

CRV REGIONAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Regional Planning Committee Meeting Minutes

March 15, 2023; 5:00 – 7:00pm Gulkana Fuel Pilot Lounge

- I. Call to Order: By Bruce C 5:14pm
- II. Roll Call:
 - a. RPO Members Present: Bruce Cain - CV Chamber of Commerce; Terry Valentine – CVDA; Joe Bovee – Ahtna; Gary Schliesing – Glenn Transport/Gulkana Fuel; Judy Chapman – DOT&PF, Jennifer Rosenthal – CVDA (non-voting); Asa Brewi – CVDA (non-voting)
 - b. RPO Members Absent: Jerry Lesemann – Crowley; Martin Boniek - Copper Valley Air
 - c. Guests: Jason Jordet – DOT&PF; Chad Heller – DOT&PF; Shanika Dunn – DOF; Tom Middendorf – DOWL; Justin McGinnis – AWT, Jason Hoke – CVDA, Mike Trimmer – DOT&PF; Jason Severs GVFD; Katherine Keith – DOT&PF; Danielle Tessen – DOT&PF; Ryan Anderson – DOT&PF; John Becker – CV Chamber of Commerce; Jeremy Weld, CV Chamber of Commerce; Sara Lucey – DOT&PF.
- III. Approval of Agenda: ***Motion to approve the agenda by Joe Bovee, 2nd by Gary Schliesing, motion passed.***
- IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes: ***Motion to approve the 1.25.23 meeting minutes by Joe Bovee, 2nd by Judy Chapman, motion passed.***
- V. Discussion:
 - a. Bruce Cain, Chair, welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the meeting.
 - b. Commissioner Anderson recognized the work the RPO is doing and other RPOs' in the state are looking to us to see what's working and what makes sense for Alaska. Regarding the Right-of-Way issues in Glennallen, The Governor, on his last visit to Glennallen, was very clear that the ROW conflict where BLM plotted a 200' ROW and the State had a 300' ROW easement needs to be resolved. This issue has been ongoing for a long time and runs along the Glenn and Richardson Highways. DOT is working to establish a process to get through these ROW conflicts where they could vacate the 50" portion of that easement and the property rights would automatically go to the underlying landowner. in which they could coordinate the entire corridor and work with individual landowners. The DOT regs stated that the property would be sold back to the landowner at fair market value, but homeowners already own the land, so the DOT&PF is in the process of changing the regulation. But in the meantime, want to move forward to get this resolved for the Glennallen area. The DOT would like to resolve this programmatically and hit entire corridors to free up those land pieces. Would the RPO/CVDA like have a role in helping resolve ROW project? Discussion followed: Is this a regional program? CR – We want to resolve regionally but wants to start here in GA and see if it works and then expand to other parts of the state. Will the utility companies be using the ROW? It would be dealt with it would be a specific easement for utilities. Would RPO made a commitment to help, would the RPO be willing to write a resolution? ***Motion by Terry Valentine to assist the DOT to establish a programmatic process to review ROW issues in the Glennallen area, 2nd by Joe Bovee, motion passed.***
 - c. The Governor has a big push to attracting people to Alaska. What can the DOT do to attract people to AK? How to improve the highway system and waysides for tourism and economic development? There is additional funding to maintain and build more waysides. DOT is look at the system and launching a survey called the Last FUNTIER. They want people to identify opportunities for improving access to outdoor adventure on roadways, ports and aviation. The survey can be located at <https://the-last-funtier-akdot.hub.arcgis.com/> and there are also posters with QR Code links to the survey. Please share. Discussion followed. Standardizing signage, informational kiosk, maybe add 511 to waysides. People need basics, pull-overs, garbage, bathrooms. It was noted facilities in Canada every 25 miles. Adopt a highway add adopt a wayside program.
 - d. Chair's Report: Bruce Cain: The working group continues to work on the RPO Operating Agreement to define our process. Meeting once a month, public meetings etc., great tool for our

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people and region to get organized and work together. Discussion followed, The largest land managers are not on the committee and need to have a seat. The park service and state are not represented on the RPO and need to be represented. Jen reviewed the seats on the committee. Bruce, The RPO is not necessarily reviewing land managers issues, they are focused on transportation issue in the RPO boundary. Jason, some are set seats, some are at large, the public is welcome to all meetings. This is more transportation focused, if it overlaps into other areas there is opportunity for these entities can come and participate. This committee's formation was based on and is transportation focused.

