

**ANCHORAGE METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS  
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Planning & Development Center  
Main Conference Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
4700 Elmore Road  
Anchorage, Alaska**

December 8, 2011  
2:30 p.m.

Technical Advisory Committee members Present:

Name	Representing
Jennifer Witt	Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF), Central Region, Planning
Ken Morton	DOT&PF
Stephanie Mormilo	MOA, Traffic Division
Cindy Heil	Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)
Steve Morris	MOA/Dept. of Health & Human Services (DH&SS)
Lance Wilber	MOA/Public Transportation Department

Also in attendance

Name	Representing
Craig Lyon	MOA/Traffic Department
Vivian Underwood	MOA/Traffic Department
Jon Spring	MOA MTP Project Manager
Bart Rudolph	DOT&PF
Gary Katsion	Kittleson and Associates
Anne Brooks	Brooks and Associates
Judy Dougherty	KABATA

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

CHAIR MORMILO called the meeting to order at 2:23 p.m. Bruce Carr, Lois Epstein, Jerry Weaver, Steve Ribuffo and Jerry Hansen were absent. A quorum was established.

**2. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT**

CHAIR MORMILO encouraged public involvement in this meeting of the AMATS Technical Advisory 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. BUSINESS ITEMS CONTINUED**

CHAIR MORMILO stated the TAC would be beginning with chapter seven opinions only. They were all number 99s just so we could go through them and see if anybody had anything they wanted to discuss.

MS. WITT moved that we accept the no-changes on these comments. MS. HEIL seconded.  
*The motion passed unanimously.*

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CHAIR MORMILO stated the TAC would now move on to the additional comments.

MR. SPRING began by describing comment number one, regarding the Knik Arm crossing references to consultants, stating that the document in a number of cases referenced Wilbur Smith Associates. There's no other place in the draft plan where we recognize any other consulting activities. The suggestion is that we move those references.

CHAIR MORMILO stated she felt that referred to the authors. MS. WITT concurred saying that's reasonable. It's an appropriate change. MR. MORRIS asked if the Project Oversight Committee (POC) would recommend referencing this in a footnote saying Wilbur Smith Associates. CHAIR MORMILO replied in the positive but it wouldn't be in the body of the report but would be similar to other references.

MR. SPRING stated as a background, these comments were primarily delivered after the commentary was finished. In some cases, they were delivered a day or two before the previous TAC meetings. Huffman/O'Malley Community Council gave AMATS a substantial number of comments which somehow got lost in the flow and we felt it was appropriate to deal with them now, and there were also some other comments that were parked by the TAC previously that we needed to come back and deal with.

MS. DOUGHERTY asked for clarification as to whether or not Wilbur Smith & Associates are still going to be named in a footnote? MR. SPRING stated currently they are in the text of the document in a number of places. We want to take that out of the text because KABATA would be the appropriate reference, since that's the body that contracted for services. If there's a need for a specific document, we'll identify that document

MS. WITT moved that we accept the changes recommended in the first set of comments. MS. HEIL seconded. ***The motion passed unanimously.***

MR. SPRING explained the second comment involves goal 3, objective 1 related to the project's prioritization and optimizing the benefit/cost ratio. The commenter was unable to find where the cost/benefit ratio was calculated in the MTP and couldn't find the assumptions used to calculate that. The POC did utilize the cost ratio as part of the initial screening criteria for the roadways. The criteria we used was based on the cost for annual daily traffic times the length. It was a rough analysis, but it was something we could do without busting our budget and we could do it in a timely manner. MR. SPRING stated the POC's recommendation would be not to change it.

MS WITT asked if the POC did spell out that that's how we calculated the benefit/cost ratio, right? CHAIR MORMILO replied in the affirmative.

MR. MORRIS moved that we accept the changes recommended in the first set of comments. MS. HEIL seconded. ***The motion passed unanimously.***

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MR. SPRING described the third comment as left over business from earlier in the process. It's a comment by one of the TAC+ members regarding changes to the goals and objectives. The POC has two recommendations; the first comment is a concern that health issues aren't properly addressed in the goals and objectives, particularly the increase in traffic on health and active transportation issues. POC recommends moving the second objective under goal eight to a new objective under goal three.

