



**ASSEMBLY PUBLIC WORKS AND FACILITIES
COMMITTEE AGENDA**
January 26, 2026 at 12:00 PM

Assembly Chambers/Zoom Webinar

<https://juneau.zoom.us/j/91849897300> or 1-669-900-6833 Webinar ID: 918 4989 7300

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to acknowledge that the City and Borough of Juneau is on Tlingit land and wish to honor the indigenous people of this land. For more than ten thousand years, Alaska Native people have been and continue to be integral to the well-being of our community. We are grateful to be in this place, a part of this community, and to honor the culture, traditions, and resilience of the Tlingit people. *Gunalchéesh!*

C. ROLL CALL

Members Present In-Person: Chair Ella Adkison; Neil Steininger; Nano Brooks

Members Present Online: Alicia Hughes-Skandijs

CBJ Staff Present: EPW Director Denise Koch; EPW Deputy Director Nate Rumsey; Administrative Officer II Rose Evans; Chief Engineer John Bohan; Streets & Fleets Maintenance Superintendent Scott Gray; Utilities Production & Treatment Manager Dr. Chad Gubala; Acting Transit Superintendent Matt Carpenter; Engineering Contract Administrator Greg Smith, RecycleWorks Operations Manager Stuart Ashton; Contract Specialist Cristian Crabtree.

CBJ Staff Online: Chief General Engineer Jenny Smith (Zoom); City Architect Liam Knecht (Zoom); Utilities Engineer II Alan Steffert (Zoom); City Clerk Breckan Hendricks (Zoom); Communications Director Ashley Heimbigner (Zoom)

Others: Assembly Member Paul Kelly (Zoom)

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - The agenda was approved.

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. December 01, 2025 Meeting Minutes – - Approved with no changes

F. AGENDA TOPICS

1. Draft FY2027 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Projects and Schedule - Informational Only

Director Koch gave an overview of the Draft FY2027 CIP Projects and Schedule. She said they did several months of work before submitting it into the record publicly and starting

this conversation, which included discussions at the Assembly Retreat to get a sense of the Assembly's desires and how to integrate revenue reductions into the Capital budget and talking to the different departments about what projects are important to them. She mentioned they will come back to this committee on March 16th with the 6-Year CIP to give them a concept of the big projects that are on the horizon and it's an opportunity for this committee to discuss or ask questions about particular projects in the FY2027 CIP.

Mr. Rumsey presented the draft FY2027 CIP and schedule. He stated that on December 15th, they had the different departments provide their submissions so they could start incorporating their priorities into the CIP, which was not included in the draft schedule. He talked about a memo they received providing additional revenue forecasts for FY27 and direction regarding the 1% voter approved projects and 3% temporary sales tax funding, which reflected how they captured projects for the FY27 CIP. Also included in the draft resolution is the FY2027 CIP list of projects by funding source proposed, departmental submissions, and the updated version of the table showing the voter approved sales tax. He explained they are not requesting any action today from the committee but are there to answer questions, and they will be back in March to provide more information.

Ms. Evans noted Assembly Member Kelly was online.

Ms. Hughes-Skandijs asked if they were going to continue swapping out their funding source and paying it back every year to stay on schedule with doing street work like they did last year. She stated when they changed the utility rates she was concerned they were not set high enough to cover the funding to do the maintenance and street work they needed to do, even though it was a huge imposition on affordability for the population.

Director Koch responded this is actually the third year they are doing this. She stated they also talked about that amount of increased revenue not being enough to keep pace with their capital needs for the utility. She expressed the Assembly will ultimately make the final decisions on what they want to see in the capital budget, but unless directed otherwise, she would continue using some of the sales tax money for the utility portion of the road projects to keep pace and have the efficiency of having utilities and streets work together to complete a street.

Mr. Bohan commented this is the third year in recent times they have utilized street sales tax to get to a complete street and keep work going, and is a pattern they have done over the past 20 plus years when utility rates are lacking and they need to balance projects. He pointed out the Assembly made the decision during the utility rate setting process to earmark an amount of standalone street sales tax for the FY28 CIP, so they will probably see more next year.

2. Streets - Berm Info and Priority for Plowing - Informational Only

Director Koch thanked Mr. Gray and his staff for their tremendous work through the record-breaking amount of snow they received. She noted they call in contractors when exceeding their capacity, and contractors were called in pretty early, who mostly did the

snow hauling sort of work. She mentioned even though the recent snow emergency piece was put at the front of the memo, they had planned on talking about berms anyway. She said it has been evaluated multiple times in the past, and there does not seem to be any piece of equipment to make clearing berms fast or easy, and if the community and Assembly wanted more time spent on berms, it would be a substantial amount of time that would come at the expense of doing some of the road clearing they do. She understood that sometimes it can be confusing to know who maintains which streets, but there are maps on the website showing which roads are CBJ roads and a link to maps showing DOT roads.

