



Alaska Long Range Transportation Plan Transportation Stakeholders Group, Meeting #2

May 28, 2014
1:00 PM–4:30 PM

HDR
2525 C Street
Fourth Floor Conference Room
Anchorage

Staff Attendees:

Michael Crabb (DOT&PF)
Eric Taylor (DOT&PF)
Marcheta Moulton (DOT&PF)

Alan Meyers (Parsons Brinckerhoff)
David Rose (Parsons Brinckerhoff)
Keyur Shah (Parsons Brinckerhoff)

Tom Brigham (HDR)
Jessica Conquest (HDR)
Julie Jessen (HDR)

Stakeholder Attendees:

Donna Gardino, FMATS
Reuben Yost, AMHS
Jennifer Witt, DOT&PF
Robert Venables, Marine Transportation
Advisory Board
Brian Lindamood, ARRC

Kirk Warren, AIDEA
Lori Schanche, MOA
Kathie Wasserman, AK Municipal League
Judy Chapman, DOT&PF
Andy Hughes, DOT&PF
Craig Lyon, MOA-AMATS
Jimmy Smith, DCCED/DCRA
Shelley Potter, DOT&PF
Jessica DellaCroce, DOT&PF
David Levy, Alaska Mobility Coalition

Stakeholder Attendees on the Phone:

Mitzi Barker, RuralCAP
Lee Ryan, Aviation Advisory Committee
Denise Michels, City of Nome
Roxanne Bash, WFL

Guests

Lois Epstein, The Wilderness Society

Meeting Overview

A meeting was held with the Transportation Stakeholder Group (TSG) on May 28, 2014 to continue the conversation about the Alaska Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The purpose of this meeting was to share plan issues identified via public input to date, review and consider the Alaska transportation system performance emphasis, and to review and provide input on plan goals, strategies, and actions. David Rose from Parsons Brinckerhoff (PB) provided a baseline conditions update on the Alaska Aviation System and Keyur Shah (PB), provided pavement and bridge baseline conditions update and an explanation of the Preliminary Capital Improvements Plan (CIP).

The central component of the meeting was discussion, which was facilitated by Julie Jessen (HDR), and focused on likely future scenarios and what plan strategies should be used for this LRTP update. The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:30 PM.

Note: Questions and comments from stakeholders and the planning team in this summary are a synopsis of the meeting's dialogue. When appropriate, planning team responses have been supplemented to supply complete responses.

Minutes from this meeting, and all advisory and public meetings, are available on the project website: www.dot.alaska.gov/lrtpplanupdate.

Meeting Materials

- Handouts
 - Agenda
 - 11x17 Map showing transportation infrastructure with 10-year forecast of major Capital Improvements Projects
- PowerPoint presentation

Meeting Summary

Introductions

Julie Jessen (HDR) opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking them for taking part in this important process. Julie explained that this was the second in a series of Transportation Stakeholder Group planning meetings that will be held during development of the LRTP update. Julie went over the purpose of the meeting, which was to discuss public input to date, review and consider the Alaska transportation system's performance, and review and provide input regarding what the updated plan's goals and strategies should be and what actions should be taken.

Julie reminded the group that some of the takeaways from the first TSG meeting were:

- The project team needs to look at the how transportation and other infrastructure needs intersect
- A good implementation strategy needs to be created
- Maintenance of existing infrastructure is a huge issue across modes
- Safety, congestion, and connectivity are key focus points
- Future conditions show challenges and opportunities
- Transit, public transportation, and non-motorized transportation need a larger role in plan

Julie also shared a summary of public input received to date:

- Maintain, preserve, and upgrade existing infrastructure first
- Expand the system and improve access to remote areas
- Stay away from mega projects
- Provide better freight and passenger service to rural communities
- Improve transit service
- Add safety improvements such as more side walks and bike paths
- Consider long-term costs and benefits, climate change, accessibility and other agencies' roles

Lori Schanche (MOA) suggested that use of the term "bike paths" be replaced with "bicycle facilities" because this term is more general and includes bike paths and bike lanes. She noted that by using the term "paths" the audience may incorrectly assume that bikes are not allowed on roads.

Meeting Presentation

Prior to the general discussion, David Rose provided an overview of the baseline conditions of the Alaska Aviation System. David then turned the floor to Keyur Shah, who discussed the baseline conditions for pavement and bridges within the system, and provided an overview of the preliminary capital improvements plan.