MR. MORRIS clarified that there are two things with that move; the air quality objective moving from goal eight to three, and then adding another goal. MR. SPRING replied yes, thank you for the clarification, further stating the new goal would be to improve opportunities for active transportation (non-motorized) as part of daily system use. It relates primarily to an emphasis on more active transportation facilities like bike paths and sidewalks and separating the pathways. It seems more appropriate to put that other objective looking at air quality under this health goal.

MS. WITT asked if the second objective under goal eight is going to be moved to goal three, and we're putting the improve opportunities for active transportation under goal three? MR. SPRING replied it should go under goal eight, and then read goal eight back to the committee: "design and maintain a transportation system that respects the integrity of the community's natural environment and protect scenic vistas."

CHAIR MORMILO agreed but stated the second objective that we're talking about has more to do with health, so we're moving it to goal three, and we're adding a goal. There's also another one, "balance the benefits of improvements against the impacts to neighborhoods with populations that are traditionally under served by transportation."

MS WITT clarified that goal three will have three objectives; two of them are brand new, and one of them will be the second goal that we're moving from goal eight. MR. SPRING agreed, stating the second part is another new objective that addresses the concern about environmental justice, which reads: "balance the benefits of improvements against the impacts to neighborhoods with populations that are traditionally under served by transportation."

MR. MORRIS moved that we move the air quality objective from goal 8 to goal three and add the two new objectives - the public health objective and the environmental justice objective - to goal three as well. MS. HEIL seconded. ***The motion passed unanimously.***

MR. SPRING described the next comment is a change to objective six under goal eight which states "context-sensitive design strategies should pertain to all transportation projects that support development...and transit supported corridors." The POC recognizes that's a legitimate concern, that obviously, according to municipal policy all projects need to be considered as context-sensitive design. The POC's recommendation is to add the wording, "all transportation projects with particular emphasis on the areas of transit supported corridors, employment centers, and town centers..."

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MR. WILBER asked if the current municipal policy is only directed toward context-sensitive solution on municipal projects. It specifically excludes DOT. He suggested saying "transportation projects" instead of "all transportation projects."

MR. MORRIS moved to insert the word "especially" after strategies on objective eight, goal six. MS. WITT seconded. ***The motion passed unanimously.***

MR SPRING described the next comment which involves the infamous missing grid link map, figure 5.17. There was some concern by the public that this means that these links will be left out but it's just illustrative of how the system can be improved if connections are made. However, you'll see it is recommending that we amend the map, figure 5.17, to add the study areas that we identified through the OSHP and the Hillside district plan. So, include these study areas in this figure that shows the grid maps, but within the study areas, don't show any grids. Plus, in a footnote, they state specifically that this missing grid map is used to quantify missing system links, but do not constitute a recommendation to construct them.

MS. WITT moved to approve the change with the modification of changing "do" to "does." MS. HEIL seconded.

MR. MORTON stated these are very useful to communicate some of the challenges in the area. And by putting the box around it we're appeasing the commentary, but I think we're losing sight of the purpose for which the figure was originally established.

MS WITT clarified that it could be sufficient to just have a footnote that says this is illustrative without going further and putting the big asterisk in there? MR. MORTON agreed stating this doesn't represent a transportation plan....this is used as an indication of those links. MR. SPRING stated he thought Mr. Morton had a good point, and that it was good to show the problems of the system. We'd still need to deal with the map involving these study areas. We mention the study areas in a number of places. MR. SPRING recommended that we have another map to show where the study areas are, or at least reference it in the OHSP; that would be another way of doing it. MS. WITT suggested to the TAC that AMATS show that on a recommended network?

