

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

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

**May 24, 2012
1:00 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
Dan Sullivan	Municipal Mayor
Patrick Flynn	MOA/Municipal Assembly
Chris Birch	MOA/Municipal Assembly

Also in attendance

Name	Representing
Craig Lyon	MOA/Community Development/Transportation Planning (CCD)
Steve Morris *	MOA/Dept. of Health & Human Services
Lance Wilber *	MOA/Public Transportation Department (PTD)
Jamie Acton	MOA/PTD
Lori Schanche	MOA/Project Management & Engineering
Rich Wilson	MOA/Port of Anchorage
Emily Cotter	MOA/Port of Anchorage, Juneau (via phone)
George Vakalis	MOA/Municipal Manager
Jennifer Witt *	DOT&PF
Bart Rudolph	DOT&PF
Mike Vigue	DOT&PF Headquarters, Chief, Program Development, Juneau (via phone)
Kris Riesenberg	Federal Highway Administration, Juneau (via phone)
Bill Sheffield	Former Governor of Alaska, Former Director, Port of Anchorage
John McPherson	HDR Alaska, Inc.
Gary Katsion	Kittelson & Associates
Jamie Kenworthy	
John Weddleton	

**AMATS Technical Advisory Committee members*

1. CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR CAMPBELL called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. A quorum was established. Cindy Heil represented the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation in Ms. Edwards' absence. Assembly Member Birch arrived at 1:11 p.m.

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. HEIL seconded. *Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved unanimously.*

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES - None

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Freight Advisory Committee Appointments

MR. LYON reported the Technical Advisory Committee met and recommended appointment by the Policy Committee of the following individuals to the AMATS Freight Advisory Committee to fill the Airport seat and a public member seat:

Appointment: Teri Lindseth, Planner III w/ Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport
Replacing: Jack Jones with Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport

Appointment: Doug Thompson, Director Southcentral Operations, Holland America/Princess
Replacing: Mike Blewett, Regional Manager, Fred Meyers

ASSEMBLY MEMBER FLYNN moved to approve the appointment of Teri Lindseth and Doug Thompson to the Freight Advisory Committee. MS. HEIL seconded.

There were no comments from the public.

Hearing no objections, the motion passed unanimously.

b. Port of Anchorage Intermodal Expansion Project Resolution

This draft resolution proposed by Mayor Sullivan is a request from the AMATS Policy Committee to the Governor to direct the State Department of Transportation and Public Facilities to add the former earmark amount of \$19.2 million to be an additional allocation to AMATS so that it can be obligated towards the Port of Anchorage Intermodal Expansion Project. This Port project received \$32 million in earmarks over 5 years through SAFETEA-LU averaging \$6.4 million per year. During the interim period of continuing resolutions and no earmarks the FHWA formula funds go to the State Department of Transportation, and FHWA fund amounts that used to be earmarked in each state are now added to each state's formula.

MR. LYON reported the Technical Advisory Committee discussed this issue at their last meeting, and Mr. Rudolph with DOT&PF provided a presentation at that time. The TAC recommendation was to have that same presentation shown to the Policy Committee, and then have the Policy Committee provide direction to the TAC and Staff.

BART RUDOLPH, Anchorage Transportation Planner with the Alaska Department of Transportation provided an overview on what happened during SAFETEA-LU, the formula funds received, how earmarks were distributed, and what happened with continuing resolutions to show how the State had that money put back into the formula funds, and how it ultimately affects AMATS funding overall. He explained SAFETEA-LU was from 2005 to 2009, and with continuing resolutions his presentation continued as if it were another five years operating under the same rules for continuing resolutions. The following information was included in Mr. Rudolph's presentation:

The Port of Anchorage had \$25 million of deductive earmarks, a \$7 million earmark in the additive earmarks, and an FTA earmark for \$25 million totaling approximately \$57 million over five years in earmarks during SAFETEA-LU. The FTA earmark was not part of the highway program and was not discussed. After SAFETEA-LU under the continuing resolution process, earmark funds were not distributed to the Port as they once were, but were put into the State of Alaska formula funds. All earmarks after SAFETEA-LU were stripped of their titles, and the State blended all the money into one pot. Then, based on allocation formulas although the Port did not receive funds AMATS received approximately \$36 million per year, an increase of approximately \$12 million per year. It is AMATS' responsibility to direct those funds to projects through the TIP process. Under continuing resolution the money is completely spent each year, and nothing carries over year to year.