David walked attendees through the general funding source for aviation, discussed how the funding is used, identified capital needs, and provided a general backdrop of how the aviation transportation system is used today and how it will be used in the future. He noted that the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) is unique in that it owns so many airports. In addition to airports owned by the State, there are also numerous private airports and military airports, and a few municipally-owned and federal airports located in the State of Alaska. Alaska receives the highest amount of federal funds for aviation per capita. These funds are provided through: (1) an airport trust fund acquired via user fees collected across the country (Airport Improvement Program - AIP) and (2) from the federal general fund, which has more competition for its resources.

David provided a graphic that showed federal funds allocated to Alaska airports and the respective local match. David explained that passenger facility charges are used by airports to match federal funds and that this represents a true user fee. Twenty-nine Alaska airports qualified for primary entitlements in 2014. In order to qualify for this, an airport must have more than 10,000 enplaned passengers. David noted that, when looking at planned projects and the amount of money available for them, the numbers don't add up. Between now and 2016, \$290 million per year in capital improvement projects is planned. This is a larger amount than what can be provided through the AIP and other funding sources.

David explained that a pilot program to identify airport needs was completed at 18 airports in 2013. The results of the analysis to date found that there is a big deficit between capital needs and the ability to fund them. He suggested that there needs to be a different approach to project prioritization.

Jessica DellaCroce (DOT&PF), project manager for the statewide aviation system plan and the pilot needs assessment at 18 airports that David referenced, commented that DOT&PF needs to work it into the Aviation Project Evaluation Board (APEB) evaluation criteria. The staff is going to analyze 30 more airports this summer and make a micro spending plan. She stated that the spending plan needs to be consistent with the project prioritization process. She said that for a long time, DOT&PF did not inventory needs because it couldn't afford to address them all.

David Rose confirmed that the LRTP aims to assess the current and future needs for each of the modes, in a similar way, over the 20-year period, in part by looking into the development and capital improvement projects already planned. David added the project team will need to be realistic in its description of the efficiency of each system into the future based on available funding.

Next, Keyur Shah presented baseline road pavement conditions. In looking at the projected remaining service life of pavement for every road mile in the State, as of 2014, 45 percent of State roadways have no remaining service life. Although the National Highway System (NHS) was not in as poor condition as the rest of the State roadways, there is still a significant amount of pavement that will need to be replaced or repaired. In the case of bridge condition, Keyur stated that bridge condition is similar to what it was in 2008. In discussing the preliminary CIP, although the plan is a work in progress, the project team has started looking into the total needs for the committed projects planned for construction within the next 10 years, and the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)—the specific projects to which the state is committed for the next four years. The LRTP technical analysis will consider the assumption that all the CIP projects will be constructed and consider how the transportation system would then perform. The project team will then ask critical questions, such as: *is that a level of service that we want?*

Donna Gardino (FMATS) asked if the project team is incorporating Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) requirements for statewide planning into the LRTP. David Rose replied that the project team will, and that this will be shown in a policy plan. The update will be in compliance with federal law and, as a result of MAP-21, the LRTP will be performance-based. Turning to the Preliminary Capital Improvement Plan pie chart in the PowerPoint, David stated that 41% of the 10-year CIP allocation is for projects that are preservation/asset management-related. The modernization category (34%) includes projects that make the infrastructure more modern by improving safety and making it more productive. The remaining category is directed at new infrastructure (25%).

Jennifer Witt (DOT&PF) asked if the focus of the CIP is on surface transportation. Keyur confirmed that the information presented to the TSG is focused on surface transportation at this moment, but that the final product will include marine and other modal projects as well. Keyur showed a slide that displayed how recent revenues have been beneath the average historical revenues applied to transportation. He suggested that the 10-year list of improvement projects will likely turn into a 15-year list. This revenue projection included all forms of revenue.

In summary, the emerging conclusions found to date include:

- Airport investments need to be aligned with goals and priorities, with a focus on maintenance of existing infrastructure
- A growing backlog of pavement needs
- Funding is uncertain
- CIP needs to account for more than 10 years worth of projects
- Need to account for growth in urban centers and keep up with connectivity needs

In closing, David added that the plan will be more policy and performance driven. The level of funding from the federal government will not be as high in future years. In addition to having to provide for a vast system, there are new and additional needs that will have to be addressed. Julie then made a short presentation on the policies, strategies, and actions used to help guide the last LRTP planning process. She explained that the goal for this stakeholder discussion was to set new strategies and actions for this LRTP update.