MS. BROOKS suggested that if AMATS left the study areas on the grid maps, we could remove the grid lines from behind them. You're still illustrating the fact that additional connectivity would be good in these areas. MR. SPRING agreed but stated there are some of these that have the locations for future projects. For instance, there's the study area at Elmore and the link between Rabbit Creek and De Armoun. MR. SPRING would suggest that there might be future projects to come out of these study areas that can be folded back into the plan, and if you put it in the grid map, it's not exactly clear what's going to happen.

MS. WITT withdrew her original motion. MS. HEIL withdrew her second as well.

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Discussion followed among the committee on appropriate language.

MS. WITT moved that we modify the language on the grid map, which is on 5-24 to include a footnote that reads: "This missing grid map is used to identify missing system links, but does not constitute a recommendation to construct them." MS. HEIL seconded.

MR. MORRIS asked for clarification on one item stating “shouldn’t we say ‘these missing grid maps’ rather than ‘this missing grid map’?” MS. WITT accepted that as a friendly amendment. ***The motion passed unanimously.***

MR. SPRING stated the next comment involves something that came up at the original TAC meeting from the Port of Anchorage representative. It regards a figure on 5.42 that shows a variety of information. It was a stacked bar map. The POC believes it should be revised to make it clear and have side by side bars, so that it distinguishes between the two different types of port tonnage.

MR. MORRIS moved that figure 5.42 be revised to be a cluster chart rather than a stacked bar graph. MS. HEIL seconded. ***The motion passed unanimously.***

MR. SPRING stated the next comment was a continuation of a similar comment from the Port of Anchorage representative replacing the wording that starts with, "The Port of Anchorage Intermodal Expansion Project...." In order to clarify new information, it should read: "The Port of Anchorage Intermodal Expansion Project will replace the current deteriorated infrastructure while constructing a new dock to accommodate larger vessels, crane and cargo handling infrastructure, improved road and rail links, and terminal holdings that will allow the port to expand in the future. This project was developed in phases, and the first phase is already underway."

CHAIR MORMILO clarified that all that really changes is the reference to the length of the dock. It says that they're constructing a new dock instead. It also removes the final sentence, which says what the estimated cost is.

MR. HEIL moved to accept the new language as suggested by the Port of Anchorage. MR. MORRIS seconded. ***The motion passed unanimously.***

MR. SPRING described the next comment from the Turnagain Community Council. It is regarding the projections we included in chapter five about that operation forecast at the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport. The commenter mentioned that this operational forecast seemed to be a little out of date. It was done in 2007, and there is a caveat that's posted on the AIA website that specifically warns the user to beware of these forecasts because the Airport hadn't updated the forecasts in awhile and that, due to the recession, they may be a little

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bit off. The POC suggested taking that caveat into consideration and removing the enter section on the forecast estimates.

CHAIR MORMILO clarified that the recommendation starts with that last sentence and gets rid of all the forecasts. We'll start with "the TSAIA operation forecasts" and would end with, "...due to the economic recession we expect the reverse in the future."

MS. WITT moved to accept the new language as suggested by the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport. MR. MORRIS seconded. ***The motion passed unanimously.***

MR. SPRING stated the next three comments are from the Municipality of Anchorage Watershed and Natural Resources Advisory Commission. We went to them and presented the plan awhile back and asked them to submit a resolution if they so chose. There were three separate items: 9, 10, and 11. They are mostly policy items that recommend changes to the plan.

The first one reads "Promote project planning and design that maximizes avoidance of aquatic areas, valuable wetlands, and other environmentally sensitive areas. Where these areas cannot be avoided, negative impact should be minimized and/or mitigated." The POC tentatively concurs with that change.

MR. SPRING stated the second comment is also in chapter eight, under page 8-21. They recommended that: "Municipal transportation plans and future recommended projects should work in concert with the Alaska national pollution discharge and elimination system permit." POC concurred with the recommendation. The only question we had was whether or not this should apply to more than just municipal transportation plans.

CHAIR MORMILO suggested just stating "transportation plans" rather than "municipal transportation plans."

MR. SPRING described the third as a new action item under EC-E. "For future road projects, address wildlife/vehicle incidents based on existing maps and traffic accident data and through consultation with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game." POC concurs, but recommends that the action item read: "For future road projects, address wildlife/vehicular incidents based on existing maps and traffic accident data and through consultation with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the transportation and public facilities."