Assembly Member Birch arrived at 1:11 p.m.

MR. SHEFFIELD testified on funding for the Port. He discussed Above the Line and Below the Line SAFETEA-LU earmarks noting funds Above the Line were extra funds that were granted to the Port. After SAFETEA-LU ran out those monies the Port was getting all went to the State of

Alaska. He indicated the Governor said he would save that money until this was resolved and not spend it. He noted the Port has been 3 or 4 years on this problem in getting their \$6.4 million per year, which is approximately \$18 to \$20 million. He explained that if DOT were to allow funds to be used for the Port it would have to comply with Title 23, and the Port thinks they do comply. He believes the Port receiving those funds is a matter of fairness that needs to be applied.

MR. RUDOLPH confirmed that virtually all monies, including former earmark money, has been blended into one pool with no other separate monies that DOT has set aside for any other purpose that was formerly earmarked.

MAYOR SULLIVAN indicated it was clear what that the path forward would be, and if the Policy Committee was willing to do so and felt that out of the allocation AMATS received that some of those monies should be going to the Port, that it sounds like it is the Policy Committee's job make that call in the TIP.

MR. LYON confirmed adding this to the TIP would be a major amendment to the TIP as it is a new project, and it would be in Table 3, 4 or 5. He explained if the staff drafted an amendment for the Administration to bring forward to the body, the draft amendment is released for 30 days for public review, and also goes through the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Assembly, and then back to the Policy Committee for final approval. He indicated this process typically takes 5 to 6 months. He further noted the TIP is a four year document, and the Port project could be included in the table showing four years of funding, but the Alaska legislature would still have to obligate the monies.

MAYOR SULLIVAN confirmed his intent is to contemplate adding the Port Project to the MTP so that AMATS can take monies that are planned for road projects and divert some to the Port. He noted the rationale behind that is as Mr. Rudolph pointed out that AMATS received approximately \$12 million more because of the funding of the earmarks. He stated AMATS is flush with extra road project money that AMATS would not have had the State not blended the earmark money, and clearly some of that was designated for the most important transportation project in the State, which is the Port. He thinks it would certainly be appropriate to do a little reallocation.

CHAIR CAMPBELL noted he could not speak for any conversations that the two governors have had regarding this money. He stated he has not received any communications from the Governor on any level indicating to him as either the regional director of DOT, or as the AMATS Chairman that there is some commitment for this money. CHAIR CAMPBELL noted AMATS has received an extra \$12 million a year, and it is the Policy Committee's duty and responsibility to determine how to allocate that money. He personally did not think AMATS would get a stand-alone edict from the Governor or anyone else telling AMATS it has to or should spend money on the Port. He noted the Port would compete with other road projects in the system, and it would be a discussion of project priorities for the overall transportation system

and funding. He also believes the Port does fit in some ways under Title 23, but any projects would have to meet FHWA requirements under that Title.

MAYOR SULLIVAN noted in a meeting he had with Commissioner Lukin, the Municipal Manager and Mr. Sheffield that Commissioner Lukin did indicate that this was the process to go through to allocate the money and was supportive of it.

MAYOR SULLIVAN moved to table. CHAIR CAMPBELL noted this could come forward again at a future date in a modified form. *Hearing no objections, this agenda item was tabled.*

c. **Standardized Socioeconomic Assumptions for AMATS Regional Transportation Modeling**

This is a draft resolution for adopting standardized household and employment forecasts and allocations for AMATS regional transportation modeling and includes direction to the TAC to draft policies and procedures for standardized socioeconomic assumptions for AMATS regional transportation modeling forecasts used in the development of AMATS transportation plans, programs and projects.

