

**ANCHORAGE METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS  
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Mayor's Conference Room, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
632 West 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Anchorage, Alaska**

**January 27, 2011  
1:00 p.m.**

Policy Committee members Present:

---

Name	Representing
Jennifer Witt*	Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities, Chief of Planning (DOT&PF)
Cindy Heil*	Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), Air Quality
Dan Sullivan	Municipal Mayor
Dick Traini	MOA/Municipal Assembly
Patrick Flynn	MOA/Municipal Assembly

Also in attendance

---

Name	Representing
Craig Lyon	MOA/Community Development Department (CDD)
Teresa Brewer	MOA/CDD
Alton Staff	MOA/Public Transportation Department
Bart Rudolph	SOA/DOT&PF
Debbie Ossiander	Assembly Member
John McPherson	HDR
Anne Brooks	Brooks & Associates
Walt Parker	ACC

\*AMATS Technical Advisory Committee members

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

CHAIR WITT called the meeting to order at 1:03 a.m. All Policy Committee members were present with Cindy Heil sitting in for Ms. Edwards. A quorum was established.

**2. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT**

MR. LYON stated there is a new chair for the Policy Committee. Robert Campbell is the new Regional Director for DOT. Folks will remember him from serving on the AMATS TAC for a long time. Ms. Witt is sitting in for Chair Campbell for this meeting. Mr. Lyon encouraged public involvement in this meeting of the AMATS Policy Committee. He explained staff would first make their presentation, followed by any comments from Committee members, and the floor would then be open to public comment.

### **3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

MR. LYON stated he had one change. The next scheduled PC meeting is not on Feb. 17<sup>th</sup> but will be on February 24<sup>th</sup>.

MAYOR SULLIVAN moved to approve the agenda. MR. FLYNN seconded. *Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved unanimously.*

### **4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – NONE**

### **5. BUSINESS ITEMS**

#### **a. 2035 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP) - RESOLUTION**

MR. SPRING mentioned the intent of staff is to update the Committees at every TAC and Policy meeting. We have a consultant team onboard and working on the first stages of the plan. Two principals are Anne Brooks of Brooks and Associates, and Gary Katsion from Kittelson and Associates. Kittelson and Associates is the prime consultant on the contract.

MR. SPRING briefed the Committee on the actions of the TAC two weeks ago. All Committee members need to be on the same page with respect to the plan assumptions and the process in development of the plan. The transportation plan plays out investments over an extended period of time, generally 20 years in the future. It includes all the road projects that could be funded through AMATS: roadway, transit, pedestrian and bicycle projects. The Plan is a requirement of FHWA and is required to be updated every 4 years and there are ramifications if we don't have an approved update. The resolution from the TAC lists the assumptions we propose to use in the development of the Plan.

MR. SPRING stated one of the assumptions involves the extension of the planning horizon from as 2027 to 2035 for both LRTPs and the other main one is we are combining are the existing Chugiak-Eagle River LRTP with the Anchorage Bowl LRTP. In the past, they were separate and developed with separate public involvement processes. FHWA and FTA have been encouraging AMATS to combine them and mentioned this in a certification review about 10 years ago. There are a number of good reasons why this should be done, the most important of which is the overlapping nature of the project recommendations. The Glenn Highway, which serves as the main link between the two parts of the city, is a case in point, have an impact on Chugiak-residents. Therefore it is important that decisions regarding the improvements to the corridor involve a joint effort under the auspices of a unified Transportation Plan. Maintaining separate plans create problems with respect to the financial constraint requirement since each separate plan would need to make separate assumptions regarding project costs and expected revenues. Creating a unified plan allows for more consistency with respect to the assumptions used in the cost estimates as well as the revenue estimates.

Another assumption in the TAC resolution includes the notion that the main emphasis will not be to reevaluate existing projects in the both Long-Range Transportation Plans. The intent is to conduct an update, not a complete re-evaluation of the universe of potential transportation alternatives such as was done for the 2005 update. MR. SPRING stated with the major LRTP update effort in 2005, looked at many roadway and transit alternatives. The assumption going into this particular planning effort is that the projects AMATS identified back in 2005 are still valid projects. This update will primarily focus on revalidating those projects intent, utilizing updated transportation TransCAD modeling output. Some additional work has been done since the last plan was adopted in 2007, a couple of subarea plans, one on hillside, one downtown and one not adopted yet in the Eagle River area. Those plans came forth with specific transportation improvement recommendations which may need to be incorporated into the new updated plan. Other assumptions involve the identification of the specific transportation demand model that AMATS will use to project future demand. The H2H project has developed a new transportation model designed specifically for corridor analysis. A recommendation of the TAC is to use that model, which incorporates the latest land use and demographic assumptions as well as model refinements.