Stakeholder Discussion

Note: Questions and comments from stakeholders and the planning team in this summary are a synopsis of the meeting's dialogue. When appropriate, planning team responses have been supplemented to supply complete responses.

David Levy (Alaska Mobility Coalition) explained that there has been a push during the past few years at the legislative level to have a transportation trust fund. He thinks it is something that will eventually come about and could potentially solve the current funding problems.

David Rose responded, saying that the way he views the LRTP and funding is by focusing on how the State wants the transportation system to perform over the next 20 years. Then it must determine how much it would cost to achieve that performance level. If the State can't afford it all, then it is tasked with determining what it wants the most and then must determine how it will achieve it.

Scenarios

David Levy said that there is a disconnect in our State. In other states, transportation infrastructure is funded by fuel taxes and registration fees. These taxes and fees are raised when more money is needed.

David stressed that his point was that this disconnect will need to be addressed at some point. He stated that he represents the community transportation industry, and that he thinks there needs to be a strong emphasis in the plan on how the State intends to move people regionally.

Lee Ryan (Aviation Advisory Committee) noted that the AIP program funding is higher for Alaska because of all of the airports smaller than 10,000 enplanements. He added that one of the areas where having more federal funding puts the State at a severe disadvantage is the federal requirements that are associated with the funding. These requirements often necessitate that certain improvements be made, and dictate where the funds can be used. Lee added that another big chunk of the funding goes to Runway Safety Areas (RSAs). He suggested that Federal funding versus state funding is something that should be considered. He noted that 20-year grants require a 7.5% state match, with that coming from the general fund. He said that the federal government is lenient when it comes to smaller airports because they recognize that there are some areas where their standards can't be met. Lee said he sees being less reliant on federal funds as an opportunity. With state-funded projects there is a more streamlined process with less environmental documentation required. He is hopeful that the project team will use risk assessments as a prioritization component.

Brian Lindamood (ARRC) stated that the reality of the situation is that federal funds provide a lot of our State's capital infrastructure money. Projects are undeveloped because the amount of time spent on the project development cycle is greater than the political cycle that is funding it. Brian stated that part of the issue may be that the State throws all of its money into one pot and then "goes at it." He suggested that the State take more time to look into the long-term maintenance costs associated with its projects.

David Levy suggested that Wilson's bill helped to create criteria for projects across the State. The bill failed because there is a philosophical difference within the legislature about how much control voters should be given to help make funding decisions. Alaska doesn't want to be like California, which gives voters a significant amount of power when it comes to determining the distribution of funding.

Brian stated that if we continue to fund projects incrementally, then we will only get projects that are partially completed because they are more prone to being held up by the political process.

David Levy suggested that a regional transportation authority is needed to empower more local decision-making.

Kathie Wasserman (Alaska Municipal League) said that she thought that this conversation was putting an unrealistically positive spin on the situation. She stressed that the legislature determines how much money DOT&PF receives. The State needs to plan for the worst-case scenario; the situation will not get any better in the future. She noted that the root cause is political dysfunction, and therefore, because funding is drying up, the best chance for getting money from the legislature is to be working on a project that they are passionate about.

Judy Chapman (DOT&PF) noted that while the funding available is decreasing, the standards that have to be met are increasing.

Robert Venables (MTAB) suggested that projects need to be prioritized based on public safety and the greatest need, rather than being based on regulatory needs.

Judy suggested that by using State dollars to fund its projects, the State is really utilizing a form of state's rights. She said that currently the State spends funds to acquire land that it cannot immediately use for construction. It needs to avoid the federal strings that bind it forever from exerting its rights.

Robert stated that the size of projects that the State takes on is going to continue to shrink. He thinks this is a result of something greater than just financing issues. He suggested that the State maintain what it has first and then, if there is any funding left over, it can look into new projects.

Andy Hughes (DOT&PF) suggested that consideration should be given to identifying the level of service to which the State wants its transportation systems maintained. He stated that all of our roads have years left in them. It is the pavements that have zero life. He added that pavement is patchable. In the Southeast, some roads are even being converted back into gravel roads due to lack of use and the cost of repaving.

