

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

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

**November 17, 2011
2:00 p.m.**

Policy Committee members Present:

Name	Representing
Robert Campbell	Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities, Regional Director (DOT&PF)
Cindy Heil *	Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), Air Quality
George Vakalis	Municipal Mayor

Also in attendance

Name	Representing
Craig Lyon	MOA/Community Department (CCD)
Jamie Acton	MOA/Public Transportation Department
John Smith	MOA/Project Management & Engineering Division (PM&E)
Julie Makela	MOA/PM&E
Bart Rudolph	DOT&PF
Steve Kari	USKH Corporation
Bruce Carr *	Alaska Railroad Corporation
Kris Riesenber	Federal Highway Administration/Juneau (by phone)
Judy Dougherty	Knik Arm Bridge & Toll Authority (KABATA)
Walt Parker	Anchorage Citizens Coalition
Kacy Hillman	DOWL HKM
Angelina Burney	DOWL HKM
Todd Logan	
Joann Mitchell	USKH Corporation

*AMATS Technical Advisory Committee members

1. CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR CAMPBELL called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m. Cindy Heil was present on behalf of Alice Edwards, and George Vakalis was present on behalf of Mayor Sullivan. Patrick Flynn and Chris Birch were absent. A quorum was established.

2. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

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

Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved as written.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES - None

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update

No action was required under this agenda item, and it was heard under the information portion of the agenda.

b. 2012-2013 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

MR. LYON provided a presentation on the 2012-2013 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which consists of planning funds for AMATS staff. He explained while a majority of the funds are for AMATS staff, there are some funds for DOT and Health and Human Services as well. These are federal funds, and this is a two year work program with a one year budget for the next year. At this time, the dollar figure is the same as the last two years. He noted changes to the budget are in red. MR. LYON indicated they have done what they can with this UPWP to address any corrective actions that came out of the 2010 federal certification. He stated this plan has gone before the Planning and Zoning Commission acting in its capacity as the AMATS Citizens' Advisory Committee and Technical Advisory Committee and both recommended approval.

There were no comments from the public.

MS. HEIL asked that the organizational chart in Figure 1 of the plan be updated to reflect changes in TAC committee members. She noted Todd Cowles and Kim Rice are no longer on the TAC. MR. LYON concurred.

In response to MS. HEIL'S question on comments received from the public, MR. LYON noted he received comments from DOT and Public Transit which have been incorporated into the plan.

MR. LYON discussed the addition to the plan of a new Appendix E, Table of Major Discrete Projects. He explained major discrete projects are all the tasks in this UPWP that have a specific timeframe. He noted many of items staff supports in the next two years are ongoing efforts, but a lot have deadlines such as “develop street typology map” and “complete the Chugiak-Eagle River portion of the connectivity study.” For this reason, this table has been included to clarify which entity is responsible for the task, and when staff expects it to be completed. MR. LYON explained the second table in the appendix contains the corrective actions from the 2010 FHWA/FTA certification. This table details what the correction action is, and when the task is expected to be completed. He further noted the projects listed in Appendix E are contained in the plan, but had not been broken out into a separate table before.

MS. HEIL noted there was one item missing in the table. MR. LYON is already aware of it and adding it.

CHAIR CAMPBELL asked about the addition of some neighborhood plans and district plans shown in red on Table 2 and listed as Task 241, Government Hill Neighborhood Plan, and Task 249, U-Med District Plan. MR. LYON explained the Government Hill task is a neighborhood plan managed by the Planning staff, but Transportation Planning will be assisting if Long Range Planning has some questions or issues related to any transportation aspects of that plan. He indicated Transportation Planning would not be managing the project, but was asked to include funds in case assistance is needed. With regard to the U-Med District Plan, he explained there is an update to the plan, and again Transportation Planning would be assisting and was sure it would tie into the existing plan as well as the Northern Access Study.

MR. LYON confirmed Transportation Planning’s role in these plans would be as advisors, not as the lead group involved.

CHAIR CAMPBELL was interested in the number of neighborhood plans in Anchorage. MR. LYON indicated they had worked on the East Plan and West Plan before, and there are some downtown circulation plans. MR. VAKALIS indicated there is a Northeast Community Neighborhood Plan in process.

In response to Chair Campbell, MR. LYON indicated he did not think it was a requirement to have neighborhood plans as part of AMATS’ metropolitan planning activities.

In response to CHAIR CAMPBELL, MR. LYON noted the U-Med District Plan is being led by the Long Range Planning, and it is in the early stages, whereas a consultant has been retained for the Government Hill Neighborhood Plan and work has begun.