The Policy Committee has before it a resolution from the TAC which lists all of the assumptions regarding the plan development. The Policy Committee is being asked to adopt the resolution.

MR. SPRING talked briefly about the public involvement plan. Typically that is the area which receives the most attention. Attached to the memo is an outline of the public process. A key part of the public involvement plan is the expansion of the TAC to include additional members. The TAC has good representation among the public agencies but includes few non-agency stakeholders. AMATS staff is recommending adding the following representatives to the TAC for the purpose of providing guidance to the development of the Plan update: the Native Village of Eklutna, Homeland Security, and the Transit Advisory Board, CBERRRSA Board member, representative from the environmental community, a representative of persons with disabilities, and a representative from the Mat-Su Borough.

MAYOR SULLIVAN mentioned it would be a good idea to have someone from the Freight Advisory Committee as a member. MR. SPRING replied a Freight Advisory Committee member has been recruited and has agreed to serve of the committee. The first meeting is next week on Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup>.

CHAIR WITT asked why the concerted effort now and what happens to the existing LRTP with the timing that is very critical. MR. SPRING answered it is very critical. According to FHWA regulations, AMATS is required to update the Plan every 4 years. The last plan was adopted in June 14, 2007, which means the new plan must be adopted by June 14, 2011. The current project schedule calls for the Policy Committee to adopt the Plan by the end of December, officially means that AMATS will need to ask for an extension from FHWA and FTA. If the plan lapses, AMATS will not be able to obligate funds for or start new phases of projects. Existing phases that are already obligated can continue, but new phases cannot be obligated. It is expected that

there will be several DOT projects, which will be seeking new obligations or approval after the June deadline. Those include the O'Malley Rd reconstruction-ROW phase; Dowling Rd extension-phase 1 from Old Seward Hwy to C Street; Muldoon Rd landscaping and pedestrian construction phase; Anchorage Areawide Trail rehab projects in the amount of \$100,000; Bicycle Plan implementation projects and Pedestrian Plan implementations projects. The largest project that could be impacted is the Seward Hwy reconstruction from Dowling to Tudor.

FHWA is willing to consider our application for an extension if we can justify the need to ensure we have a robust and proactive public involvement plan and need the extra time to comply with SAFETEA-LU requirements and to ensure that the public involvement process is adequate. The extension letter will be presented at the next Policy Committee meeting.

CHAIR WITT mentioned that the lion's share of this update had been advanced through a pretty robust public process when we tried to amend it last time. The amendment itself failed and yet the work remains valid for the most part and a lot of that was bringing the plan into compliance with SAFETEA-LU.-LU.

MR. FLYNN mentioned some colleagues and others expressed concerned about combing the 2 plans. MR. SPRING noted the concerns of the FHWA and the need to deal with some of the issues that overlap in both communities. Each community has its own perspective on how to address transportation demand. MR. SPRING stated for example, the Anchorage Bowl might emphasize transit and pedestrian and bicycle facilities in their part of the plan, while the Chugiak-Eagle River's focus may be more automobile oriented due to its relatively demands low density AMATS staff will use the best method of combing the individual perspectives of the communities in each of the chapters as they are written.

The 1<sup>st</sup> chapter includes goals and objectives. Currently there are two sets of goals and objectives.... While desirable, MR. SPRING didn't think it would be feasible to combine both sets of goals into one set. It may make more sense to maintain two separate sets of goals and objectives. Some areas of the Plan will probably not require such a strict separation of the two planning areas. For example, in the financial plan will look at the overall picture of revenues coming in and will estimate the cost of each individual project. It will still be possible to look at the plan and identify distinctly Chugiak-Eagle River components. AMATS staff is planning to conduct public meetings in both Chugiak-Eagle River and in the Anchorage Bowl.