Jessica DellaCroce (DOT&PF) said that there is a demand for a high performance transportation system at minimal local cost because the State has been receiving federal dollars to maintain its roads. The public just expects that the status quo will be maintained.

Jennifer said that she wants to look into whether or not the state is using the correct standards for determining whether or not improvements need to be made. She asked if we are using the appropriate metrics given the new funding environment. She noted that planning will be more challenging due to the fact that Alaska is facing reduced federal support and can no longer rely on a steady funding source. She asked how the State can adequately plan when it can't rely on steady funding. She suggested that the best offensive move the State can make is to learn how to focus its money. She asked if the LRTP will be structured in such a way that it really informs us how to make our decisions.

David Levy said that the State does not make enough money from its gas tax to cover everything. He suggested that using a dedicated transportation fund would allow for a better understanding of where the money is actually being allocated.

Kathie Wasserman (AML) added that there was a bill proposed to the legislature that would do away with the taxes. Robert noted that we have a targeted audience, and we need to remember that.

Brian commented on how there are a lot of other modes of transportation that need to be accommodated through this LRTP. He provided the example of ATVs, which are often looked at from a recreational standpoint, but are often utilized as a primary means of transportation in rural areas. Despite this, there are no ATV plans. In addition, there are numerous safety issues associated with ATVs. Brian suggested that if we want to embrace the uniqueness of the state, the nontraditional modes of transportation need to be recognized. Denise Michels (City of Nome) suggested that this is really an equity concept. Brian replied that the issue goes beyond that because the ATVs exist outside the traditional road system, yet still have hundreds of people a day on them.

David Rose addressed the group, saying that what he has heard during the discussion was that, looking into the future, we need to set plan scenarios. Scenarios based on the assumption that in the future the current revenue sources don't change. By doing this, the LRTP will be planning for the worst-case scenario. Jennifer suggested that the worst-case scenario may in fact be that funding is reduced below current levels.

David Rose said that one of the goals of this discussion was to put a strategy together that will help the project team determine how to approach the future. Directing the group back to the plan strategies Julie had covered at the beginning of the group discussion, David asked the group what type of scenarios they wanted to identify for this process.

Denise noted that the plan should note that many local roads are not included. David Rose agreed that under the worst-case scenario for funding, it is likely that such roads will be left out. Denise added that there will most likely be an emphasis on national highways. Rural roads will not be addressed.

Brian suggested that the plan should show what the road network is like today, what it would take to maintain them as they are today, and what it will look like if they are not maintained. Robert noted that such an approach would be good, so long as it does not appear that the plan is “crying wolf,” and making the outcome seem worse than it really would be. Brian agreed that the plan would need to be written in a language that the audience understands.

Andy asked if the future includes a state-maintained system. Over time there has been an effort to remove local roads from the state-maintained system so that they become the responsibility of the respective local governments (such as a municipality or the associated borough).

In general, the group decided that the following are potential scenarios that should be considered as part of the plan:

Worst-Cast Scenario

- Political dysfunction continues
- Federal requirements increase
- Federal funding decreases
- Municipal/local matches reduced
- Planning function continues to be stop/start
- Project size shrinks
- User expectations increase beyond what the public is willing to fund

Positive Scenario Actions to Be Included in LRTP

- Tie regulatory actions into public safety need
- Use State funding so that there are fewer requirements
- Maintain the base system first
- Define realistic levels of maintenance
- Match evaluation standards to what the public thinks
- Make hard, short-term decisions
- Consider additional fees
- Look into “nontraditional” modes that are used both recreationally and non-recreationally as being methods of transportation
 - e.g. ATVs and snowmachines
 - Provide State standards for “nontraditional” modes of transportation
- Provide equal focus on all modes of transportation
- Consider fees
- Make plan less urban-centric
- Develop ROW instrument
- Reduce emphasis on NHS, and include rural roads
- Provide if/then description of the transportation network based on funding scenarios

Other considerations

- Utilize a Regional Transit Authority model
- Determine the focus of the plan
- Make local roads part of the state system
- Create dedicated fund for transportation projects
- Provide consistency across regions
- Consider federal requirements

