

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

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

**January 26, 2012
1:00 p.m.**

Policy Committee members Present:

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

Also in attendance

Name	Representing
Craig Lyon	MOA/Community Development/Transportation Planning (CDD)
Vivian Underwood	CDD
Teresa Brewer	CDD
Erika McConnell	CDD
Jon Spring	CDD
Bart Rudolph	DOT&PF
Kelly Petersen	DOT&PF
Gerry Welsh	DOT&PF
Kris Riesenber	Federal Highway Administration/Juneau (by phone)
Chuck Kopp	Senator Fred Dyson's Office
Jeffrey Miller	Professor, Computer Systems Engineering Dept., UAA School of Engineering

*AMATS Technical Advisory Committee members

1. CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR CAMPBELL called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Assembly Member Birch was absent. A quorum was established. *Mayor Sullivan left at 1:25 p.m., and George Vakalis sat in for the Mayor.*

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

MAYOR SULLIVAN moved to approve the agenda. MS. EDWARDS seconded. *Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved.*

MAYOR SULLIVAN noted he would be leaving at 1:30 p.m., and Mr. Vakalis would fill in for him at that time.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES - None

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan - Update

JON SPRING reported on the status of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). He provided copies of the released public hearing draft, which will go through the approval process with the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Assembly and the Technical Advisory Committee. At the request of the Committee, the following changes were made to this document:

- Project 201 connecting the Seward Highway to Glenn Highway between Chester Creek and the Airport Heights Interchange was split into four phases with one phase being the overall environmental phase.
- Index added specifying locations in the Plan where the Knik Arm Crossing information can be found. See Page 12 of Appendix A.
- Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) held a public hearing on January 9th on the MTP and continued its discussions to January 30th. Recommendations from the PZC will be combined with other materials and introduced at the February 14th or 28th Assembly meeting. The Assembly will need to hold a public hearing, which is expected to be on March 13th, and if agreeable to the Assembly, there will be a work session prior to the public hearing.

- MTP is on schedule and expected to come before the Policy Committee for final approval in late April followed by submittal to FHWA and FTA for approval meeting the deadline of June 30, 2012.

In response to Assembly Member Flynn, MR. SPRING noted the PZC may elect to re-open the public hearing for additional testimony, but that is up to the PZC.

Assembly Member Flynn asked if it would be possible to hold the Assembly public hearing on the MTP on either February 28th or March 27th noting March 13th is during spring break and may affect public participation. MR. SPRING indicated he did not think the February 28th hearing date could be met for several reasons, including approval by PZC of a resolution. He will change the MTP schedule to reflect a March 27th Assembly public hearing date.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER FLYNN indicated March 23rd would be the most likely date for a work session, and he will confirm this with the Clerk's Office.

CHAIR CAMPBELL noted his appreciation for Mr. Spring's willingness to work with the Assembly and the Mayor's Office to schedule this and try to increase public involvement, but he also expressed concern about the schedule. He wants to make sure AMATS gets done in a timely fashion, and the public has had weeks already to provide comments through a variety of means, not just having to be in physical attendance. He asked to keep in mind that AMATS wants to make their deadline.

There were no public comments.

**b. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) –
Administrative Modification 4**

The Municipal Public Transportation Department was awarded a grant from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in the amount of \$2.4 million to repair the roof of the Transit Maintenance Building. As this is a new project that does not require air quality conformity determination it can be added to the Transportation Improvement Program using an administrative modification. If approved this project would be added to the TIP as follows:

Table 8 – Other Federal, State and Local Funded Projects within AMATS

- *Added one new project*
 - *People Mover Maintenance Facility Roof Replacement*

MR. LYON noted AMATS is in the process of doing a TIP Major Amendment 3, and this new project was part of that. However, in the interest of time, this project was changed to an administrative modification, which does not require a public hearing process. He explained the only change in Table 8 that the Committee will be voting on at this meeting is the one project in red in that table.

MR. WILBER provided background details noting the Municipality and Public Transportation partnered, applied for and were awarded a \$2.5 million competitive grant to do a facility repair on the Transit Maintenance Facility, which is a 90,000 square foot building roof repair. Including this project in the TIP through an administrative modification would allow them to then work with the State to get this project incorporated into the STIP, and then inform the FTA to release those funds. MR. WILBER further noted the Municipality would need to put the appropriation before the Assembly and put the document out to bid with a goal to this project as soon as possible. It is estimated that this roof repair project will take 5 to 6 months to complete.

