlays for nonmotorized transportation. Where do people access transit? Where do people live? Where do people work? Where do people buy groceries and receive other services? Where do people recreate? We will take this information and prioritize.

Design Guidelines & Standards: Alta will also complete design guidelines. Alta designed the National Guide for Urban Bikeways as well as the Rural Network Guide (Center for Prevention and FHWA). There are many locations in Anchorage where the rural network guide is totally applicable.

Winter Cycling Congress: Alta has been an active participant in the Winter Cycling Congress annually since its inception to encourage more people to bike during winter months.

PROJECT SCHEDULE & SCOPE

Jessica Szlag, Anchorage-based Alta project manager presented the project schedule and scope.

The Anchorage Nonmotorized plan will follow a six-step process between September 2017 and April 2018 to include:

1. Guide
2. Listen
3. Learn
4. Envision
5. Share
6. Approve

The CAG will be intimately involved in four steps of the plan development: Listen, Learn, Envision and Share.

LISTEN AND LEARN: September 2017 – December 2017 – to include 2 CAG meetings, community workshops, online crowdsourcing mapping, review of best practices, review of existing plans.

ENVISION: January 2018 – to include finalizing vision, goals and priorities for nonmotorized transportation in Anchorage.

SHARE: February – March 2018 to include public review draft release in February, 1 CAG meeting in March to review the draft plan.

APPROVE: The project team will move the plan through the necessary review and approval processes and the CAG should participate by commenting, testifying and sharing information with friends and constituents.

COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP RESPONSIBILITIES

The project team will guide the CAG through the process and important milestones. Overall the CAG should be prepared to do the following:

1. Represent the larger community
2. Meet 4 times to review progress throughout the planning process
3. Relay information about the plan to stakeholders
4. Encourage others to participate in the Community Involvement Events

The CAG has been selected as a diverse cross-section of Anchorage residents and are stewards of the plan. It will be important to encourage participation by your friends, families coworkers and peers to guide nonmotorized transportation planning in our city for the next 10-15 years.

The Community Advisory Committee will meet four (4) times: September 2017, November 2017, March 2018 and June 2018.

VISION – GOALS EXERCISE

Steve Durrant, Alta Principal, facilitated the CAG through a visioning and goals exercise to begin to identify what participants think that the vision and goals of the plan should be. The team handed out three different colors of post-it notes and were asked to answer the following questions. There was no limit to the number of answers participants could provide.

- What are your aspirations for this project? (ORANGE)
- What is a mark of success for this project? (PINK)
- What is your greatest fear or obstacle to the success of this project? (BLUE)

The team categorized the responses on-the-fly, posted them on the white board, and then discussed the themes listed below. A detailed compilation of all of the responses received is attached.

ASPIRATIONS

- CONNECTED NETWORK
- AGENCY COORDINATION
- ALL AGES & ABILITIES: Safe network for everybody
- SAFE
- FUTURE TOO
- SYNERGY-good coordination both with plans but between agencies

SUCCESS

- Limits of acceptable change.
- MODE SHARE
- Anchorage! Recognition as premier Anchorage Cycling City
- PUBLIC HEALTH-more public awareness

OBSTACLES

- Engineering “Standards”
- Maintainability and DOLLARS
- RESOLVE: how do we make this happen as a community and invite people to use?
- ATTITUDE

COMMENTS – QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

- Q: How will this project overlay with the current Vision Zero effort?
- A: This plan is part of the overall Vision Zero implementation project. The two projects will coordinate when it comes to data collection, analysis and complete streets. We are working to ensure that the projects coordinate so that people involved in both efforts are using their time and energy efficiently so that efforts are not duplicated.
- Q: What is the scope when it comes to large areas of land with soft surface trails like Far North Bicentennial Park, Kincaid Park, Alaska Pacific University, BLM Campbell Tract?
- A: Everything within the AMATS boundary, regardless of ownership, it will be included in this plan. We will coordinate with all major landowners as stakeholders.
- Q: How will this plan successfully advocate for pedestrians? It is really difficult to advocate for pedestrians because they are generally not part of organized advocacy groups?
- A: We agree that this is challenging, however this is a primary goal of the public engagement strategy. Not only are we implementing typical open houses, but we are also scheduling a series of mobile meetings to meet stakeholders in locations where they already are.
- Q: How will project prioritization work?
- A: The project will use Alta's planning process described in the powerpoint presentation combined with the vision and goals we hear from the community to prioritize the non-motorized transportation system.
- Q: Project cost estimates in the most recent bike plan were not accurate. How will the project address these obstacles?
- A: This project will engage R&M consultants who have been building road and non-motorized transportation infrastructure to complete a detailed cost analysis for 5 test projects from which we will be able to better predict all project cost estimates.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Agenda
2. Powerpoint
3. Sign-In Sheets
4. Aspirations, Success, Obstacles