- Utilize a risk assessment and decision matrix
- Assess the development cycle and timelines
- Create criteria and priorities

Julie reminded the group of the strategies used for the last LRTP and asked if they thought these are still applicable. The group suggested focusing on the following:

- Prioritize Needs
- Manage for Results
- Constrain Needs
- Increase Revenues

Brian said that he didn't see where we looked at optimizing overall transportation networks in the last master planning effort. He cited the Juneau Access project as a good example of this because it would build a road to relieve the ferries, but does not take into account that ferries would still be needed to get to Juneau in the first place. He added that when he goes to Fairbanks he does not use the train, but yet ARRC provides service there when flying and driving are more preferable options. He suggested that we look at the State as a whole and determine whether or not there needs to be a pipeline or an airport, or if it is sufficient to just provide road access.

Andy added that some roads are better at long distances rather than short distances and that this should be taken into consideration as well. Brian suggested that the project team manage its model network for the most cost-effective outcome.

David Rose asked that the group help the project team define "prioritization of needs". Andy added that the strategy "Manage for Results" is also unclear. What do they mean by results?

Julie broke the attendees into groups of three and asked them to brainstorm what actions they would recommend under each of the strategies.

Prioritize Needs

The group built this strategy by assigning it the definition of: optimizing system performance while prioritizing and constraining needs. Supporting actions to this strategy that were identified by the group included:

- Find stable way to maintain what we have
- Don't grow without a mechanism in place to pay for it
- Safety first
- Preserve transportation system to a standard that matches its level of use
- Be systematic about prioritization of needs
- Tie prioritization to increases in cost and effectiveness
- Respond to occurring congestion and development
- Conduct cost/benefit analysis
- Facilitate new growth
- Consider metrics for needs
- Consider all modes
- Classify the infrastructure according to functional classification

Brian suggested that the state needs a stable way to maintain what it has. There needs to be some sort of gatekeeper to keep the transportation system from growing without the funding to support it.

Judy added that for aviation improvements, safety should be considered first (obstructed approaches, etc.) Donna suggested that the transportation system be preserved as it ties to land use. Reuben added that different levels of functionality should be applied for maintenance, as is appropriate given the level of use. Robert suggested that the group get away from a catalog of wish lists by being systematic about how they prioritize improvements.

Jennifer asked how the State should attempt growing its transportation system while also maintaining what it has responsibly. The perception is the general public does not think there is anything wrong with the current system. She said that the approach taken for this LRTP might be slightly different if we believe that the financial constraints will only be applicable for the first 10 years of the plan. David Rose replied that is the challenge with long-life assets. Brian said that on the private side, if you build an asset with a 50-year life, you get a depreciation cost. Brian gave the example of the 30 million dollar project in Muldoon that is projected to have a project life of over 30 years. He noted that, in theory, the State should only see a loss of a million dollars a year.

Andy suggested that there should be measures in place to determine cost-effectiveness. Donna added that these measures should assist the State in responding to occurring development and congestion. Brian said that he knows of some developments, such as the Takatnu Commons, where the businesses are required to deal with additional improvements. Andy confirmed that it is their responsibility to put up additional signals, etc.

Manage for Results

The group built off of this strategy by identifying supporting actions, which included:

- Tying the pavement management system to the asset management system
- Tying modal management into the equation for improved efficiency and cost effectiveness
- Base the investment emphasis of plan on the mission of the DOT&PF
- Create new evaluation criteria based on achieving performance targets
- Use pavement data to make investments
- Make plan emphasis on:
 - Access to essential services
 - Service to underserved populations
 - Freight
 - Education of voters/ residents
 - Utilization of local improvement districts (service areas) through State policy changes

Constrain Needs

There is a potential to merge this strategy with Prioritize Needs. The group built off of this strategy by noting that decisions should be risk-based. Supporting actions to this strategy that were identified by the group included:

- Lowering the acceptable level of service
- Managing expectations
- Creating a NEPA-like strategy for non-NHS roads
- Identify needs that reflect reality, but still reach a little
- Increase user fees
- Reduce construction

- Preserve transportation corridors in high growth areas
- Develop performance metrics to focus needs
- Consider funding sources in pursuing needs
 - Use a matrix to convey likelihood
- Include illustrative projects where there isn't known funding
- Leave a level of buffer for new mandates

Jennifer noted that “constraining needs” is just a way of saying “lowering your expectations.” Andy added that it includes lowering the level of service provided and increasing the fares. David Rose said he was hearing the group say that this category should really be called “Risk-Based Needs.” Jennifer suggested that there be a strategy for non-NHS roads. Judy asked if we constrain the plans based on constrained funding sources.

