

AMATS Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting Minutes

Meeting Details

Date: January 27, 2026

Time: 5:00pm-6:53pm

Location: Virtual (Microsoft Teams)

Chair: Matt Cruickshank

Minutes Prepared by: Christine Schuette, (AMATS)

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Roll Call

- **District 1:** SJ Klein — Present
- **District 2:** Matt Cruickshank — Present
- **District 3:** Allie Hartman — Present
- **District 4:** Diana Evans — Present
- **District 5:** Dave Weber — Present
- **District 6:** Nancy Pease — Present
- **Anchorage Chamber of Commerce:** Kathleen McArdle — Present (*arrived after roll call at 5:05pm*)
- **Eagle River Chamber of Commerce:** Chuck Homan — Present
- **Federation of Community Councils:** Bob French — Present
- **Planning & Zoning Commission:** Jeff Raun — Present
- **Member:** John Scudder — Present
- **Staff:** Christine Schuette (AMATS), Aaron (AMATS), Rhiannon Brown (AMATS), guest presenter Steven Stone (Public Transportation)
- **Quorum:** Yes

Agenda Items

3. Approval of the Agenda

Motion: Approve the agenda
Moved by: Member Klein
Seconded by: Member Homan
Outcome: Approved (no objections)

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4. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

Minutes considered: 7-24-25 / 10-28-25
Motion: Approve both sets of minutes
Moved by: Member Homan
Seconded by: Member Klein
Outcome: Approved (no objections)

5. Action Items & Discussions

General: It was reaffirmed by Chair Cruickshank that while discussion is welcome, committee members' comments on action items must be submitted in advance of the meeting to allow fair review by all members before voting on adoption.

AMATS Staff Schuette clarified that this is not a rule outlined in the by-laws of the committee, but it is a practice that the committee has relied on in the past to aid committee discussion and action.

No comments were submitted on the first three action items on this agenda so the committee engaged in discussions on each of the items and agreed to call a special meeting on February 10th 5:00pm-7:00pm to take action.

A. Amendment 2 to the 2050 Transportation Plan (MTP)

Project Background: The Transportation Plan (MTP) is the long-range blueprint for the region's transportation system, looking out at least 20 years into the future. It identifies current and future transportation needs and sets priorities for projects that improve the safe and efficient movement of people and goods. The MTP is updated regularly to reflect changes in population, land use, travel behavior, and available funding. The plan is

developed with input from the public, partner agencies, and stakeholders to ensure it aligns with community goals and federal planning requirements.

Staff Briefing (Rhiannon Brown)

- Update project description for TIP NHS-1: Seward Highway: O'Malley Road to Dimond Blvd to match Policy Committee action (October 2023).
- New projects: Municipality seeking US DOT MoA, America Bureau, Rural & Tribal Assistance Pilot Program grants for two life safety access roads.

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Committee Comments:

Member Pease mentioned that the O'Malley - Dimond description mentions "under crossing" but does not specify further. She expressed concern about potential drift back to a full freeway interchange which the community previously opposed.

Member Pease also mentioned that her Community Council, Rabbit Creek, is in favor of the Potter Valley life safety access road, one of the added projects seeking grant funding.

Chair Cruickshank asked about funding for the added projects.

AMATS Director Jongenelen confirmed that the MOA life safety access road projects were seeking grant funding and would not get funded through the AMATS allocation. The best point of contact regarding the grants would be

Chair Cruickshank asked if community councils and members of the public could nominate projects at any time or if they needed to wait for a certain time period when nominations could take place.

AMATS Director Jongenelen stated that projects could be nominated at any time, but the program must remain fiscally constrained so if you are suggesting a new project be added in between MTP development cycles where nominated projects are scored and ranked, you must also suggest what currently listed project should be removed or delayed.

Chair Cruickshank asked when the next MTP update is scheduled to take place.

AMATS Staff Brown confirmed that the next MTP Update is in the works and should kick off in the next month or so.

Member Pease asked when the next call for projects would be.

AMATS Staff Brown stated that this update has a shorter timeline and a smaller budget. Staff will be focusing on moving existing projects forward rather than adding new ones. Current projects will stay if they still meet performance measures and goals.

Public Comment: None

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B. Amendment #4 to the 2023–2026 TIP (Funding Program)

Project Background: The Funding Program (TIP) is a short-range planning document that programs federal, state, and local transportation funding for projects over a four-year period. It includes capital, maintenance, and operational projects for roads, public transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and other transportation infrastructure. The TIP reflects the priorities identified in the Transportation Plan (MTP) and is developed in coordination with local agencies, stakeholders, and the public. Projects must be included in the TIP to receive federal funding and advance to implementation.

Staff Briefing (Aaron Jonenelen):

- Amendment makes changes across Tables 1–8 and 10; some information may be dated due to late updates.
- HSIP projects: The AMATS Policy Committee noted concern about the defunding by Commissioner Anderson. The Municipality and DOT&PF have since worked to restore some of the funding; updates will appear in the Administrative Modification #5 on the Technical and Policy agendas in February.
- New Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ) project: Downtown Transit Center
- Transit: Fare modernization

Committee Comments:

Member Pease noted that Rabbit Creek Community Council is concerned about postponing the Rabbit Creek Road rehabilitation to later years. They prefer reducing the project scope rather than delaying it entirely and want safety improvements at key intersections (Old Seward Highway, Elmore Road, and Golden View).