MR. SPRING remarked that the POC discussed whether or not this made sense as an action item or a policy item and he felt seems more similar to a policy item and that it would fit best under the same section, but under policy recommendations. So it would be under environmental concerns, air quality, and public health – 8-21 of the additional policy recommendations.

MS. WITT moved that the TAC accept the changes as recommended by the POC for items 9 and 10, with the minor typographical revisions and elimination of the word "municipal" on page 8-2,

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and further recommend that the TAC accept the recommended language under item 11 and that it be listed on page 8-21 as a policy bullet, as opposed to an action item. MS. HEIL seconded. ***The motion passed unanimously.***

MR. SPRING explained the last item which involves an additional bullet on page 7-72, which is a Recommended Studies page. We have a whole list of studies that are funded under a line item, and all of these relate to that line item. The TAC has a recommendation to add a new study program which would look at some area transportation studies similar to the one that Lance worked on in the Hillside area. The recommendation is to add a bullet under that third column and state, "sub-area transportation studies identify the potential streets and highways planned for Hillside, Chugiak, and Eagle River."

MS. HEIL moved to accept the new bullet as suggested on page 7-72. MR. MORRIS seconded. ***The motion passed unanimously.***

MR. MORTON asked to look at something on page 4 of 7. The POC recommends no change to priority as limited funding has been allocated but goes on to say that the POC recognizes that this road is a substandard road. MR. MORTON suggested that it wouldn't be helpful if we were defending a lawsuit on this road and we had this statement on there and proposed eliminating everything after the first period in the response.

MR. SPRING offered one caveat. Assembly member Birch originally put this in as a project back in 2005. This time around we're taking it out because it doesn't meet the initial screening criteria.

CHAIR MORMILO suggested the TAC just say that "POC recommends no change to priority." MS HEIL asked if it takes a motion to change a comment. MR. SPRING stated he felt it's appropriate to make a change through the committee.

MR. SPRING stated these comments will be changed to say, "The AMATS TAC recommends" when it goes forward to the Policy Committee. It will no longer say "The POC recommends."

MS HEIL moved that comment 88, chapter 7, page XX on page 4 of 7 be changed to say, "The POC recommends no change to the priority." MS. WITT seconded. ***The motion passed unanimously.***

MS HEIL moved to approve all the comments for the 88s and 99s on the supplemental response summary, except for the one that was previously amended. MS. WITT seconded. ***The motion passed unanimously.***

MR. SPRING stated the next one is the FHWA comments in response to the draft. There are two comments. The first one involves the financial assumption that the state of Alaska proposed for the transportation infrastructure fund. They felt that we didn't put enough background

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information about the possibility of its approval. The FHWA thought it would be appropriate to add language that discusses where it is in the process now, and how it'd be used in the future to fund transportation projects in Anchorage. The POC recommended this rather lengthy clarification and expansion of the description.

MR. MORRIS stated the comment says "Conservatively estimating \$350 million...." and asked why that was considered conservative? MR. SPRING responded that the project team had attended a few of the state legislative caucus meetings where they discussed it, and we heard that it could be up to \$1 billion, so \$350 million is quite a bit lower. MS. WITT also pointed out that this new funding source isn't assumed to kick in until 2016, I believe, and AMATS wil be updating our transportation plan before that assumption kicks.

MR. WILBER moved that we accept the POC recommendation for the additional test, also as suggested from the comment from the Federal Highway Administration. MS. HEIL seconded. ***The motion passed unanimously.***

MR. SPRING stated the second FHWA comment involves the text on page 7-1. He stated the project team used the term - "priority areas" - to discuss what are really elements of the plan, "program areas." We also use priority for the initial screening criteria, so this has nothing to do with the initial screening criteria. We agree that, in order to avoid confusion, we should change the text on the second column, first paragraph from "these priority areas" to "these program areas."