Reuben suggested that the plan should not constrain needs to the point that there is nothing to strive for.

Lois Epstein, observing the process as a member of the public, submitted the following comment:

The LRTP should include a scenario which analyzes elimination of one or more of the mega-projects. Those costs then could be used for other projects including pavement preservation, bridge upgrades, community roads (state money only), etc., and the analysis could qualify that.

Note that the mega-projects were mentioned as concerns by the public during the public meetings and should be examined in the LRTP, not accepted as givens.

Brian noted that only 2/3rds of the planned railroad to Point MacKenzie is being constructed because there isn't the funding available to finish the project.

Andy noted that the people here today may not be here tomorrow. Brian said there is a fear of constraining future budgets in Juneau

David Rose noted that one of the reasons for having a dedicated fund for transportation is to combat existing capital project funding so that there is enough money to complete the projects.

Increase Revenues

The group built this strategy by noting that changes to policy will be the means of achieving increases in revenue. Supporting actions to this strategy that were identified by the group included:

- Increase revenues to cover costs
- Look to creative models
 - Public-private partnerships
 - Toll authorities
 - Port authorities
 - Gas taxes
 - Infrastructure banks
 - Fees
 - Landing fees
- Identify cost causer vs. cost payer
- Create user fees through VMT tax

- Weight of car
- Weight of driver
- Look to Local Improvement Districts (LIDs)
- Create a local sales tax
- Create dedicated sales tax for transportation
- Maintenance agreements
- Create local service areas
- Institute policy changes
 - Develop/emphasize complete streets policy – where focus is on all users
 - Promote interagency collaboration during planning process/ cross-development land use
 - Emphasize corridors/ other uses, not just road corridors
 - Consider full lifecycle costs, including annual maintenance
 - Use federal dollars for big bang for the buck (align federal money) funding to project
- Review federal funding dollars, but note obligations are going up
- Manage expectations
- Consider alternative funding opportunities (e.g. Public-Private Partnerships)
- Need to maintain to improve elsewhere

Julie asked if there are any policy areas the group would change moving forward. Donna thought that in the future there will be a mandate for a streets policy. Complete streets policies look at all modes during creation of a project. The older population often does not have cars and therefore multiple modes will have to be given more consideration in the future. Robert asked about safety. He said funding sources may say that they can “pony up” for pavement, but not for other improvements. Donna replied that complete streets do not necessarily cost more. The end result is that there is now a bike lane and sidewalks for pedestrians.

Jennifer said there should be increased focus on areas where additional focus is needed, giving the example that the Parks Highway would not qualify for such additional attention.

David Levy suggested that the use of driverless cars will increase. Brian noted that plans are constantly updated and he thinks it would be helpful if there was more interagency consultation. Robert suggested that groups associated with other related uses (such as energy/utilities) should also be consulted. Brian said that, once documented, one would think the agency review could be relaxed a bit. Denise said that the planning coordination needs to be vastly improved. Andy said that planning for transportation and for land use should be coordinated.

Brian added that we need to look at funding from a lifecycle cost perspective. Andy asked if he was talking about annual maintenance. Brian said that the lifecycle cost would include annual maintenance.

Jennifer suggested that federal funds should be aligned to appropriate projects. Brian added that he thinks there needs to be more discussion of funding in this LRTP. He suggested that everyone just throws their money into the coffee can and that as the federal funding shrinks the needs will increase, and this will not work long-term.

Craig Lyon (AMATS) suggested that we have to manage the public’s expectations so that they understand that if we don’t increase the federal or state gas tax, we won’t be able to get anything done. David Levy stated that we need to look at alternative modes of funding, such as toll roads or Public-Private Partnerships. Kathie noted that Alaskans have listened for years and years about the next big thing coming when the State hasn’t been providing adequate maintenance. Reuben noted that we have to be careful. We must satisfy the federal highways requirements and not write this plan for the legislature.

Donna suggested that the State needs to provide improved access to social services (housing, employment, medical care). She added that we need to protect underserved populations as well through this process.