Mr. Brooks thanked Mr. Gray for everything their department does in keeping the community accessible. He asked if there were looking at any permanent solutions ideas for the next time there is a major inundation of too much snow instead of putting it in a parking lot or dumping it in the channel.

Mr. Gray answered their solution is the multiple dumping sites they go to. He noted when there is a historical event, they get permission from DEC to dump in Gastineau Channel.

Director Koch added that dumping snow in Gastineau Channel is allowable under extraordinary circumstances, and they have to obtain authority from DEC to do that.

Mr. Steininger thanked Mr. Gray and his team for their work. He stated that he lives downtown and is a pedestrian more than a driver. He asked who has the responsibility for the clearing of sidewalks, particularly in the downtown business district.

Mr. Gray answered for streets in the downtown area, it is normally done by the laborers, who basically take care of clearing all the sidewalks in the downtown area, and anything up above 5th is done by residents. He said they also go out farther into Willoughby, 9th, Harbor View, and high school areas. He added that in the Valley they try to get most of the main road sidewalks, but it depends on how much snow they get and how much they can move back.

Mr. Steininger inquired if it was CBJ's responsibility to keep sidewalks clear within the core district, 4th street and below and the main business district, or if there was any shared responsibility with the building owners.

Mr. Gray responded some of the property owners take care of their own, but they try to get in there and do that.

Chair Adkison asked if they ever think about putting shovels on Parks and Rec trucks and using them as backup cleanup when they have large snow events like this and staff is strained and working overtime and equipment is a big issue. She said it seemed like they could take some workload off of the streets crew in unprecedented events like this.

Mr. Gray voiced that for snow removal purposes, a lot of the plowing has to be done with larger equipment, and Parks and Rec does not have the capabilities of doing that.

Director Koch added one of the challenges during these events are all the people wanting to help, but they would need a CDL to drive those pieces of equipment, which can be challenging and time consuming to obtain. She added they also have responsibilities of building maintenance, working on parking lots, and doing work for other CBJ facilities.

Mr. Brooks commented that a lot of people recognized that because there was so much going on, that the sidewalks in the residential areas were the last to get it, and people do not necessarily need a CDL to drive a regular truck with a plow on it, so that may be something Parks and Rec could justifiably do. He added there were about 6 to 10 trucks buried at one of the Parks and Rec facilities through the snow event they may could use to help. He asked if that was something that could be entertained if needed in the future.

Mr. Gray answered that pickup trucks are not big enough to move the amount of snow on the sidewalks. He explained they are trained to push back as if there is going to be another storm, so they push back as far as they can and a pickup truck cannot do that.

Director Koch added the Parks and Rec team, especially in building maintenance, had the critical job during the EOC of managing the work of removing snow from the roofs of buildings and moving snow away from the sides of the building after being removed from the roof. She noted they are also pretty maxed out during this event with things like that.

Chair Adkison asked how coordination went with DOT during this event, as she understood DOT can be challenging to work with on a day to day basis.

Director Koch expressed one of the values of an EOC is they wind up having that coordination, and they had a daily 4 p.m. standing meeting that included CBJ, Streets, DOT, school district, and Barlett Hospital, which was really helpful.

Mr. Gray stated they have a pretty good working relationship with the maintenance and operations crew, and if there was a situation where they could help each other, they did.

3. Utility - Drinking Water Production and Distribution issues in Dec and Jan - Informational Only

Director Koch explained she does not want to just come to them every 4 or 5 years and say they have a lot of capital needs and not hear from them in the interim if they are not talking about rates. She stated the long list for December and January was a combination of the continuing aging infrastructure and capital needs they have been hearing about. She noted the really cold weather was tough on the utility, and there is a lot that goes on to keep the seamless and invisible services of the utility working correctly. She shared this really hit the drinking water side of the utility more harshly than the wastewater side, and

their drinking water crew worked really hard and worked weekends, nights, and holidays to keep up. She added the drinking water treatment staff was also working overtime, as they told the community during this time to run a small trickle of water through their tap, but it lasted longer than anticipated, and they started to see a real decline in the reservoir water levels. Director Koch felt it was important for this committee to have a fuller understanding of the utility in between talking about rates.

