

Mayor pushes development

by Mitch Lipka
Times Writer

To spur economic growth in Anchorage, Mayor Tony Knowles this morning presented the Alaska Railroad Corp. with an unprecedented plan to turn 60 acres of tidal land at the mouth of Ship Creek, owned by railroad, into a major commercial development with high-rise buildings and parks.

The proposal for a municipal-

Railroad key to Ship Creek venture

Alaska Railroad safety violations

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ity-railroad joint venture apparently was well received by the railroad's board of directors.

Besides high-rise buildings, the plan calls for such facilities

as a dock for cruise ships, a new small boat harbor, all types of commercial development and the possibility of an aquarium or trade building, said Tyler Jones,

Anchorage port director.

If the railroad agrees to enter into a partnership with the municipality, work on the project could begin this year, city officials said.

"I think there is a vast opportunity for the railroad to foster a new kind of development in Alaska," Knowles said.

"We're interested in working with you," railroad President Frank Furpin told Knowles at the board meeting.

Jim Campbell, chairman of the board, said the railroad's directors will take formal action by Friday on the partnership request. The municipality holds an option on the land which is owned by the railroad and currently is leased to Anchorage Dredge and

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Railroad

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Dock Co. Inc.

Knowles emphasized the need to move swiftly on the project because of time constraints.

Some 2.2 million tons of gravel — enough fill for 10 acres — will become available to the municipality this year when a new city landfill is excavated at Ft. Richardson, Jones said.

Also, interest in the project has been expressed by two "large private corporations," said municipal Community Planning Director Bill Luria.

Officials declined to identify the companies.

To show the municipality's readiness to begin work immediately, Luria told the board that between \$5 million and \$7 million in cash is available for the project.

"So, the municipality brings a lot to the table," he said. "We do believe the time is right to move forward."

"It's an exciting proposal," Campbell said. However, the board would not take immediate action on Knowles' request for "a full commitment to the partnership concept."

"I would like some time to discuss this (with the board)," Campbell told Knowles. "We'll take some action on this before this meeting is over (Friday). We look forward to this."

The key to Knowles' plan is for the railroad and municipality to be unified in handling the project and get a major commitment from private industry.

In addition to the railroad owning the land, its main rail line runs past the area to be developed. Jones assured the railroad board that road access to the development will not get in the way of rail transportation.

Municipal Manager of Intergovernmental Affairs Chip Dennerlein is optimistic the railroad will make a commitment to the venture.

Friday, April 18, 1986, The Anchorage Times D-5

New tug-and-barge operation set to start

Times Business Staff

Totem Ocean Trailer Express will inaugurate a new tug-and-barge operation between Puget Sound and Alaska April 26.

Alaska Barge Lines will run a barge twice each month between Anchorage and Tacoma, Wash.

Gordon McMillan, top executive of the new barge line — a wholly-owned subsidiary of Totem Ocean Trailer Express, said the new service fills a market void. "We will be shipping building materials, mobile home modules, boats, machinery and other non-perishable goods," McMillan said.

He said the new barge line already has more

than 70 percent of its first barge filled.

The barge company will operate flat deck barge transporting containers and break-bulk cargo to the Alaska Railbelt. Its docks are located within Tote's terminals on the Blair Waterway of the Port of Tacoma, and at the Anderson terminal at the Port of Anchorage.

"We think this new operation will expand customer capacity and give us a better competitive edge in the future," McMillan said.

Tom Berry, marketing manager of Totem Ocean Trailer Express in Alaska, said the new barge line compliments the service already offered

by Tote.

Totem Ocean Trailer Express Inc., which has carried more than 12 billion pounds of cargo between Seattle, Tacoma and Anchorage areas, began service to Alaska Sept. 9, 1975.

During the first five years of its existence, Tote struggled against escalated fuel prices and rate wars — wars that saw the demise of smaller lines like Foss Alaska and Pacific Western Lines.

"There have been some casualties along the way but we think our excellent service will make it all work," McMillan said.

Sunday, March 2, 1986

Bringing new life to the waterfront

Anchorage is a waterfront city, but it's easy to forget that because so little of the city is built around the inlet. Mayor Tony Knowles wants to change that by attracting a major development to the mouth of Ship Creek. The idea of bringing waterfront amenities to the mudflats has been around for a long time; this latest proposal sounds promising and certainly deserves a closer look.

The mayor envisions a complex with a small boat harbor, a cruise ship dock, a park, shops, offices and residences, and a citywide attraction, such as a museum or aquarium.

However, many hurdles must be cleared before the mayor's dream becomes reality. Is the area seismically able to handle such a development? What effect will filling in tideflats have on Ship Creek? What could serve as the major attraction? And will private developers be interested in the terms the city and railroad could (or should) offer?

Assuming the city can put together a development package, public support will depend on what the development offers and how much it costs the city. Officials say they already have \$5 million from port revenue bonds and a state grant for a small boat harbor. That could work as seed money to attract the additional private investment that will be necessary — possibly as much as \$100 million according to one maximum, back-of-the-envelope estimate.

Mayor Knowles is moving fast with the idea, but he shouldn't rush it past the public. Though the administration began re-exploring the old question of waterfront development anew last summer, the Anchorage Assembly wasn't briefed on the current "concept" until Tuesday. Assembly members, sensitive to past incidents where Mayor Knowles delayed involving them, complained again.

The mayor now plans to involve the railroad and assembly in a steering committee to pursue the idea. That committee should have members from the general public, as well, and give citizens a voice in what the city does with the waterfront idea. A waterfront development at Ship Creek is a good idea whose time may finally have come, but the public needs to become more involved before the concept goes much further.