MS. HEIL moved to approve the 2012-2013 Unified Planning Work Program and it be sent to FHWA for approval. MR. VAKALIS seconded.

Hearing no objections, the motion passed unanimously.

c. **100th Avenue Project Resolution**

John Smith with the Municipality's Project Management and Engineering Division provided a presentation on the 100th Avenue Extension, Minnesota Drive to C Street. Also present from the Municipality was Julie Makela, Project Engineer, Steve Kari with USKH, and Kacy Hillman with DOWL HKM who is working on the environmental aspects of the project. MR. SMITH provided a project update briefing and overview, and highlighted some of the difficulties with the project. The 100th Avenue project has been worked on for about 8 or 9 years. This final segment is strategically located between Minnesota and C Street and is the final missing link to the 100th Avenue Corridor and will provide an alternate east/west corridor in South Anchorage. This project is identified as a one mile collector roadway in the OS&HP, and is identified as a short-term project in the 2025 LRTP, as well as the draft 2035 MTP.

He explained the proposed alignment shows Minnesota Drive with a couple round-abouts, then connecting Minnesota to C Street, and there the alignment shifts to the south to protect more sensitive wetlands and to hopefully develop an alignment more acceptable and permissible to the Corps of Engineers.

MR. SMITH'S presentation on the project included the following topics:

- Street network
- Typical section envisions two 11 foot traffic lanes with 6 foot shoulders, adjacent multi-use pathways on each side that will tie into the existing pedestrian facilities on the west side, as well as tie into the C Street pathways, and then continues on up to the Old Seward Highway.
- Intersection levels of service
- Average daily traffic impacts to Dimond Boulevard with the completion of this project.
- Project facts
- Provides additional benefits related to traffic and the signalized intersections on Dimond Boulevard, but will not alleviate the traffic issues at Dimond and Old Seward.

MR. SMITH noted the current project cost is approximately \$10 million, which will vary dependent on right-of-way costs and final mitigation costs for the wetlands.

MR. SMITH explained the project challenges as follows:

- Alignment bisects sensitive contiguous wetlands area and requires U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) Individual Permit.
- Securing COE concurrence on project purpose and need and agreement on the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA).
- Accommodating future induced development of adjacent properties.

- Right-of-way acquisition

MR. SMITH further explained securing the COE'S concurrence on purpose, need and agreement on the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative is a big hurdle, although they are making some progress. In addition, there are large acres of undeveloped property, and the new alignment will be accommodating some future induced development, and he noted this is also something the COE is analyzing as far as what kind of mitigation costs there will be. He also indicated one section of existing right-of-way between Rovenna and Arctic, but the rest of the alignment does require right-of-way acquisition.

MR. SMITH discussed their last meeting with the COE, and the COE indicated a project specific resolution from AMATS would be beneficial to confirming and solidifying the project purpose and need, which is why they are here. MR. SMITH stated they are seeking AMATS support and are asking AMATS to approve a draft resolution, which was included in the Committee's packet.

There were no comments from the public.

In response to Mr. Vakalis, this resolution is at the request of the COE, and due to the high sensitive nature of Klatt Bog, the COE felt they needed a project specific recommendation from AMATS stating this project is in our plan, and it is not just a project in the plan for no reason. He indicated the COE felt this resolution would be persuasive in issuing the permit.

In response to Mr. Vakalis, MR. SMITH indicated he did not think the mitigation is the hang-up as it is a prescribed methodology, and there have been about 5 ½ debits calculated for that alignment. He further noted the proposed mitigation is a portion of the School District site by 92nd Avenue, as well as a ribbon of wetlands that is slightly to the north of the alignment, and that those debits would be more than enough to mitigate what the alignment would require.

MR. VAKALIS noted this is how the Municipality sees it, but his understanding is the COE does not see it that way.

MS. HILLMAN noted the COE'S issue is not currently with the mitigation because they are not at that point with the COE yet. She explained the COE'S issue is that they do not believe that the Municipality's purpose and need is justified enough, and they believe the "no build" is the least environmentally damaging practical alternative. She noted this does not meet the purpose and need of the project. She further noted they are here today to have AMATS backup the purpose and need for this project.

In response to Chair Campbell, MR. SMITH stated the project is being funded primarily through a State grant and some bond money has been utilized as well. CHAIR CAMPBELL asked if the project came into existence around the TIP, and whether it was prioritized high enough to get funding in the TIP. MR. LYON stated the Long-Range Transportation Plan includes this project, and when AMATS looked at the best way to fund the project, it was decided it would be a

combination of a State grant and bonds as opposed to federal funding. For this reason, he explained the project would not be in the TIP because it will not be federally funded.