The next meeting of the TAC+ will be a joint meeting with the PC on March 24th in Eagle River.

MR. TRAINI asked if the project team talked with representatives from Eagle River if the legislative representatives were consolidated before the decision was made to merge the two plans. MR. SPRING stated that there has been talk of merging the two plans in the past but direct discussions have not occurred recently.

MR FLYNN expressed concerns regarding the future allocation of transportation funding between Chugiak-Eagle River and the Anchorage Bowl is equitable. MR. SPRING explained the funding for projects in the LRTP are funneled through the TIP. That is where the criteria come into play. The best method of making sure that there is no bias is to make sure the TIP project evaluation criteria is not biased with respect to the Anchorage Bowl projects.

Senator Dyson called into meeting at 1:20 p.m. Senator Dyson also expressed concern regarding the joining of the two plans.

MS. OSSIANDER stated she is 30+ yr resident and has been concerned about transportation infrastructure for a long time. She has noticed her commute into Anchorage has exploded with more cars on the road; the time it takes to return home is longer. She was the lone representative outside the bowl on the last update and was pretty chagrined when she saw the financial obligation that pretty much consumed the resources for the Anchorage Bowl and left very little for the Chugiak-Eagle River.

She has real concerns with the 3<sup>rd</sup> whereas of the resolution regarding the combing of the two LRTPs. She suggested that there should be some kind of set aside in proportion to the percentage of the MOA population represented by Chugiak-Eagle River. A differential 10% set aside may be adequate and would at least give people some reassurance that they are not going to be swallowed up.

Ms. Ossiander was also unsure what the 6<sup>th</sup> whereas regarding the use of the H2H model meant. She was also unsure about the part of the resolution involving adding only those roads, bike, ped and transit projects that are cited in plans or studies that have been completed and adopted after the approval of the Anchorage Bowl and the Chugiak-Eagle River LRTPs. Chugiak-Eagle River has had very little planning efforts or analysis directed at its transportation needs. Our previous LRTP was based on public testimony from individuals who experienced frustration. Recently, Kittelson and Associates has completed a downtown Eagle River circulation study which has yet to be adopted. Will the fact that the study has not been adopted mean that the project recommendations will not be included in the Plan update?

The 2<sup>nd</sup> to last whereas refers to the Anchorage Land Use Plan and Chugiak-Eagle River Land Use Plan updates acting as triggers to a new Transportation Plan. Ms. Ossiander's concern is that this could interfere with the plan update time schedule. In conclusion this resolution needs some pretty substantial reworking.

MR. FLYNN pointed out that just recently we received some stimulus dollars and he received complaints that the lion's share went to Chugiak-Eagle River. Funding allocations appear to seesaw so it will be necessary to try to make it as fair as possible.

MAYOR SULLIVAN asked for clarification on something Ms. Ossiander mentioned regarding the assumption that only roads, bicycle, pedestrian and transit projects that are included in

subarea plans adopted after the most recent LRTP update is incorporated in the new Plan. MR. SPRING replied that the intent is to include the projects from the not yet adopted Eagle River Circulation Study that seemed to have some consensus.

MR. FLYNN stated when we get to debate this it is his intent to amend this whereas clause to delete the words “only those” and the 3<sup>rd</sup> line replace considers with given wording. MS. OSSIANDER asked if there will be an opportunity to include new projects every four years. . CHAIR WITT stated yes and that while the LRTP must be updated every four years it can be amended in the intervening years as well.

MS. HEIL stated there is a difference between taking new projects that come up from new studies versus an open invitation to nominate projects. When we do a new plan we do ask if there are any new projects we haven't thought about and I think it's saying we want to look at those projects that have come up through formalized studies but we are not necessarily going to open it wide open. Mr. Spring mentioned we cannot open up everything and model every single alternative like we did 4 years ago.

SENATOR DYSON agreed with what Ms. Ossiander said and mentioned he didn't know this item was coming up or he would have been there. He always liked the idea of short and long term plans being in place.

The State's financial situation is pretty volatile now; we are fat city now and might be for the next few years. It will be easier to get capital money for projects. We need some agility to move quickly on issues where the money might be available for our wish list. SENATOR DYSON stated he needed to see some agility and reassurances that we've had in the short-term plan.

