

**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**

**September 22, 2011  
1:00 p.m.**

Policy Committee members Present:

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Name	Representing
Robert Campbell	Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities, Regional Director (DOT&PF)
Cindy Heil	Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), Air Quality
Dan Sullivan	Municipal Mayor
Patrick Flynn	MOA/Municipal Assembly
Chris Birch	MOA/Municipal Assembly

Also in attendance

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Name	Representing
Craig Lyon	MOA/Community Development Department (CCD)
Vivian Underwood	MOA/CCD
Bart Rudolph	DOT&PF
Emily Cotter	MOA/Port of Anchorage (by phone)
Judy Dougherty	Knik Arm Bridge & Toll Authority (KABATA)
Anne Brooks	Brooks and Associates
Doris McCoy	First National Bank Alaska
David Barton	Access Alaska, Inc.
Aves Thompson	Alaska Trucking Association
Chris Grgich	DOWL HKM
Gary Katsion	Kittelson & Associates

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

CHAIR CAMPBELL called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. All Policy Committee members were present with Cindy Heil representing Alice Edwards, and George Vakalis representing Mayor Sullivan. A quorum was established.

Mayor Sullivan arrived at 1:25 p.m.

**2. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT**

MR. LYON provided the announcement encouraging 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 explained the Policy Committee was being asked to review the draft for the 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan as a Business Item. He noted the Technical Advisory Committee had not had an opportunity to review the draft plan and meet to provide recommendations to the Policy Committee until this morning. He further noted that business items before the Policy Committee need to be provided to the Committee one week in advance, and this draft plan was provided to the Committee at this meeting. For those reasons, he suggested the Committee continue this meeting to Thursday, September 29, to take action on releasing the draft plan for 30 day public review.

With regard to the Transportation Improvement Program major amendment for two ITS projects, MR. LYON explained the Committee had previously seen this item and recommended approval for release for public review a month ago. This is back before the Committee for final approval.

CHAIR CAMPBELL noted another request for a business item. MR. VAKALIS asked to change the order of the day for Agenda Item 5(d), Other Business, to bring that up as the last agenda item. He explained Mayor Sullivan wanted to propose another business item and would like to address it himself, but that he would be arriving late to the meeting. *Hearing no objection, this change to the agenda was approved.*

MR. LYON noted Agenda Item 6(a), a presentation on the Regional Transit Authority, should be removed from the agenda and postponed. It will be rescheduled dependent on when the presentation can be put together.

*Hearing no objection, this agenda as amended was approved.*

### **4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES - None**

### **5. BUSINESS ITEMS**

#### **a. 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan – Release of public review draft**

GARY KATSION with Kittelson & Associates and project manager for the consultant team provided a slide presentation and overview on the public review Draft of the 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. This included a chapter by chapter summary, and a discussion on the public process and schedule.

CHAIR CAMPBELL asked for questions or comments from the public. There were no comments from the public at this time.

MR. KATSION responded to Assembly Member Flynn's questions with regard to Project 201, Seward Highway/Glenn Highway Connection Phase III, Chester Creek to Airport Heights, Page 7-20. The reason this project was not broken into more discrete pieces was because in the current LRTP there is a general alignment of the project. Also, since the current Highway-to-Highway (H2H) process did not finish the environmental document and the alternatives were not screened, Staff does not have recommended alternatives. This project is a combination of all those alternatives, but is still considered vague enough because one cannot be chosen right now.

MR. FLYNN was troubled by this noting there were two other elements broken up in the short-term project list. MR. RUDOLPH explained the first two elements are the same in all the alternatives presented previously on the H2H project, that those would not change based on the alignment of this section, and that is why those two were broken out.

MR. FLYNN asked if there is any scenario in which Airport Heights would not need to be a grade separated intersection with the highway, and why that was not broken out. MR. RUDOLPH indicated he did not know.

MR. FLYNN noted the Committee was provided with what appears to be a list of amendments for the MTP review draft.

MR. KATSION explained the list of amendments are items still being worked on including some minor tweaks to wording, and a little bit of information that is being gathered by Staff and the consultant team. He indicated these things will be in the document next week if it is released. He noted the substantive ones are the project description and cost estimates for the Knik Arm Crossing (KAC) Phases 1 and 2, and staff and KABATA are working on it. The items on the amendment list related to the KAC are Items 9, 12 and 13. MR. KATSION noted Item 8 is a table that the TAC asked for to show specifically what was assumed under the KAC versus what is in the MTP. He further noted the items they would be showing are the comparison of the households that were in the Mat-Su and the Anchorage side for both plans. It would show the traffic volumes on the bridge under both plans, and then the traffic volumes on the Glenn Highway under both project scenarios. It would also include a brief description of the differences as well.

MS. HEIL noted everyone is working really hard to get documents out for review with the intent to get more comments. They are focusing on 2 things; one to make sure that it is in a format to get good public comment on, but staying at the same within the schedule. She explained this document needs to be released by next Thursday, and it is critical to the overall timing. She knows it is not perfect, and there are still some things that have to be done. She is hoping that they will get the rest of these changes in the document to the Policy Committee in the next couple days so they will have several days to look at it before next Thursday with the goal for it

to be released. Then after this, there will be another public hearing draft, which will go out for an additional public review. She noted there is a lot of opportunity for public comment. She would like everyone to focus on getting a really good plan that can be released out to the public knowing that there are going to be some editorials and adjustments coming.