MR. WILBER moved to change the text on the second column, first paragraph from "these priority areas" to "these program areas. MR. MORRIS seconded. ***The motion passed unanimously.***

MR. SPRING described the last item which involves new suggestions from KABATA regarding edits and changes. He stated he asked Ms. Dougherty with KABATA if she would go through them because the POC hasn't had time to review these in depth in order to give a recommendation.

MS. DOUGHERTY apologized for the late submittal of these comments. They came about in reaction to the potential Knik Arm Crossing being put it into its own chapter. She stated that KABATA felt that pulling the KAC project into its own chapter kind of removes a lot of the context that this information had imbedded in it. Specifically, you can look at page 632 where KABATA would recommend that the TAC strike the second paragraph of the first column, pro forma. KABATA felt it doesn't speak to the legislation, and this is in reference to the pro forma. MS. DOUGHERTY stated further that KABATA believes the first sentence is incorrect, and the second sentence is covered in the preceding paragraph.

MS. HEIL asked if these comments were based on the second chapter, or more in general.

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MS. DOUGHERTY answered it would actually be in general. One of the basic problems that KABATA has is how the plan currently reads is that there is a lot of emphasis on what happens if the bottom falls out of the financial plan. There is no mention of what happens if it's successful; there is no mention of the anticipated \$1 billion dollar surplus at the end of this concession that will be used for transportation projects. The graph on the last comment related to the reserve account shows the little bits of red at the bottom; that shows the draws on the reserve account, and they're very small. She stated that KABATA doesn't anticipate the reserve account being depleted on their pro forma, so it shouldn't be implied that the financial plan anticipates this. These bullets and changes to the text reflect what our pro forma is showing. These are the assumptions that have been made by the plan.

MR. WILBER stated he hadn't had a chance to look at these, but though that, philosophically speaking, Ms. Dougherty had a good point. The pro forma has a perspective about how the thing is going to happen and how it's going to happen successfully. He stated he didn't think he would be comfortable voting on making changes today and asked for the POC's review and recommendation. MR. WILBER said he would have no objections if the POC had an opportunity to look at these and make a recommendation to the Policy Committee, and the POC could make a recommendation and note that the Technical Committee didn't act on it

MS. DOUGHERTY replied that she would just add that comment number two has an incorrect page reference. It should be 633. On page 633, the second bullet says that "the state will assume all risk associated with the availability payment." She also asked the TAC to look at all of these bullets and discern which are really revenue assumptions and which should come out.

CHAIR MORMILO clarified that section says "capital operating costs and estimated revenues." MS. DOUGHERTY replied if you go back to the first column on page 632, it says, "for the purposes of fiscal constraint, the revenue assumptions about the Knik Arm Crossing for the MTP, which are consistent with KABATA pro forma plan are as follows" and clarified that KABATA was not proposing changes to the plan; we're proposing changes from an editorial perspective.

MS. WITT asked for feedback from the TAC about the table that's been provided on the back page. It does show the intent of KABATA over time and reflects what the pro forma says. MS. DOUGHERTY responded that KABATA wouldn't have a problem with pulling some of these minor things if the chart was at least included and explained.

MS. HEIL stated our assumptions over the last three meetings has been that everything we've been moving on has been put into the public hearing draft and be ready to be released on Thursday. Given that, she thought it was important that our message is clearly given to staff.

MS. HEIL moved that, in light of the new information regarding cost and schedule of impact, staff not work on a separate chapter for the Knik Arm Crossing until the PC can weigh in on the timing of the development of that chapter. MR. WILBER seconded. ***The motion passed***

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*unanimously.*

MS. HEIL moved that these comments be given to the POC to review and make recommendations to the Policy Committee and tied in, as possible, to the chapter that's being developed. MR. WILBER seconded. *The motion passed unanimously.*

6. INFORMATION ITEMS

f. Other Informational Items

7. SCHEDULED AMATS MEETINGS

Policy Committee Meeting, December 15, 2011

Policy Committee Meeting, December 21, 2011

Technical Advisory Committee, January 10, 2012

Policy Committee Meeting, January 26, 2012

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:32 p.m.