David Levy noted that we talk about educating ourselves and the legislature, but we haven't talked about educating the voters. He suggested that they are an incredible resource that needs to be made aware of the situation as well. Robert replied that he would caution the group not to use the term "education."

Andy noted that for rural transportation service in Southeast they want local improvement districts. The Ketchikan Gateway Borough deals with local roads by creating service areas. Residents pay into the local road system to provide the State with the resources it needs, similar to a municipality. Robert noted that we have been able to do that successfully in Haines.

David Rose stated that, regardless of the level of funding, the plan can provide overall guidance for the priorities that are set and the level at which the system is maintained or improved. The plan will set direction through how the funds are used. We need to make sure that the plan is still meaningful, despite the level of funding.

Julie suggested that the long-range plan should be providing guidance downstream rather than creating a wish list upstream. Hopefully what we are doing can inform plans so that they are more interconnected (MPOs, regional plans, etc.). David Rose noted that the plan will look for ways, given the current conditions, to reach our goals. Right now we are determining how to advance our goals through strategies that move us in the direction we want to go.

Donna asked if DOT&PF has ever applied for a TIGER grant. Jennifer replied that it has submitted for TIGER grants before, but DOT&PF has made the conscious decision not to compete with local governments for grants they could submit for on their own. Brian added that DOT&PF has the discretion to provide project match. Jennifer replied that DOT&PF can go beyond the match for the Mat-SU Borough if they can complete their corridor management plan. With the Federal Land Access Management Plan there has been some latitude for DOT&PF to help with the acquiring of additional funds. She added that there have been some partnerships. Robert added that it should be taken into consideration that the "devil is in the details."

David Levy asked if there are examples in the State where Public-Private Partnerships were used. Tom Brigham (HDR) provided the example of the Klondike Highway in Skagway that was built stronger so that ore haulers could use it. The mine developers paid for the improvement. Andy added that the mine developers just paid for the extra pavement.

Brian said he thinks part of the Fairbanks road network is State-owned, part of it is municipally-owned, and that it is obvious that the federal government built part of it. Robert said it should be part of a private-public partnership. Andy suggested that local service areas should be used in areas where boroughs have avoided taking the roads because they want the State to maintain them. Donna said she thinks a policy change should be used to transfer ownership. The cities are tasked with maintaining roads they do not own. Judy said that these local service areas are actually illegal because the roads were originally funded by the federal government. Andy replied that it needs to be done anyway.

Julie suggested that there may just need to be sidebars in the plan that help guide the audience through the planning process and to support or explain why certain decisions were made.

In addition to the strategies listed above from the previous LRTP, the group also added the following as stand-alone strategies for this plan:

- Consider which fund to use where
- Optimize modal consideration/efficiencies

Julie requested that if any of the meeting attendees have questions, or data to provide to the project team, that they please contact her or David Rose.

At this point in the discussion, Julie Jessen noted the time and closed the discussion.

Key Issues and Opportunities Summary

In general, it was agreed that the LRTP will need to address reduced funding and an increase in transportation system needs. It was suggested that a plan be devised to make the State less reliant on federal funding, while also better identifying and prioritizing its needs. The concept of making sure that all high priority projects benefit the greater transportation network was discussed at length. In addition, it was agreed that focus should be placed on funding projects in their entirety, from initial construction to long-term maintenance, to ensure that projects are fully completed and are not postponed by the political process. There was discussion of innovative methods of funding projects, such as increased user fees and Public-Private Partnerships. It was also agreed that there should be an evaluation conducted to identify where the burden of road maintenance should really be applied.

It was agreed that the prioritization of needs for this plan should focus on maintaining the current system first, and then making additional improvements based on available funding and resulting increases to efficiency. To manage for results, it was agreed that investments should be made based on the mission of the DOT&PF. To constrain needs, the group agreed that effort should be made to manage expectations and identify needs that reflect reality, while still reaching a little towards future advancement. To increase revenue, it was agreed that new methods of funding should be evaluated. In addition to the strategies identified in the past plan, the group also added that this plan should consider what funds should be used where to optimize modal considerations and efficiencies.

Next Steps

The next TSG meeting will be held in September 2014. The next meeting will provide updated information and provide an overview of the preliminary plan.

Notes by: HDR