

Valley asks for deepwater port

by Al Campbell
Times Valley Bureau

Wasilla — The Mat-Su Forum has asked the borough assembly here to reactivate its now-dormant port commission and continue to press for a deepwater port near Point MacKenzie regardless of the status of the proposed Knik Arm crossing.

The borough government, which has long favored a deep-sea-class port in the Valley, has taken the position that little can be done to develop such a facility until and unless a crossing is built across the arm.

But directors of the Mat-Su Forum, a private, pro-development group here, say the local government should proceed with planning and lining up funding for a port, which they say will be needed even if the crossing is not built in the foreseeable future.

Forum chairman David Gleason said deepwater berthing at Point MacKenzie eventually will be needed to handle bulk cargo such as Beluga coal and natural gas, which cannot be shipped from existing Port

of Anchorage facilities.

"They should keep pushing for a port over here," Gleason said. While a crossing or causeway would enhance the port's usefulness by allowing for more diversified cargo, Gleason added, there could be plenty of business from docks in this area even without the crossing.

Gleason also said a Point MacKenzie port would enjoy an added advantage, in that it would be built far enough downstream from any likely bridge crossing to avoid objections from mariners.

Shippers and Anchorage port officials have expressed concern that a crossing could complicate navigation in Cook Inlet, particularly in the winter months when ice floes make piloting more difficult.

Gleason has written Borough Mayor Edna Armstrong DeVries, calling the borough's inaction on a port "short-sighted," and likely to lead to difficulties later when the time comes to work out joint jurisdiction with other governments.

A frequently discussed plan calls for establishment of an Upper Cook Inlet Port Authority, involving Anchorage, Mat-Su, and Kenai Peninsula local governments as well as state and federal agencies.

The letter to the borough mayor says "the time is right," to work toward such a joint authority, which eventually could lead to an integrated Upper Cook Inlet Port.

Mat-Su Borough Planning Director Bob Stickles says, however, the borough here is "ready and waiting" to reactivate port authority planning, but he insists any new activity is contingent on a Knik Arm crossing.

Stickles said it is almost 100 percent that a Mat-Su port could not be established without the crossing being in place.

If a crossing is approved, Stickles said, the Mat-Su Borough already has requests prepared seeking state funding for port studies and other assistance in developing the facility.

Panel seeks plans, funds for new port

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Meanwhile Tyler Jones, director of the Port of Anchorage, says the Anchorage Port Commission has no objection — in fact encourages — a "dual-port strategy" in Upper Cook Inlet, and a Point MacKenzie facility would appear a natural part of such a long-range plan.

Jones said the Anchorage commission sees no competition or damaging rivalry between two ports.

ASSEMBLY ACTION SUMMARY - Regular Meeting of October 30, 1984

Page 3

tem	Assembly Action	Administrative Action Required
13.	Resolution No. AR 84-303, a resolution of the Municipality of Anchorage providing for the appropriation of One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) as a contribution from the Port of	Municipal Clerk will advertise for public hearing for the meeting of November 20, 1984.

Anchorage operating fund balance to the Port of Anchorage's capital improvement budget to fund modifications to the Port of Anchorage's gantry cranes, was introduced and public hearing set for 11-20-84.

Anchorage Daily News Thursday, October 18, 1984 C3

Anchorage P&Z commission says no on Knik Arm Crossing

By LARRY MAKINSON
Daily News reporter

The Anchorage Planning and Zoning Commission turned thumbs down to the Knik Arm Crossing on Wednesday night, rejecting the concept of a bridge across Cook Inlet by a 7-0 vote.

"It's been held out there to be a panacea," said planning commission chairwoman Alicia Iden, "and it's just not so."

As an alternative, the commission voted to endorse widening the Glenn Highway to six lanes as far as the Wasilla cutoff, and to

widen the Parks Highway to four lanes as far as Wasilla.

The recommendations will be forwarded to the Anchorage Assembly and to Mayor Tony Knowles, as well as to the state Department of Transportation. The final decision of whether to build the bridge will be made by the Alaska Legislature.

Prior to voting on the bridge as a whole, the commission voted unanimously to eliminate from further consideration the proposed downtown bridge alignment. They cited dangers to marine navigation in the inlet and the disruptions to downtown traffic.

The actions came after a three-hour work session and a public hearing held Oct. 3 in conjunction with the Transportation Department.

"The costs — at least in my mind — far exceed the benefits," said commissioner Nancy Fisher.

In rejecting the bridge, several commissioners cited the planning department's findings that a crossing — which would cost an estimated \$550 to \$750 million — would draw funds from other vitally needed Anchorage road projects.

Other concerns were voiced about the effect

of the crossing on the governments on both sides of the bridge — an issue that was not addressed in the impact statement prepared by DOT.

"The governmental status quo would be a disaster," said commissioner Ted Burton.

The commission did vote to re-evaluate the need for the Knik Arm Crossing — and other alternatives, — by 1995, or when the developable land supply in the municipality dwindles to 10,000 acres. Currently, the municipal planning department estimates there are 29,000 acres of undeveloped residential land in Anchorage and Eagle River.

Anchorage Daily News Thursday, October 25, 1984 C7

Lack of notice on PCB shipment angers Seattle mayor

United Press International

SEATTLE — Seattle Mayor Charles Royer said he is upset that the Department of Defense failed to notify the city before a barge of soil contaminated with PCB was brought into Elliott Bay last week.

The barge left Anchorage on Sept. 28

with a load of sealed metal drums containing about 950,000 pounds of the contaminated dirt from Air Force bases in the Aleutians.

The cancer-causing chemicals were shipped to Seattle because Alaska has no approved disposal site for PCBs.

The barge arrived in Seattle last week

and has since been unloaded, with the dirt transported to an out-of-state disposal site, said Debbie Yamamoto, congressional activities coordinator for the regional Environmental Protection Agency.

"They report much better to the Congress than to the mayor," Royer said.