- e. Judy Chapman, DOT&PF reviewed Airport Planning 101 discussion including the funding to see what's possible for GKN and how the AIP airports are funded, to be eligible must be on NPIA and the highest scoring projects are programmed into the AIP. A copy of Judy's presentation will be made available upon request. There is \$180 – \$200 M annually in Airport funding. There is a reauthorization bill currently proposed and Alaska is trying to make a case for Economic Development as part of this bill. In AK we know what we need and want the latitude as to how we allocate funds, grant assurance. GKN can do a lot more with non-FAA funds, but FAA needs to sign off on the ALP and has to agree that your plan looks reasonable for the future. FAA will not fund projects like fill for lease lot areas with gravel for potential buildings, landscaping, aircraft hangers, industrial float ponds etc. FAA funds can be used for state of good repair and safety, access roads etc. Only 5-6 aviation projects are funded per year. No public notification process required for Aviation Projects.
- f. Tom Middendorf, DOWL, ALP update, Tom interviewed about 20 people/stakeholders in the area. Based on those discussions and design requirements he presented his initial observations and existing conditions as well as a few conceptual options. DOWL will evaluate the comments from this round of interviews and present a Draft ALP to the public for final comments. The ALP will then be presented to the FAA for approval and sign off. Discussion on float moat, lease lot locations, non-aeronautical operations, security fencing, the rifle range is not currently an issue concerning the FAA at this time, but should things change it could be an issue, critical aircraft etc.

Discussion followed and comments from attendees. Jason Hoke, we need to include everything in the plan whether or not we think the FAA will fund it or not because if it's on the plan we can't find the money. If it's not in the plan, we cannot work on behalf of this region to find the funding so everything must be there. First Responders Hangar with Triage, utilized by Public Safety, Trooper, EMS, and Forestry & Fire Attack. Need for putting in a re-load base for heavy air tankers so they don't have to go to Fairbanks or Anchorage for initial attack. **Mike Trimmer to provide requirements for heavy tankers to Jen so it can be passed on to DOWL** for inclusion in the plan. Mike also brought up land use around the airport, DNR has active timber sales on parcels around the airport. The land use plan needs to be accurate and show owners. Some opportunities include tie down space, potential for funding of T-hangars through the EDA, attracting other businesses. A tractor trailer of amazon boxes coming to the post office every day from Fairbanks, fly it in instead of trucking, this will also result in less wear and tear on the highways. A deep-water port is 115 MI south of us. This highway is going to more pragmatic to get stuff from the deep-water port to GKN and fly north. Trucking companies are looking for a HUB. GKN is a HUB, it is the biggest piece of infrastructure we have in this area. This area has 14.2% unemployment and the highest out migration in the state. We can't get aircraft for initial attack, GKN Development is an opportunity for a reload base and to stage a heavy airtanker that can make the difference between catching or losing a fire. Remote Grocery Deliveries from Freddy's and Walmart in GKN instead of Ted Stevens. There are many opportunities. Jason Jordet (MY APPOLOGIES IF I BUTCHERED THIS ONE) IRF is an issue through the Copper Valley Mountain Pass. A reload base and staging a heavy airtanker at the GKN would eliminate the need for IRF or flying out of Fairbanks. This can make the difference between catching and losing a fire. A larger tanker needs 5000x75 minimum, cannot

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bring C130 aircraft conditions are too tight for taxi, turnaround. ALP needs to account for and designed for use of tankers. This elevates the need for airport extension for safety.

Joe Bovee: Would the plan show aeronautical and non-aeronautical land use plan even though the FAA is not funding non-aeronautical. Judy, Yes, the FAA may fund an access road to a non-use. FAA must review and sign off on the ALP, even if it has things that are not being funded by the FAA.

Trooper McGinnis: DOT team squared away out here common-sense approach to meeting challenges.

Bruce Cain: Thank you, it is very inspiration to see the effort in our community and as a group. I Echo the approach to have a comprehensive planning efforts to include things we have in our vision. We are in the middle of nowhere and halfway to everywhere. Logistically we are a center. There are no float planes because there are no float ponds. The closest are Meyers Lake, 60 miles away and one 25 miles away that is private. Long Lake Hill is still in 1941 construction, needs to be top of the DOT priority list.

Justin McGinnis: We need to remember the need to serve smaller planes .185's ,206's, super cubs etc. all use the public airports, appreciates the big picture but keep in mind the continued use of smaller aircraft in the state.

Commissioner Anderson: Development and focus in this area is a priority for the Governor. We need to get this draft ALP is independent so we can go after and see what's possible but the RPO can drive the process. DRAFT ALP by next RPO meeting.

John Becker – Appreciate the DOT support and suggestion to form this RPO.

Next steps: DRAFT ALP in 1 month, by April 19th RPO meeting. Judy will spearhead the drawings and send to the RPO. A DRAFT ALP, aerial with a plan overlay, can be used for funding from other sources. DRAFT in hand ASAP, Legislature needs something sooner, August 1 deadline, for the signed off ALP.

VI. Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 19, 2023, 5pm

VII. Adjournment: 7:08 *Motion to adjourn by Judy, 2nd by Gary, Motion Passed.*