MR. FLYNN informed the senator that if he wanted to do a project quickly – you avoid the AMATS process. SENATOR DYSON stated he had avoided it for the last 20 yrs.

SENATOR DYSON exited the conference call.

CHAIR WITT asked Mr. Spring or Mr. Lyon to clarify if it is the intent of the AMATS staff to start out with the assumption that all the recommendations currently in the Chugiak-Eagle River and Anchorage Bowl LRTP and all that is coming out of the subsequent studies will be forwarded into the new update. MR. LYON replied in the affirmative. MS. OSSIANDER asked if this means that a project would have to come about because of a specific study before it could be included. MR. SPRING there is another whereas, 4<sup>th</sup> from bottom on 1st page that states that the model will be used to confirm the need for projects as previously included in LRTPs and to identify whether additional projects are required to meet the transportation needs in 2035. If the model results show that there is still congestion remaining in the system after we have included all of the LRTP projects and new projects identified in the new subarea studies, then the project team will need to look for new projects to solve the problem.

MS. OSSIANDER asked if this LRTP will look at all the ranking criteria or will this still be incorporated in the TIP ranking process? CHAIR WITT replied that it will still be dealt with in the TIP process.

NANCY PEASE serves on the P&Z Commission and is one of the liaisons to AMATS. We heard a presentation from Mr. Spring and had concerns regarding the KAC moving forward. We felt there were some inherent conflicts with the Downtown plan that needs to be incorporated and expressed particularly with respect to the Downtown Plan's emphasis on creating a pedestrian friendly environment

When P&Z and the Assembly passed the KAC as part of the LRTP it was with the condition that no state or local funding would be used. Now we are hearing from the backers of KAC that there is very likely to be more additional public funding needed at the state or local level. If that condition is not going to be met then that needs to be examined and the project shouldn't be shunted forward. MS. PEASE liked Mr. Flynn's proposed changes regarding the incorporation of newly adopted plans. The Planning and Zoning Commission tries to shepherd all adopted plans forward toward implementation. Finally, she expressed concerns about the H2H project. No progress has been made regarding the final choice of alternative alignments to date. As a result she is unsure which alternative AMATS staff will be modeling for the LRTP update.

MR. SPRING stated environmentally projects at this point - no decision has been made on the narrowing of H2H alternatives. As a result, staff will model the project using the alignment contained in the previous version of the LRTP.

MS. HEIL asked Mr. Spring if a lot of the technical issues out there are coming before the TAC+. MR. SPRING replied in the affirmative.

CHAIR WITT mentioned that the latest ISER population projections in Anchorage are lower than when we developed the 2025 LRTP and that in the intervening years we have accomplished a lot of road work and improvements.

CHAIR WITT asked what the desire of the body is. MR. FLYNN moved to approve. MAYOR SULLIVAN seconded.

MR. FLYNN requested changes to the whereas, working from the bottom up. Last whereas clause following word Anchorage, should be and/or Chugiak ER on second line. ***Hearing no objections, the motion was passed unanimously.***

MR. FLYNN moved the 3<sup>rd</sup> whereas clause, pg 2, deletes the words "only those" in line 1 and line 3 replace "considers" with "given priority." MAYOR SULLIVAN seconded. ***Hearing no objections, the motion was passed unanimously.***

MR. FLYNN requested a Technical Amendment and moved to add 2007 prior to the LRTP. MAYOR SULLIVAN seconded. *Hearing no objections, the motion was passed unanimously.*

Finally the last whereas on the first page MR. FLYNN moved to changed the “will” to “may” to reflect the progress made on the KAC financing. MR. TRAINI seconded. *Hearing no objections, the motion was passed unanimously.*

MS. HEIL asked if there is a way to clarify the intent to use the H2H model.

CHAIR WITT stated that the travel demand model developed for the H2H project will be used. MR. FLYNN recommended taking out H2H and saying the most recent transportation enhancements will be used. MAYOR SULLIVAN made a motion to delete H2H and use the most recent AMATS travel demand model will be used. MR. SPRING replied that would be fine. MR. FLYNN seconded. *Hearing no objections, the motion was passed unanimously.*

MR. SPRING stated Mr. Katsion and he agreed that to be consistent we should stick with the original wording and recommended by the AMATS TAC. MS. HEIL suggested the TAC approved that – then why not say the latest TAC approved version.