*Mayor Sullivan arrived at 1:25 p.m.*

MAYOR SULLIVAN had no questions at this time explaining he had been briefed by Mr. Lyon on this issue. MR. CAMPBELL noted he would reserve comments until next week when he has had a chance to thoroughly look at the draft.

CHAIR CAMPBELL asked Mr. Katsion in his discussion on the MTP schedule to focus on where AMATS was on its schedule 6 months ago, especially in regard to the slack time and where this process is going.

MR. KATSION continued his presentation reviewing the public involvement activities, open houses, and review and approval schedule for the MTP. He also discussed the public notice methods being used such as press briefings, newspaper announcements and insert, website access and the public forums scheduled. The MTP schedule discussed included:

- October – this is the period for public comment on the MTP public review draft, and includes a work session with the PZC, which is the AMATS Citizens' Advisory Committee, as well as public meetings and briefings with other community groups.
- November – Compile comments received during that public review period in October and preparation of the public hearing draft.
- December – MTP public hearing draft to be released by the Policy Committee, and another work session scheduled with PZC.
- January – April 2012. Public hearings before the Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC) and the Anchorage Assembly, then back to the TAC, and then to the PC for adoption, followed by submittal to FHWA. MR. KATSION indicated this would leave about 2 months before the cutoff date with FHWA approval in the first part of June.

MR. KATSION explained notice to the public includes: newspaper ads/inserts, electronic notices to people who have signed up to be part of the review process, AMATS meeting notices, and public forums through the AMATS, PZC and Assembly meetings.

With regard to electronic access, MR. KATSION indicated this version of the public review draft is being uploaded to the web today. He clarified the version before the Committee had parts revised this morning after the TAC meeting. He noted there is a web link and an enhanced web link to the draft with a PDF of each chapter, and the enhanced web link is [www.amatsinfo.org](http://www.amatsinfo.org).

He further noted earlier chapters have been on the web since March, and all of the chapters have been up on the web since at least last Wednesday.

CHAIR CAMPBELL expressed concern with regard to whether it was clear on the web that this is a pre-release version so people understand that AMATS has not actually released the draft version yet for comments. He hoped there was some way to differentiate between chapters out for information, and when AMATS actually releases approved documents through this Committee.

**b. 2013 TIP Major Amendment #2 Air Quality Conformity**

**c. 2010-13 TIP Major Amendment #2**

MR. LYON clarified the two Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) agenda items were related, and the Air Quality Conformity needed to be approved first.

MR. LYON explained the (TIP) amendment adds two Intelligent Transportation System projects into Table 8. He noted these two projects are not part of the AMATS allocation, but are federal funds through the National Highway System (NHS), which need to be included in the TIP in order to spend the monies. He noted the TAC, PZC and Assembly recommended approval with no changes, and this item is back before the Committee for final approval.

CHAIR CAMPBELL asked for questions and comments. There were no comments from the public or the Committee on the amendment.

MR. FLYNN moved to approve the TIP Major Amendment #2 Air Quality Conformity, and the TIP Major Amendment #2. MAYOR SULLIVAN seconded. *Hearing no objections, the Air Quality Conformity and the TIP Major amendment were unanimously approved.*

**d. Other Business Items**

**1. 2010-2013 TIP Major Amendment #3**

This item was brought before the Committee by Mayor Sullivan, and two proposed amendment drafts were distributed, a "PC Draft" and "Without Allocation" draft.

MAYOR SULLIVAN explained there was a point when the SAFETEA-LU bill was passed that designated approximately \$6.2 million essentially earmarked for the Port of Anchorage. He noted that once the ban on earmarks hit, the money was added to the overall money the State received and went into their general funds pool. He indicated their intent was to put forth an amendment that has this money directed back to the Port through this amendment process. He clarified there are now 2 years worth of funding totaling \$12.4 million.

MAYOR SULLIVAN discussed the options between the two proposed amendments he provided.

PC Draft

- Page 1, under the year 2012, the amount in red of \$39,429 represents the additional \$12.4 million added to that total for the Port money.
- Page 2, under “new project” is the explanation related specifically to the Port of Anchorage Intermodal Expansion project, and what the funds are designated to be used for.
- Page 3 the grand total in red for all types of non-highway system projects is \$39,429. Craig – should there be 3 more zeros here?

MAYOR SULLIVAN explained he thinks this is the fair thing to do as this money was designated specifically for the Port. He noted how Congress is going through their gyrations about whether earmarks are good or bad. He indicated he was just back there and thinks the common sentiment is that within a year or two you will probably see earmarks come back. In the meantime, he again noted this was money in addition to the State allocation, and it was designated specifically for the Port.

MAYOR SULLIVAN noted State DOT Commissioner Luiken had said some weeks ago that this is the process it has to go through in order for the State to have the mechanism and to have something in a plan that will actually allow them to do this. Therefore, MAYOR SULLIVAN is asking the body to consider taking this step.