MR. WILBER noted the required match is 80/20 and is being provided by the Municipality. He further noted this is additional money to the program.

MAYOR SULLIVAN moved for approval of Administrative Modification Number 4.
ASSEMBLY MEMBER FLYNN seconded.

There were no comments from the public.

MAYOR SULLIVAN urged approval of the modification.

Hearing no objections, the motion passed.

c. Other Business Items

With regard to an MTP Assembly Work Session, ASSEMBLY MEMBER FLYNN noted he also provided March 9th as a possible date to the Assembly Chair.

6. INFORMATION ITEMS

a. Official Streets & Highways Plan (OS&H) - Amendments

The Official Streets and Highways Plan (OS&HP) is an element of the Municipal Comprehensive Plan, and revisions to this plan require action by the Assembly.

ERIKA MCCONNELL provided a report on the OS&HP amendment. She noted the Policy Committee's packet contained a copy of the public hearing draft, a list of classification changes proposed between the existing 2005 OS&HP and the public hearing draft, a comment matrix that responds to all public comments received before the PZC hearing, which was at the end of October, and a list of the PZC's recommended amendments.

MS. MCCONNELL explained the main purpose of the OS&HP, an element of the comprehensive plan, is to set the functional classification of all streets in the Municipality. It

describes their general functions and characteristics with special attention to freeways, express ways, arterials and collectors, and then by default anything that is not classified in one of those categories is then a local street. She identified the three major changes between the 2005 OS&HP and the public hearing draft as follows:

- Inclusion of the street typologies from the LRTP, which were created to try to address issues that go beyond just what is traffic flow on a street to talk about such things as what is the land use along the street to try to do more to tie land use and transportation together.
- Removed completed studies from the Study Area Section and added at least one new recommendation for a study to address an issue in Chugiak-Eagle River related to Study Area H and a one lane bridge that is a collector crossing Peters Creek and connecting Aurora Borealis Street with Starner Street.
- Changes to maps and tables to correct discrepancies and provide consistency. Local streets that were updated to collector status, collectors added from the Hillside District Plan, and street projects that were added from the LRTP.

She pointed out that this public hearing draft is not consistent with the draft MTP, and there will need to be minor amendments to it after the MTP has been adopted. The draft OS&HP will be on the Assembly's agenda for introduction on February 14th.

MS. MCCONNELL responded to questions from the Committee. She discussed resolving conflicts between State and Municipal owned routes in functional classifications and how street typology applies to those. She noted this is on the bottom of Page 2:

The State of Alaska also applies functional classifications to public streets, in order to guide roadway design, plan access management, and help evaluate Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funding ... However some differences do exist between the State classifications and the OS&HP, due to differences in the functional classification categories and between the goals of MOA/AMATS and DOT&PF ...

MS. MCCONNELL confirmed the Assembly is the approving body, and this is purely a City produced document.

Mayor Sullivan left at 1:25 p.m., and George Vakalis filled in for the Mayor.

There were no public comments.

b. Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Update

VIVIAN UNDERWOOD advised the Committee that this year AMATS would be updating the ITS architecture. She explained that ITS is using advanced technology to improve the service transportation system in an integrated manner, and the architecture is merely a planning tool and project implementation tool. She noted a list of projects was included in the Committee's information, and most are either completed or are in progress, and the ITS plan needs to be updated. In addition, she indicated a new ITS Advisory Subcommittee to AMATS would be formed this quarter and will serve as the technical team with the ITS architecture update. She noted this plan is required in federal planning regulations, and it will eventually come before this Committee for approval.

MS. UNDERWOOD responded to questions from the Committee on updating the ITS architecture.

DR. JEFFREY MILLER, a Professor in the Computer Systems Engineering Department in the School of Engineering at the University of Alaska Anchorage, was introduced as the guest speaker. He provided a presentation on congestion management for real time traffic monitoring. Professor Miller has been working with Teresa Brewer and the AMATS Freight Advisory Committee and is a member of that committee. Highlight of the presentation included:

- Current traffic assessment in Anchorage
- Distributed traffic assessment in Anchorage
- Distributed vehicular data gathering architecture & tracking devices
- Cellular tracking devices
- Current status
- Future projects, including tracking freight vehicles and vehicle slippage/snow plows

DR. MILLER responded to questions. He started this project here in the summer of 2009.