CHAIR CAMPBELL thought it did not seem like the project was actually ranked and scored in the TIP at a level where it would get funding and indicated this raised questions for him.

CHAIR CAMPBELL assumption is that as this project was part of the LRTP it was modeled and is part of AMATS' Conformity Analysis.

CHAIR CAMPBELL, referring to induced development, asked how much of the land, other than the right-of-way strip across 100th Avenue, is privately owned. MR. SMITH noted there is a large 70 acre tract to the south owned by Municipality, and he thinks there are 50 acres on the corner owned by CIRI. MR. KARI confirmed there is some State owned property on the inside of the Minnesota curve, a piece of CIRI property, 70 acres of park land, and approximately 30 acres on the corner of C Street and 100th Avenue. There is also a snow disposal site at the sediment basin owned and operated by the City. North of that is Laurel Acres, which is wet and a paper plat.

CHAIR CAMPBELL asked if there is no park out there, no dedicated wetland bank, no kind of preservation parcel or anything else, but is all land available for future use as appropriately zoned.

MR. VAKALIS clarified there are some lands there the Municipality feels are ideal for mitigation. He indicated that is their plan and he believes, in fact, that Laurel Acres is one of those areas, as well as the school site.

CHAIR CAMPBELL asked if the TAC took action on this item. In response, MR. LYON explained the TAC did not as this was an informational item for the TAC because resolutions from AMATS are always something the Policy Committee signs. He noted the TAC discussed this, and the sense of the TAC was they understand this project is in the LRTP, and they support the LRTP.

CHAIR CAMPBELL indicated he did not have any problem with the project, but he explained his concern is the Committee taking on individual projects at the Policy level, which puts the Committee in an awkward situation where the Committee sets a trend or pattern, and whether it is endorsing this to the COE, or whether it is making one project produce a financial plan and not others, he stated he has the same concern. He asked for further discussion from the Committee.

MR. VAKALIS supports the project noting it is a project that really needs to go. He understands Chair Campbell's concern about the Policy Committee entering into the fray, but noted we knew that the grand scheme of everything we get involved in and this is part of the LRTP, which AMATS certainly supports. As far as he is concerned, from a Municipal point of view, he thinks this is something the Committee should at least support through resolution. He thinks it is

important enough as a transportation corridor that it needs to be supported, and it may be that is the only way to get the COE to come on-line and support it.

MS. HEIL wondered if there was a way to send a statement or two to the COE saying AMATS is doing this because we support the project, but AMATS is not very happy with the position the COE put us in because it is not good business practice.

CHAIR CAMPBELL asked if any comments were received from the COE on any of the MTP updates or anything else, on any of the road plans in terms of their concerns about sensitive areas within the Anchorage Bowl, or commented on the MTP. In response, MR. RUDOLPH noted the COE has not commented on this MTP, and he has not seen anything in the last year-and-a-half.

MR. SPRING noted they had a special meeting with the resource agencies as part of the public involvement process for the 2035 Metropolitan Plan. He noted they were given presentations showing all the projects, and they had an opportunity to comment on 100th Avenue specifically, but he noticed they had not.

CHAIR CAMPBELL noted that both in terms of his verbal communication at the meeting, and in terms of the formal written communications during the comment, AMATS has received nothing from the COE in either one of those venues about 100th Avenue specifically, or about wetlands involvement in general. In response, MR. SPRING noted the COE did submit comments, but there was nothing about 100th. He noted, however, the COE did mention they are putting more stress on the purpose and need, and it is important prior to jumping right into mitigation to look at whether or not the project is needed first, and there are no alternatives to it.

MR. VAKALIS moved to approve the resolution in support of the construction of the 100th Avenue Extension. MS. HEIL seconded. The motion passed 2 to 1 with Chair Campbell opposed.

d. Other Business Items - None

6. INFORMATION ITEMS

a. 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update

JON SPRING provided an update on the status of the 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

- The public review draft was released at the end of September for 30 days, which ended October 31.
- 3 public hearings were held during that time period.