“Without Allocation” Draft

MAYOR SULLIVAN explained the proposed TIP Amendment Option 2, “Without Allocation,” would not be adding on the end of the program, but would actually be designating some money for the Port. He indicated this means some projects would not lose their funding, but their funding would simply be pushed back a year into the schedule so the Port could get its allocation.

MAYOR SULLIVAN confirmed what he is proposing is a Major TIP Amendment.

MR. LYON explained the typical process for a TIP amendment is as follows:

- TAC would review and recommend the proposed amendment for release for public review.
- 30 day public comment period.
- PZC and Assembly review.
- Air Quality Conformity would need to be done as well.

With regard to any upcoming proposed major amendments to the TIP in the foreseeable future and the possibility of this being included, MR. LYON indicated there probably were some amendments coming up. In particular, he noted the review of the federal fiscal year to see what dollars might need to be moved around, and there will be some work that needs to be done fairly soon.

CHAIR CAMPBELL felt it would be appropriate to include in that work for the TAC to consider this as part of the next TIP amendment.

MAYOR SULLIVAN indicated they would not have a problem if there is synergy by doing several amendments, and having the body consider them together probably makes sense.

CHAIR CAMPBELL asked the TAC to consider this proposed amendment as part of their next TIP amendment. He also directed Mr. Lyon to advise the Committee of when that next amendment would be scheduled, and the Committee can then confirm with Mayor Sullivan that it meets his schedule needs as well.

MR. FLYNN asked for some assurance from Chair Campbell's office of Commissioner Lukien's office that this allocation will not affect other AMATS State allocations.

MS. COTTER with the Port of Anchorage clarified the Port is asking that these funds be added to AMATS' regular allocations. She also noted she had a conversation with the Governor's Office this morning that the request has been submitted, and the Governor's Office is aware of it. She is hopeful they can make that happen. She is working to schedule a meeting next week to provide further confirmation.

CHAIR CAMPBELL indicated there is a concern that if this money is scheduled into the TIP it could end up being a deductive effect if AMATS does not get that money from the Governor's Office/DOT.

MR. FLYNN indicated this related to his concern with relation to Page 6-32 of the draft MTP. CHAIR CAMPBELL asked how the Committee would like to consider that as an immaterial fact, or whether they would like to have some caveat on the adoption of this proposed amendment based on future funding AMATS receives. The Committee consensus was there would be time to refer this to the TAC, and given that Ms. Cotter and whomever else are seeking an answer on that, it would be helpful to AMATS as part of the process.

CHAIR CAMPBELL stated this proposed amendment would be remanded to the TAC for further incorporation into the next major TIP amendment.

## **6. INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **a. RTA**

*This item was postponed.*

**b. 2012 -2013 Unified Planning Work Program**

MR. LYON noted the process has been started to create the next two years of UPWP, which are the federal funds that go to the AMATS staff, as opposed to capital projects, including road and trail projects for the next two years. He explained a program is built for two years, and then the budget is done for 1 year, and they have a number for 2012. He noted it is scheduled for the next TAC meeting requesting release of the document for review, and scheduled for the PZC in November. He indicated the Committee would have a document soon.

**e. Committee Comments**

MR. FLYNN asked for an update on Highway-to-Highway, and if the EIS had been officially killed off. CHAIR CAMPBELL noted from a State perspective they are looking at ways to develop that project without the giant EIS.

MR. BIRCH noted it seemed to him that some of those projects, such as the Bragaw Extension, did not really happen until we got State funding. He indicated this draft MTP is a good effort, and it will be good to have it on-line with a link that can be sent. He will not be at next week's Committee meeting. With regard to the Port, he indicated it looked like there would be plenty of opportunity to work with the TAC.

MAYOR SULLIVAN was at the Port prior to this meeting, and he noted some of the executives from the Port of Tacoma are here, and referenced the long standing relationship Anchorage has with that key infrastructure, the Port. He noted this was an opportunity for him to have a chance to meet them and talk about port issues. MAYOR SULLIVAN expressed appreciation for the Committees' consideration of his proposed TIP amendment.

CHAIR CAMPBELL thanked Mr. Katsion for his efforts in updating the Committee on the MTP project, which is a huge undertaking to get the project approved. He also expressed his appreciation to others who are involved in this project for their work, including members of the audience who have been participating.

CHAIR CAMPBELL noted DOT Secretary LaHood with Senator Begich will be touring in the State next week and will be talking to State DOT. He indicated this was an opportunity for DOT to talk about some of their unique situations to federal people that may have some influence in the future about funding, earmarks and whatever else may come through on the Federal Highway Transportation Bill. MAYOR SULLIVAN noted Congressman Young will be there as well. He indicated a meeting at the City level has been set up with them at the Port.

**7. SCHEDULED AMATS MEETINGS**

Policy Committee, September 29, 2011

Technical Advisory Committee, October 13, 2011

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

MS. HEIL moved to continue this meeting for one week to September 29, 2011 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. MAYOR SULLIVAN seconded.

*Hearing no objections, the meeting was continued.*