

MEMORANDUM

Date: October 27, 2021

Kittelson Project No: 25697

To: Eric Taylor

From: Holly Spoth-Torres, Huddle AK

Subject: Freight Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

FAC Meeting Summary

SUMMARY:

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) held a Freight Advisory Committee (FAC) meeting on Wednesday, October 20, 2021, from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. using the virtual platform Microsoft Teams. A toll-free call-in number was available for those who couldn't join virtually, and the meeting was open to the public.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss which highway miles DOT&PF should ask the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) to designate as part of the Primary Freight Highway System (PFHS). The FAC members were provided with hard copies of maps (attached) and an online map to view the current and proposed freight corridors

(<https://baker.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/portfolio/index.html?appid=a7374a4f9e8842fcaa6d94c57a1c2920>) to see the entirety of the freight network. The first meeting covering this topic was held on September 22, 2021; Part 2 was held on October 13, 2021; and this meeting was Part 3. The discussion is documented in the table below and the FAC members will receive a survey within two weeks of this meeting asking them to prioritize the four sections of highway (the Elliott Hwy, the Richardson Hwy to Valdez, the Seward Hwy to the Port of Seward and to the Port of Whittier) being considered for the PFHS designation.

ADVERTISEMENTS:

The FAC members were invited to the meeting with an Outlook calendar invite. A public notice (attached) was posted on October 13, 2021, on the State of Alaska's Public Notices website (<https://aws.state.ak.us/OnlinePublicNotices/>) and the meeting information was posted on the project website (www.alaskamoves2050.com).

PRIMARY HIGHWAY FREIGHT SYSTEM

The project team opened the discussion with a clarification that the segment DOT&PF thought it had previously designated as a CRFC was not consistent with what FHWA ultimately designated back in 2018. The project team also announced that the FHWA submission deadline for the PFHS was extended to December 15, 2021.

The discussion focused primarily on two issues:

1. Which methodology should DOT&PF ask FHWA to use to determine how much mileage DOT&PF is able to designate for the PFHS?
 - a. FHWA Option 1 – Equal Allocation (or 18 mi., each)
 - b. FHWA Option 2 – Equal Allocation to the 18 “High Mileage States” (or 55 miles for Alaska)
 - c. DOT&PF creates a third option for submittal to FHWA that can be used for all jurisdictions to determine mileage allotment
2. Which roadway segment(s) should DOT&PF ask FHWA to designate in Alaska for the PFHS?

Agency	Comment/Question	Answer (if applicable)
FAC Members		
Roads and Highways Advisory Board	Does that mean that the segment between Fairbanks and the Dalton Hwy could be added to the PFHS without penalty to the Critical Rural Freight Corridor (CRFC)?	Correct. And if we designate additional PFHS, it increases our CRFC and Critical Urban Freight Corridor (CUFC) mileage.
Maritime Advisory Board	Did we receive guidance on whether partial designations are allowed?	DOT&PF doesn't want an isolated segment without connection to other freight corridors/systems.
Maritime Advisory Board	Is there strategic value in moving the designation around the state to address needs every so often? It would allow funding to flow.	Yes, it should be revisited every five years and could be re-designated somewhere else. However, DOT&PF would have to justify to FHWA why it would like to like to undesignate a segment.

Agency	Comment/Question	Answer (if applicable)
FAST Planning	Fairbanks MPO designated CUFC during the last update of its freight plan in 2016, and mostly focused on the connecting miles between Fairbanks and Anchorage. Fairbanks used about 20% of the available mileage and left 80% for Anchorage/AMATS to designate. FAST Planning supports the Elliott Hwy designation.	
Alaska Trucking Association	The Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) in the 2010 Census had over 50,000 residents. Why isn't KPB considered an urban area?	The US Census Bureau looks at population and density. Due to its lack of density, it doesn't meet the Census criteria to qualify as urban.
Alaska Trucking Association	The original Elliott Hwy designation was a mistake, so can some of those miles be redesignated to the Port of Whittier, rather than to Valdez?	DOT could consider looking at the Elliott Hwy, the Richardson Hwy to Valdez, the Seward Hwy to the Port of Seward, and to the Port of Whittier. These are four key areas not already on the PHFS.
Roads and Highways Advisory Board	Will those four segments (the Elliott Hwy, the Richardson Hwy to Valdez, the Seward Hwy to Port of Seward, and to the Port of Whittier) need to be prioritized?	Yes. There are limited PFHS miles available to Alaska and only nine miles for the rural corridors. All of those segments exceed nine miles so they will have to be prioritized.
Roads and Highways Advisory Board	Is DOT&PF able to ask for a correction on the original submission?	Yes., though that will just move CRFC mileage around and we still need PFHS miles.
Alaska Trucking Association	I would request that DOT&PF address the earlier error in paperwork.	To clarify, that paperwork issue is only moving around the CRFC mileage, outside of the PHFS. It would likely be simplest to take the 53 miles using methodology 2 to designate PFHS miles.

DOT&PF

Agency	Comment/Question	Answer (if applicable)
	Are there are unused PHFS miles? When talking about making designations, who is making these designations of these routes?	All PFHS miles are designated. FHWA may potentially designate more miles. If so, how should we determine the amount of mileage and where? Recommendations are coming from the FAC, one-on-one interviews, and working with DOT&P.
	Whatever the network, we should designate all available miles. Not opposed to the Elliott Hwy, and also open to Valdez. Any route to a port is a necessary and worthy investment. Seward, Homer, and Whittier are all ports to consider, as they have access roads that are not designated.	
	For port links, do we have freight volumes for those roadways?	Yes, that information will be provided.
	Sterling Hwy should be considered, which has the highest percentage of freight traffic on the road.	

ATTENDANCE

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