Anchorage News 4-7-86

northwest

Port association wants development group

United Press International

BEND, Ore. — An association representing Oregon's 23 port districts will ask the 1987 Legislature to create a state ports development commission.

Members of the Oregon Public Ports Association, ending a 3-day convention Saturday, voted 16-3 to ask for the legislation.

Under the association proposal, the commission's five members would be named by the governor. Other details, including qualifications of commission members and which areas of the state they would represent, have not yet been worked out.

The commission would have several purposes, including to:

- Represent port interests and capabilities in formulating state economic development, transportation, capital development and marketing.
- Assure a coherent and supportive state commitment toward local port districts.
- Provide technical assistance to ports.
- Encourage cooperation among port districts.

The commission, unlike a statewide port authority, would leave the day-to-day operations of ports up to local districts.

John M. Mohr, deputy general manager of the Oregon International Port of Coos Bay and president of the ports association, said the group has not lined up lawmakers to sponsor the proposal.

"We would like to have this introduced in the governor's legislative package," he said.

Mohr said port districts spent a lot of time in the 1985 legislative session "fighting for what we already had." By

creating a "cabinet-level commission," ports will have a greater voice in their future affairs, he added.

"We need some changes and we need to get some things done," Mohr said. "The system we're using now is seriously flawed."

Part of the proposal asks the state to spend \$75 million to \$100 million during the next five to seven years to fund port public works programs.

The money could come from entitlement funds, lottery revenue and the general fund, Mohr said.

"The real problem in Oregon is there are not enough jobs," Mohr said. "Money should be directed toward projects that create jobs."

The state's largest port, the Port of Portland, gave its backing to the plan, but opposition was voiced by officials from some of the state's smaller ports.

Wilbur Temyik, a commissioner for the Port of St. Lawrence, said he is worried that the concerns of smaller ports would be pushed aside if a commission is formed.

Sen. Bob Packwood, R-Ore., told the port representatives Friday he could support a statewide ports commission if the panel could succeed in getting ports to agree on priorities for projects in the state.

In the past, he said, ports have competed for projects, putting him in the difficult spot of choosing one port over another.

"If you can get a commission that will say, 'This is the No. 1 project,' and can get everyone to agree, that would be wonderful," Packwood said. "My hunch is, that agreement would be hard to come by."

Wednesday, February 5, 1986, The Anchorage Times

Corps to dredge city port

by Bob Peterson
Times Writer

The Army Corps of Engineers this year will do its own dredging of the Port of Anchorage turning basin rather than bid out the annual maintenance job.

The Corps wants to put its hopper dredge Essayons to the test in Alaska waters. The 350-foot-long seagoing dredge will be temporarily assigned to Alaska by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Portland District office for one week of dredging in July, said Pat Richardson, the Corps' assistant public affairs officer in Alaska.

The Corps is obligated to maintain a minimum turning-basin depth of 35 feet.

Richardson said the Essayons uses a draghead to remove silt, whereas most contractors have been removing silt with a clam-shell dredge and barging the solids to a nearby depression, or spoils area, in Knik Arm where it is dumped. The Essayons uses four inboard and submersible pumps to drive silt through the draghead, a U-shaped suction device that is dragged along the bottom, and into a shipboard hopper.

An area 3,000 feet long and paralleling the Port of Anchorage dock will be dredged, and an estimated 450,000 cubic yards of silt will be removed. Richardson said the Essayons will leave for Portland immediately after its work is completed in Anchorage, and added that no further dredging is planned for this year in Anchorage.

The Essayons was built by Bath Iron Works, Bath, Maine, in 1982, and given the Army Corps motto as its name. Essayons means, "Let Us Try," in French.

A hopper dredge can temporarily store sediment in a 6,000-cubic-yard "hopper," said Richardson. Two 1,450-horsepower pumps supply the power needed to pick up and move silt from a depth of 94 feet. Smaller suction dredges cannot reach the bottom of the turning basin, especially at high tides. Therefore, clamshells on long cables have been used to pick up the sedimentary deposits.

The Essayons can dredge and move at 2½ knots. It is a deep-water dredge capable of working in 10-foot-high swells. When its hopper is full, the Essayon will lift its draghead and steam to a spoils area and drop its silt.

The dredge has a maximum speed of 14 knots and its main engines are two 3,600-horsepower diesels. The dredge has a crew of 28.

* TOTE's New Barge Line

TACOMA — Despite lean times in the Alaska trade, Totem Ocean Trailer Express is diversifying, as a major investor in a new barge service between Puget Sound and Anchorage.

The new service, to be called Alaska Barge Lines, Inc., will start operations in early March, according to Gordon McMillan, that firm's president. Current plans are to operate two tugs and two flat-deck barges, which will shuttle between Anchorage and either Seattle or Tacoma twice monthly. Neither the

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* BARGE

(Continued from page 3)

Puget Sound port nor the equipment lessor has been chosen, McMillan said.

McMillan said the barge service, expected to reach Anchorage in eight to nine days, will carry "non time-sensitive stuff, at the lower end of the rate spectrum." TOTE ships make the trip in 66 hours. McMillan doesn't expect much customer overlap between TOTE and the barge firm, but said some economies of scale might be achieved. □

A-6 Sunday, March 2, 1986, The Anchorage Times

Public Meeting

ANCHORAGE PORT COMMISSION
MEETING
March 3, 1986
Regular

LOCATION: Terminal No. 3
Conference Room
Port of Anchorage

TIME: 7:30 p.m.

CANCELLED

ENDA

I. Call to Order
II. Minutes
III. Old Business
A. Nautical Tours Lease Request
IV. New Business
V. Port Director's Reports
VI. Persons/Items Not On Agenda
VII. Items for Next Meeting Agenda
VIII. Adjournment
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