CHUCK KOPP, Chief of Staff for Senator Dyson, asked when Dr. Miller's current funding expires. DR. MILLER indicated the current projects go through December 2013, there are proposals out with the National Science Foundation, U.S. DOT to continue these on, and he has been in talks with the Alaska DOT and the City of Anchorage and GCI.

CHAIR CAMPBELL noted the importance of real time reporting and the historical data that is collected, which will show developing trends in the network to perhaps use to better economize AMATS decision.

DR. MILLER indicated the diagnostic systems can also provide air quality data as well, and they are actually able to pull 300 plus data points from the OBD port, and depending on the application what they can pull and transmit back to their server.

MS. EDWARDS thinks it is an intriguing concept for air quality data collection on vehicle trips without people having to fill out logs.

c. **Eagle River Interchange Study**

GERRY WELSH, Project Manager with the Alaska DOT in the Preliminary Design and Environmental Section, provided a presentation on the Eagle River Interchanges Study for interchanges on the Glenn Highway. This study was in response to a legislative request to solve traffic problems on two of the interchanges, Hiland Road Interchange and Artillery Road Interchange. He discussed their objectives and some of the problems and concerns they looked at. Their conclusions and recommendations are noted below:

Conclusions

- No long term improvements for Eagle River commuters from interchange improvements.
- Without added capacity, the Glenn Highway cannot accommodate the increasing volume traffic entering from Eagle River.
- Construction of additional lanes offers the only long term benefits of improved level of service.

Recommendations

- Southbound on-ramp extensions most cost effective action for improvement. Improvements will be short-term only.
- Perform additional modeling for entire system before major project.
- Perform additional traffic modeling for new Farm Road interchange benefits.
- Address pathway discontinuity and park and ride needs.

He noted this report was presented to the TAC, made available to their AMATS Planner, and has been posted to the State website. MR. WELSH responded to questions.

MR. KOPP noted the data was from 2010, and the experience of the Eagle River delegation is that the Artillery Road intersection is increasing in severity as far as problems where people are heading northbound and pulling into Eagle River morning traffic. He knows there are several ones that do that every day, two or three times a day. He commented that the LOS of B for that a.m. peak was a challenge to their experience. They felt the report was excellent overall, but some of the complexities that were not really brought out is the fact that the northbound exiting lane has a problem if they are trying to get into Eagle River itself. He indicated they have to cross out of the lane they are stuck into, and they interfere with people coming across the bridge in Eagle River. He noted under the A-3 option (page 14) there are considerable short-term advantages which would not depreciate enough to fall to being of no value for quite some time. He indicated this was a \$16 million option of which he thinks there is about \$9.5 million that has been set aside for this intersection upgrade leaving about \$7 million. He noted they liked that this north ramp goes right into the Central Business District, is a nice flow through, and gets rid of all the hazards including trying to turn into the Charter School or the area where the legislative office is. He thinks this promotes nice flow through for years. He noted they were not sure how long the build-out would be 3 lanes between Hiland and here, but that this looked like it would

have at least 15 years of being a strong benefit for flow through unloading of the highway coming into Eagle River because this area backs up so quickly especially in inclement weather. He thinks it is the least expensive of the options as well.

MR. KOPP noted the only other comment the delegation has is this Firehouse Lane intersects with Old Eagle River Road, and those folks have to come down to Monte Avenue and deal with two stop signs and then somehow turn left, and if they give this a wider turning lane they could avoid coming down Old Eagle River Road and doing that U-turn at the end. He emphasized that they feel improvements to this interchange to have to wait 20 years to coincide with the widening of the highway, particularly this area here is truly a nightmare now.

CHAIR CAMPBELL noted this is a framework and starting point for future discussion, and he thinks what this does for the legislative contingency or anybody else that wants to talk about it is that it gives you the perimeters for some of the options that are available and some of the costs that may be associated with it. He indicated we are always under pretty good scrutiny with our federal dollars these days and about where we stretch them, and how much money is spent in different locations. He further noted there is a huge pile of needs within our system right now, of which this is clearly one of them, so he would encourage the legislative delegation to the extent they are interested in funding one of these options to make that a priority and come forward, and we will work with them to make sure that the right project is matched up with the right funding levels to do the best we can.

d. U-MED Northern Access

KELLY PETERSEN, Project Manager with DOT Central Region Preliminary Design and Environmental, provided a presentation on the Northern Access to the University and Medical District Reconnaissance Study Report. She distributed copies of the study. She noted this study was funded by specific legislative appropriation and with joint effort by DOT and the Municipality. The purpose of the study was to analyze circulation and access needs to the University Medical District. She stated she is presenting the final report, that this is the final deliverable for this project, and with this submittal DOT's work on this project is complete.