MR. LYON discussed the modeling used in developing the recent 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and projects. He noted the modeling for the MTP was done using information from the TransCAD Model, which uses the information from ISER (Institute of Socio Economic Research). However, the Knik Arm Project information provided to AMATS by KABATA for the MTP did not use ISER, but some other information. In going forward, he indicated it would be good if everyone was on the same page with how information is received, and what kind of information is being utilized to inform the AMATS model. He noted FHWA and FTA have suggested that AMATS needs to be thinking more regionally and take into account the population, jobs and the situation out in the Mat-Su Valley.

MR. LYON noted the TAC met, discussed and modified this resolution. The TAC also had a work session on the resolution. The result is the draft resolution before the Policy Committee. In particular, he noted the resolution would direct the TAC to come up with some protocols for developing standard language, forecasts, etc. to help inform the next version of the MTP when it is developed with modeling that uses the same kind of information.

MR. MORRIS discussed problems during the last MTP process for the TAC when reconciling some of the forecasts provided by KABATA with assumptions used within AMATS. He indicated this resolution and policies and procedures were seen as a way to streamline and improve the process. He thinks the TAC in particular should be looking at all the assumptions that go into the transportation model because they inform our decisions not just looking at KABATA, but AMATS' own modeling process as well. He expressed the need for a process to validate the assumptions that go into the model, where people are living and working, because that is what drives the model. He also recognized that we are looking more and more at a region-

wide model and what is going on in the Mat-Su is even more important than it used to be for transportation infrastructure in Anchorage.

CHAIR CAMPBELL expressed his concerns as follows:

- It appears this is assigning a lot of work to somebody, and he does not know who that person would be. He would like a better understanding on how that would be administered. He thinks this is relevant when these things are going to be established and adopted with a formal process. He would like to understand how much work that will be before adding more administrative requirements for various people.
- With regard to jurisdictional issues, he noted there are certain agencies and other people that are not within this body's jurisdiction. He stated he is always concerned if AMATS starts requiring things of people that are not under its jurisdiction.

In response to Chair Campbell's concerns, MR. LYON indicated the resolution is asking the TAC to draft some policies and procedures, which would require staff to draft those policies and procedures. It also requires that all regionally significant projects be modeled using standardized household employment forecast. He indicated this would make it incumbent on regionally significant projects to look at what AMATS has and saying to use this. In reality, he did not think AMATS could require the regionally significant project to do that, and maybe AMATS should suggest that all regionally significant projects use this.

CHAIR CAMPBELL indicated AMATS involvement in this is that if someone wants to bring something forward for inclusion in the MTP or within the TIP, he thinks it is within AMATS' purview to say they have to follow these procedures and play by these rules to do that. He thinks it makes sense to do that.

Referring to the draft resolution and regionally significant projects, CHAIR CAMPBELL thinks Item 4 is redundant and is covered under Item 2.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER BIRCH noted he was reminded of the work on Title 21 in land use and land use development, and how population and population density has such a dramatic impact over a long period of time particularly representing as he does in South Anchorage some of the more expansive areas of undeveloped real estate that the Municipality has. On the face of it, he does not think this seems like an unreasonable approach, but at the same time from a planning process you do assess the anticipated population growth typically in times to vacant land. He understands the concerns about who will actually be doing the work, but he does not know that this is particularly harmful.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER FLYNN thinks this is a great idea because if AMATS is going to have projects competing for dollars they should be competing on the same basis and it is absolutely

reasonable for AMATS to say if you want to play in our sand box you have to play by our rules. He was sorry this was not done before.

MAYOR SULLIVAN stated he generally agrees that having one standard is always good thing when trying to do planning otherwise confusion can reign. He thinks the intent is good. He thinks it would be up to the staff and the TAC to figure out what is best standard to use, and there are obviously a couple choices out there, and this body will wait for a recommendation to see what that means. He will be supporting the resolution.