Ms. Hughes-Skandijs thanked Director Koch for the information, as it is very useful and highlights how precarious and important the utility is to have seamless service.

Chair Adkison agreed it is helpful to be aware of all the things going on over there and how the system is old and needs help.

Mr. Steininger tied the list of issues back to the comment Ms. Hughes-Skandijs made earlier in the meeting related to concerns about the financial health of the utility and ensuring they have the money to address these needs. He wanted to make sure members of this committee and the Assembly were thinking about that.

Mr. Brooks asked what the description of instrumentation is in potable water distribution instrumentation.

Mr. Gabala responded that terminology means all of their potable distribution system and production system is controlled by devices known as PLCs, which are separate computers designed to have very specific timing phases so they can turn pumps on and off, coordinate activity to move water around, and program in feedback between reservoir levels and supply. Their water system stretches across the entirety of the CBJ and is a very large system, and they cannot move water around and produce it without having automation to assist them. He added that along with the ductile pipe and a variety of physical aging infrastructure, the devices that control all the automation and bring water are antiquated and no longer produced. They are working hard to replace them as quickly as possible.

Chair Adkison thanked Director Koch, Mr. Gabala, and crew for keeping water coming.

4. Transit - Ridership Stats for Suspended Routes and Microtransit - Informational Only

Director Koch expressed this was a continuation of a conversation and specific questions from the Committee about transit. She said there was a question about the ridership on the North Douglas Route before it was suspended, which was about three passengers per run with two runs per day. She stated the mayor also had a question about microtransit and on-demand transit, so they researched that and found microtransit is an on-demand service, whereas the majority of capital transit service is a fixed route service. She added there is also paratransit that is branded as capital access and a requirement of any bus system receiving federal dollars. She noted patrons have to qualify for paratransit and

have to have a short or long term disability, and the service has to be reserved in advance. Microtransit is much more similar to an Uber or taxi. They were not aware of any system in Alaska right now that has a fixed route, paratransit, and microtransit system all together, but Anchorage is looking at doing pilots on that. Director Koch expressed they put the cost per ride in the memo to help inform policy making and budgetary decisions the Assembly will eventually make, as there will be difficult tradeoffs the community, as funneled through the Assembly, is going to have to make on budget particularly this year. She pointed out that the fixed route system is generally the lowest cost per ride, but that changes depending on geography. She mentioned the survey done in 2024 with the community and riders was something they wanted to revisit periodically, which they may do in 2026, and they could ask the tradeoff questions about geography versus more frequent service in areas they have the densest usership.

Ms. Hughes-Skandijs asked if there was a way where they could say their fixed route service costs this much and microtransit costs this much, and the tradeoff is that they are paying a bit more for transit and if they want it, they could pay more for a ride.

Director Koch responded that she has not seen a model where a microtransit system also has a different fare structure, such as if someone wanted to use microtransit the fare might be higher than the fare for the fixed route system, but she would look into that. She felt that would be allowable, but they would have to do some research to make sure there was not some sort of requirement prohibiting it.

Chair Adkison inquired if there was any federal funding available for something like microtransit or only for paratransit and the fixed route system.

Director Koch understood the funding to be for the fixed route and paratransit system, but it might be different for places that do not have a fixed route system where microtransit is acting in lieu of their fixed route. She was not sure if they could receive federal dollars for both, but said she would get back to them on that.

Chair Adkison asked if in the event they are cutting more fixed routes, would it be possible to do microtransit for multiple areas of town.

Director Koch answered if the Assembly was interested in microtransit, there would need to be more planning and evaluation. She said if they as a community went into microtransit as a service, her recommendation would be to come up with criteria for which areas would get microtransit and which would not. She added they would need to have a lot more planning and discussing on where it would go.

G. CONTRACTS DIVISION ACTIVITY REPORT

1. November 22, 2025 to January 15, 2026

Director Koch acknowledged their Tlingit & Haida colleagues at the meeting who work with them on solid waste issues. She reminded the committee there is an MOU with Tlingit & Haida to work on solid waste issues and they are formally partners on waste and are always working hand in hand.

H. NEXT MEETING DATE

1. February 23, 2026 at 12:00 PM, Zoom & Assembly Chambers

I. ADJOURNMENT

ADA accommodations available upon request: Please contact the Clerk's office 36 hours prior to any meeting so arrangements can be made for closed captioning or sign language interpreter services depending on the meeting format. The Clerk's office telephone number is 586-5278, e-mail: city.clerk@juneau.gov.