Chair Cruickshank and Member Homan summarized some items that came up at the CBERRSA meeting. A concern was raised about the Peters Creek to Mere Lake connection project. While design funding remains in the TIP, construction funding was moved out of the current TIP cycle. It was noted that the amount removed matched the funding added to a project in Anchorage, possibly off Minnesota Drive. Additionally, there was discussion about the limited TIP funding allocated to the Chugiak–Eagle River area, with only four projects funded under this program, which was viewed as insufficient for the community.

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Public Comment: None

C. Draft TIP for 2027–2030

Staff Briefing (Aaron Jonenelen):

- The new Funding Program for 2027–2030 is out for public comment; it replaces the current TIP ending soon.
- Constraints: Must remain fiscally constrained; rising costs and delays have pushed some projects to illustrative status.
- New Additions:
 - Denali Complete Street Project
 - Tudor-to-Roosevelt Non-Motorized Connection
 - 15th Avenue Complete Street (lane reallocation study)
- Plans & Studies: Includes next Transportation Plan (MTP) update, the Safety Plan update, and some corridor studies.
- DOT Requests: Added NHS projects, including O’Malley to Dimond Boulevard reconstruction.
- Next Steps: Public comment period ongoing; public hearing at next assembly meeting; final approval expected in March.

Committee Comments:

Member Klein noted that some projects in the new TIP may align with priorities from the Seward-Glenn Planning Environmental Linkages (PEL) study and the Reconnecting Communities project for Fairview. However, the PEL is not finalized, and its priorities may differ from the current TIP. The member suggested

commenting on specific projects, such as 15th Avenue, and mentioned interest in proposals like the Hyder Greenway.

Public Comment: None

D. Safer Seward Highway Project (Draft EA)

Sponsor: Member Pease

• Project corridor: Mile 98.5 (Bird Flats) → Rabbit Creek Road

• Concerns:

- Legal Questions: AMATS removed portions within the AMATS boundary from MTP/TIP due to scale and cost.
- Municipality did not endorse the DOT preferred design; but DOT proceeded anyway.
- Design Concerns: Extremely wide footprint in some areas despite limited curves needing correction.
- Modeling Issues: Traffic modeled on summer peaks, not winter when most crashes occur; assumptions about speed and level of service questioned.
- Safety Analysis: Downplays effectiveness of targeted safety improvements at a fraction of the cost.
- Environmental & Community Impacts: Insufficient mitigation for park/refuge lands; unclear intersection modeling (e.g., Potter Valley Road); parking and trail impacts.

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Committee Comments:

Chair Cruickshank asked for the dollar amount of the project within the AMATS boundary.

AMATS Director Jongenelen stated that there is some uncertainty about the exact cost of the Safer Seward Highway portion within the MPO boundary. While it is estimated at \$290 million or more, the overall project is expected to exceed \$1.4 billion, which will impact statewide transportation funding for years, even though AMATS is not contributing funds.

Member Klein expressed concerns over the likelihood of some of the projects in the Seward to Glenn PEL and others that he has been following, that are slated to receive STIP funding, even going forward if this project proceeds.

Member Evans stated that it would be good for members of this committee to follow up with their legislative representatives about this project.

Several members of the committee and AMATS staff requested that the submitted comments on this item be cleaned up in a clear and concise manner for consideration at the special meeting February 10th.

Motion(s):

- **Motion:** Approve member Pease's draft comments as CAC comments

Moved by: Member Klein

Seconded by: None

Outcome: Failed

- **Motion:** Postpone the item to the Feb 10 special meeting to allow CAC members time to review and adopt a refined comment package.

Moved by: Member Hartman

Seconded by: Member Klein

Outcome: Approved

Abstention: Jeff Raun (Planning & Zoning Commissioner) Member Raun stated that due to his position on P&Z, he will abstain from any future votes pertaining to this project.

6. Informational Items

1. Transit on the Move Update

Presenter: Steven Stone (Public Transportation Department)

- The Public Transportation Department is entering the final phase of updating its Transit on the Move plan, which is updated every five years.
- Public Comment Period: Opens February 2 and closes April 19, following extensive outreach at community events last summer.

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- Next Steps: Gather input on prioritizing projects from the 2020 plan and new ideas for the 2025 plan, including potential new routes, microtransit, and service expansions.
- Outreach continues at community council meetings, AMATS TAC and PC meetings, and public events.
- Updated information and survey link will be available at trans.anchorage.gov

Committee Comments:

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Member Scudder asked if there were any proposed projects on the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

PTD Staff Stone confirmed that there were.

Member Klein thanked the project team for their outreach for this plan.

Public Comments: None

2. AMATS Turns 50

Staff Briefing (Christine Schuette)

- AMATS was designated in April of 1976
- We designed an anniversary logo inspired by the original logo
- We will have anniversary branded items and find other small ways to celebrate this year

Committee Comments: None

Public Comments: None

7. Committee Comments

Meeting Format: There was some discussion about meeting in-person or not and it was generally agreed that one meeting a year in person might be appreciated. AMATS Staff will look into acquiring an in-person room for the July committee meeting but also maintain a virtual option to join.

Member Klein noted that the Fairview PEL is in its final draft stage. There is controversy regarding the parkway option and project prioritization. Community

councils, including Fairview, have submitted comments, and the plan is expected to go before the Assembly for approval.

Chair Cruickshank: noted that he has noticed a positive trend of increased engagement with community councils. Many representatives are actively gathering feedback from their communities and bringing it to the C.C., which strengthens input and collaboration, even when opinions differ.

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8. Public Comments

None

9. Adjournment

Motion: Adjourn

Moved by: Member Scudder

Seconded by: Member Homan

Outcome: Approved

Adjourned at: 6:53pm