MS. HEIL stated she is supportive of this. She thinks it puts more of a formalization of what AMATS did over the MTP because the Policy Committee before that MTP effort started passed a resolution that identified the rules that established which model would be used, that there were certain projects that were going to stay in regardless, and there were ground rules. She thinks this helps expand that and sets some additional ground rules for consideration before going into the next MTP update. She thinks that is a good idea especially since AMATS has a lot of knowledge and a lot of lessons learned, and now is the time to make sure we do not have to relearn that if AMATS waits too long to develop something like this. She noted this will come back before the Policy Committee, and this resolution does not commit this Policy Committee to anything at this point. She noted it directs the TAC to look at this and bring back what they come up with. She thinks there is always an opportunity to modify it. She thinks it is fine for now.

In general, CHAIR CAMPELL noted he agrees with what everyone said that this is a good idea in concept. He thinks it should be remanded, and suggested that the motion be somewhat broader than this recommendation in specificity, require more development of this process, and bring it back to the Policy Committee in the future for further clarification and discussion of what has been talked about at this meeting. He also supports the overall concept; he thinks it is a good one, and ultimately if it is done correctly and efficiently it could save time in the overall system in the future.

CHAIR CAMPBELL asked for public comments.

JOHN MCPHERSON pointed out there is a relationship between land use and transportation and so if AMATS is considering a regionally significant transportation project it is very likely that it is going to affect the location of future development. He indicated if AMATS locks someone into saying we are going to use certain projects, and if we are considering something like an interchange suddenly business and growth is going to change to flock to those TAZ'S, and almost inevitably you are going to be modifying land use and distribution of population and employment every time you are considering a major transportation change to the system.

CHAIR CAMPBELL asked if Mr. McPherson in general supports this concept, or is saying land use drives transportation. MR. MCPHERSON stated he was just saying that you cannot just necessarily have a static set distribution of population and employment and say all transportation

projects shall use that because they actually affect that distribution. He indicated there would be errors in the trials of forecasting if you were to force a major project to use a set distribution. CHAIR CAMPBELL indicated his understanding of Mr. McPherson's comments noting he assumed he would take his testimony to the TAC for implementation into their recommendations.

MAYOR SULLIVAN moved to approve. MS. HEIL seconded.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER FLYNN asked for additional clarification. CHAIR CAMPBELL indicated the motion needed was to direct the TAC to do something for the Policy Committee. He noted this is a resolution presented by the TAC, and it is not really instructions to the TAC per se so asked for clarification from the mover and seconder.

With the mover's concurrence, the seconder, ASSEMBLY MEMBER FLYNN proposed an amended motion to provide additional clarification.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER FLYNN moved to amend the motion to approve remanding this subject to the TAC to develop the policies and procedures that will govern forecasting in future plan development. MAYOR SULLIVAN seconded.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER FLYNN confirmed his motion would take the resolution off the table and replace it with the amended language. This action had the mover's concurrence.

Hearing no objections, the motion as modified passed unanimously.

d. **Other Business Items - None**

6. **INFORMATION ITEMS**

a. **Non-Motorized Transportation Status**

LORI SCHANCHE, Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator for the MOA provided a status report on non-motorized transportation. Highlights included:

- Discussion on the progress of an update to the Areawide Trails Plan, which is being called the Anchorage Trails Plan because it is an update, but also a new plan. A draft plan expected this fall and hopeful for approval of the plan next spring.
- Bike to Work Day was held and done in coordination with the Department of Health.
- Bike map being updated for 2012.
- Brochure under development on changes to Title 9 laws for both motorists and bicyclists.
- Bicycle Safety Classes being provided (Traffic Skills 101).

- Attempting to get a lead certified instructor course for a number of the Anchorage Police Department people.