- Over 300 comments were sent in, and the projects receiving the most comments were the northern access for the U-Med District project, phasing of the Seward Highway Project (Phases 1, 2 and 3), and the Knik Arm Crossing project.
- Comments were received from people who thought transit and the trails non-motorized component were under-funded.
- Project staff is working responses to the comments and recommendations for revisions to the plan where it is felt a comment requires some revision. The comment responses will be submitted to the TAC next Wednesday for review and consideration at their December 1 meeting.
- Met with the House Anchorage Legislative Caucus, as well as the House Finance Infrastructure Committee. Feedback was received on AMATS assumptions on funding levels, which is changing from dominant federal funding to dominant state funding, and their comment was that AMATS might be a little aggressive in the State funding assumptions. Federal transportation bill is evolving daily. At this point, no changes will be made to the funding level assumptions.
- TAC Work Session scheduled for November 21 to discuss the KABATA household and employment allocation by Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) received from KABATA. The Policy Committee is also invited.

In response to MS. HEIL regarding the status of the Air Quality Conformity, MR. SPRING noted the air quality conformity model post processor needed to be updated to line up with our new H2H model. He stated the update of the AMATS Transportation Demand Model has been completed, and the post processor was run last weekend. He indicated they are ready to initiate a Consultation Team meeting, which should happen after Thanksgiving, to go over the details and assumptions about the Air Quality Conformity Analysis. He explained at a minimum there has to be a 30-day public review of the Air Quality Conformity, although it does not necessarily have to be published with the draft plan, but does have to be approved by the AMATS Policy Committee at the same time as they approve the MTP.

CHAIR CAMPBELL asked Mr. Spring to work with Mr. Lyon to provide AMATS with an updated MTP schedule prior to the next meeting. He indicated a formal presentation is not required. The schedule should lay out the major tasks yet to be accomplished, and the timelines for those tasks.

b. Obligation Report

BART RUDOLPH presented a report on the Final AMATS FFY11 Project Obligation Report/Administrative Modification Table. He noted this is the end of the federal fiscal year

report for 2011, which shows how the AMATS allocations were spent. He highlighted the following items:

- All projects listed in the report are in the TIP and shows the dollar amount in the TIP, adjustments made over the quarters, what has actually been obligated, and what is left to obligate.
- This report falls in line with the previous quarterly reports.
- Majority of the AMATS program went to the Dowling Road Extension, TIP Project No. 2.
- Deobligations listed were used to help balance the program for construction overruns.
- Project G-1, Muldoon Road Landscaping & Pedestrian Improvements required some monies to be AC. This was because some of the deobligation money did not go through in time, and as a result money was AC from 2012. The deobligations that did not go through will actually happen in 2012, which will balance out, and they will not actually be taking money from next year's program.
- All CMAQ projects went according to plan, and the program balanced to zero.
- The overall program was allocated for \$37.5 million, which was exactly what was obligated.
- With regard to the STIP projects, \$60 million of state and federal money went to the Seward Highway Project, which was outside of the AMATS allocation, but spent here in the AMATS area. For this reason, AMATS tracks those projects as well.

MR. RUDOLPH stated no action is required on this report.

c. **UAA Car Sharing Update**

JAMIE ACTON, the Mobility Coordinator for the Municipality's Public Transportation Department, provided a brief overview of some of the activities she has been participating in with the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA), and their planning on the transportation demand management in the area. Her report covered the following topics:

- Transportation Demand Management – TDM
- UAA – implementation of secure bike storage in parking garage.
- UPASS – student, staff, and faculty can use their wolf pass to ride Municipal busses.

- UPASS eligible for AnchorRides as well
- UAA sponsorship of a Howl for the Home Team Municipal Bus.
- Zimride – social media platform for car pooling (students, staff and faculty) private ridesharing network for UAA
- Hertz on Demand – car rental allowing rent by hour covering gas, insurance and for \$8 hour you can go wherever you need to go around town. 2 vehicles at the UAA campus, a Camry hybrid and Ford Escape hybrid. UAA’s investment covered all cost with bringing the program to UAA at first. The next step was to open this program up to the general public. UAA felt it was in the best interest of UAA and U-MED and opened up program to entire community.
- UAA shuttles run approximately every 15 to 25 minutes providing connectivity.
- Intelligent Transportation System (ITS)
- With regard to parking management, UAA has been very strategic in its parking strategies.
- UAA has also been offering alternative work schedules as part of their transportation demand management.

c. **Other Informational Items**

A copy of the 2012 meeting schedule was distributed.

d. **Committee Comments - None**

7. **SCHEDULED AMATS MEETINGS**

Technical Advisory Committee, December 1, 2011

Policy Committee, December 15, 2011

AMATS Work Session on KABATA TAZ, November 21, 2011

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.