She explained the definition of a reconnaissance report is a planning level document that identifies a problem, develops a preliminary purpose and need, identifies and analyzes alternative solutions, and compares those alternatives and recommends alternatives for further evaluation. She noted with this Northern Access to the U-MED District there was a special emphasis on public involvement because it is a sensitive area, and DOT wanted to make sure that public issues and concerns were heard and addressed. She referred to the "Notice to Readers" page in report noting this report is NEPA document, not a decision document, and its purpose is not to select a proposed alternative. She stated the purpose of this report is to: let people know that this project has been in the AMATS planning queue for many years; to give information to AMATS that was collected about the area; to let people know the next steps in pursuing a project; and that what shape or form that pursuit would be is up to AMATS.

MS. PETERSEN reviewed the study and highlighted the following:

- Public participation
- Roadway improvement concepts, labeled A through L that were investigated.
- 3 prong approach for solutions for the area – decrease traffic demand, improving existing roadways and constructing new access to the area.
- Analysis criteria and alternatives recommended to be carried forward, which was the Traffic Demand Management Model G, I, J and K.
- Document completed in September and posted to the project website with emails sent to the email list advising public comments would be taken for 30 days.
- 43 comments received: 12 positive; 18 negative for any project in area; 7 on specific resources important to protect if a project were to happen; and 6 questions about website or report itself.
- Disc at the back of the report with an electronic copy of the report and all supporting documents.

Discussion from the Committee followed.

There were no public comments.

e. **Obligation Report – First Quarter**

The Obligation Report lists all the projects in the TIP. It shows programmed dollar amounts according to the last TIP, any monies that have been obligated or deobligated so far, any changes approved by the TAC or the Policy Committee, and any additional monies anticipated to be obligated.

MR. RUDOLPH provided the AMATS FFY12 First Quarter Project Obligation Report. He clarified the first colored column (light purple) is the funding amounts programmed in the draft TIP Amendment 3 that was out for public comment and has not been technically approved by this Committee yet, but it is what AMATS is aiming for when planning program funds for future projects. The light yellow column shows what has been obligated since the first quarter, which is most likely to be zeros as it has only been 3 months, and the funding levels have not been approved in the TIP yet. The light blue column shows what is anticipated for obligation this year. He provided the following highlights:

- Huffman Rd. Reconstruction had construction overruns. Money was deobligated last year due to low bids. Now approximately \$2.6 million is to be added for construction overruns.
- Eagle River Road Rehab. This project is almost \$9 million. Anticipate advance construction of \$18.5 million from next year to deliver this project this year.

- Pavement Replacement Program. \$12.3 million is the Dimond Road resurfacing project, which is the largest project in the TIP this year. Being watched closely to ensure it is obligated in time.
- Dowling Road Extension. Deobligated almost \$4 million due to low bid. All deobligations in this report can go towards construction overruns in the future, but for planning purposes they deobligate now based on the low bid.
- Dollar amounts in red are deobligations of projects that were closed adding to the balance this year.
- Transportation Enhancements. The big project this year is the Glenn Highway Rehab, \$5.1 million and a few thousand dollars was added to the Area Wide Trails Program and the Bicycle Plan Projects.
- CMAQ Projects. Basically, everything is on pace to obligate as indicated in the TIP.
- The total AMATS allocation in the TIP is planned for a \$36.3 million program, and they anticipate between the obligations and the deobligations at \$32.9 million leaving approximately \$3.3 million in wiggle room for construction overruns or to add to other projects.
- Also listed are NHS projects and generally funded projects that are not part of the TIP.

In response to Assembly Member Flynn, MR. RUDOLPH confirmed AMATS is not using any advance construction funds this year because the stimulus money was used to clear all that out.

There were no comments from public.

f. Other Informational Items - None

7. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

MS. EDWARDS thanked the presenters noting a lot of material was covered, and they did a good job.

8. SCHEDULED AMATS MEETINGS

Technical Advisory Committee, February 9, 2012

Policy Committee, February 23, 2012

Technical Advisory Committee, March 8, 2012

Policy Committee, March 22, 2012

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:41 p.m.