MS. HEIL motioned the 6<sup>th</sup> whereas say the latest TAC approved travel demand model. MAYOR SULLIVAN seconded. *Hearing no objections, the motion was passed unanimously.*

Main motion to accept the resolution as modified. *Hearing no objections, the motion was passed unanimously.*

**b. OTHER BUSINESS ITEMS - NONE**

**6. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**a. OBLIGATION REPORT**

MR. RUDOLPH presented the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter obligation report and noted a few format changes from the FFY 2010 reports. The red column indicates the amount programmed in the 2010-2013 TIP Amendment #1. The amendment is still in the approval process and has not yet been formally adopted, but we have not received any public comments throughout the process and anticipate adoption with minor or no changes made. There has not been a lot of activity during the first quarter to any project phase that is part of the TIP Amendment. MR. RUDOLPH stated there is not a lot to point the Committee’s attention to at this early stage in the fiscal year, but he noted the Dowling Road project. This project is a main chunk of the AMATS allocation for this year was with a little over \$21.6m anticipated to obligate in August, not May as indicated on your handout. There is a small overrun at this time as noted on the top of the second page. The top 2 projects are de-obligated and remember this is how we help balance this program. Projects that came under budget are used to help other projects and balance the program. Everything else

seems to be on schedule. The red box at the bottom of the third page should be noted, there is a little over a million dollars, or 3%, difference between anticipated needs and what is shown in the TIP Amendment. We are required to be within fifteen percent at the end of the first quarter. Our TIP has programmed about \$37 million and our green column has obligated about \$185,000 of that. We anticipate about \$35.9 million left to obligate at this time which equals the blue amount in the far right column, \$36.1 million. We are just a little under what we have in the TIP for overruns.

MR. FLYNN asked if they would be seeing this for approval next month. MR. RUDOLPH replied no, you only would need to approve it if we had to add more money towards more projects.

**b. HIGH PRIORITY TRANSIT CORRIDOR**

MR. STAFF thanked staff, the committees for their support and Mr. Jim Schmidt who works for HDL and did the majority of the work on this study. MR. STAFF provided a summary overview of the High Priority Transit Corridor study funded through AMATS. The purpose of the study was to sustain ridership achievements since 2002, and to examine strategies and initiatives that may be most effective to further improve service, productivity and ridership

He discussed the features of a transit supportive development corridor which include:

- Medium to high-density housing (over 8 du/acre) within 1/4 mile of the major street at the center of the corridor
- Small scale commercial sites oriented to the street
- Multi-modal facilities, emphasizing bus, pedestrian, and bicycle transportation
- Expanded sidewalks and crosswalks, street furniture, bus shelters, and landscape improvements

MR. STAFF explained that Route 7-Spenard was selected as a prototype corridor to study with the following considerations: Route coverage, Service headways, Ridership, Bus running times, On-time performance, Stop spacing, Coordination among routes, Origin-destination patterns, Transit signal priority, and Household socio-economic profiles along the corridor. Transit marketing is also an important component to sustain and increase ridership.

MR. STAFF also discussed the Dimond Center Intermodal Feasibility Study that will look at reducing the time needed for buses to get out of the Dimond Center Transit Center.

MAYOR SULLIVAN asked about funding for the Dimond Center Intermodal Facility. There are millions of dollars appropriated. Is the study the first step toward spending these funds?

MR. STAFF replied around \$3m is available in federal funds and state matching funds. The study is to determine the feasibility and phasing of improvements at the Dimond Transit Center intermodal facility recommendations. MAYOR SULLIVAN thanked Mr. Staff and left.

MR. FLYNN asked is that a State or City project? MR. STAFF answered he believes it is FTA money. FTA released \$100,000 to do the study to determine if an intermodal facility is needed. \$3m is not going to build what is recommended.

**c. OTHER INFORMATIONAL ITEMS -NONE**

**d. COMMITTEE COMMENTS**

**7. SCHEDULED AMATS MEETINGS**

Technical Advisory Committee, February 10, 2011

Policy Committee, February 24, 2011

Joint Meeting is March 24, in ER

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 2:39 p.m.