Discussion followed on Bike to Work Day.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER FLYNN asked Ms. Schanche to email him statistics collected during the Bike to Word Day event and to provide him with extra copies of the updated bike map when it is updated.

With regard to the number of bicyclists, MR. LYON noted that was a question asked in the last Regional Household Travel Survey, and a new survey has been included in the new TIP amendment.

MAYOR SULLIVAN indicated that at some point a cost analysis should be done on how much is being spent per biker because clearly a lot of money is being put into facilities whether it is striping, bike lanes, etc. He indicated if AMATS is truly trying to survey the commuter population then it needs to have better data to know what is being spent per biker because he thinks this would be a key element in AMATS' decision-making. He would like to see something more than anecdotal when it comes to spending millions of dollars on bike commuters.

In response, MS. SCHANCHE noted there is also a safety factor such as building bike lanes to provide a safer place for bicyclists to be.

MAYOR SULLIVAN noted he was not asking to debate it, just literally what is being spent on specific facilities for bike commuters, and how many there are, which is an analysis AMATS needs to do as part of its job.

CHAIR CAMPBELL noted it is hard to understand what the real day-to-day use is compared to a peak day, and to some extent he was not really sure it has to be a commuter to give the facility value if people are using it for recreation, to go to the store or pickup laundry. He does think it would be helpful for AMATS to make decisions when there is a better idea of how many people are being served. He also noted there are other factors such as safety, and it is not just a dollar for dollar equation. However, he stated it is a baseline to help AMATS gauge some of the relevant importance of these things.

There were no comments from the public.

b. Public Transportation / People Mover Update

LANCE WILBER, MOA Director of Public Transportation, provided a presentation on People Mover. Highlights included:

- On-time performance for buses and AnchorRides.
- Ridership up on all modes.
- Over-counter sales up 30%.
- Advertising revenues up 130%.
- Bus Stop improvements at key bus stop locations and hubs.
- On-time message boards at strategic locations.
- Site enhancement crews.
- New bus fleet additions.
- New crew and new perspective including communication, succession planning, and customer service image.
- Enhancement of safety measures and cameras, and coordination with the Anchorage Police Department.
- New fare collections system coming on-line in June with smart cards and magnetic swipe technology with outreach to the community on the new system.

MR. WILBER provided a copy of the new People Mover brochure.

CHAIR CAMPBELL asked for comments from the public.

MS. SCHANCHE suggested adding a bike to the front of the bus pictured on the brochure.

MAYOR SULLIVAN noted ACDA (Anchorage Community Development Authority) has a new security contract, and the Transit Center is closing earlier than before, which may be causing Transit some problems. Discussion followed on the impacts the change in hours would have on the Transit Center. MAYOR SULLIVAN indicated they would help to solve this issue in any way they can.

CHAIR CAMPBELL suggested a “bus to work” day.

MR. WILBER noted seniors ride the bus for free on Wednesdays, and kids ride free on Thursdays during the summer.

MR. WILBER briefly discussed the status of the Opticom traffic signal control system that was being installed on buses for certain routes and intersections. He noted most of the fleet has those devices because not just one bus runs those routes. Transit has agreed not to install any more Opticoms until the State and City have completed work on new signal controllers. Once that is complete, Transit will implement more Opticoms on those routes. He confirmed that Transit has a measurable improvement to determine the success of this program.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER FLYNN explained the Assembly gave Transit a one year sunset to come back and make a report to the Assembly on the Opticom program.

c. **Other Informational Items - None**

7. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

With regard to upcoming issues during the next few months, MR. LYON noted the Policy Committee would be seeing an action item for a TIP major amendment in June.

MAYOR SULLIVAN introduced Rich Wilson, the new Port Director.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER FLYNN thanked for the Mayor for highlighting People Mover at his press conference. He suggested it might be good to do something similar on a trails update.

8. SCHEDULED AMATS MEETINGS

Technical Advisory Committee, June 14, 2012

Policy Committee, June 28, 2012

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.