

**ANCHORAGE METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSPORTATION  
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING  
Mayor's Conference Room, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
632 West 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Anchorage, Alaska**

**March 26, 2009  
1:00 PM**

Those in attendance were:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>REPRESENTING</u>
* Gordon Keith	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, Regional Director
** Jennifer Witt	ADOT/PF
Aneta Synan	ADOT/PF
Dave Post	ADOT/PF
Jim Amundson	ADOT/PF
* Alice Edwards	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Air Quality
** Cindy Heil	ADEC
* Matt Claman	Municipal Mayor
* Sheila Selkregg	MOA/Municipal Assembly
* Patrick Flynn	MOA/Municipal Assembly
Craig Lyon	MOA/ Traffic Department
** Jody Karcz	MOA/ Public Transportation Dept.
** Jerry Hansen	MOA/PM&E
William Mehner	MOA/Heritage Land Bank
Walter Parker	Self
Bobbi Wells	Chugiak/Birchwood Community Council
Duane Hippe	HDR Inc.
Tom Brigham	
Andrew Niemeic	KABATA

- \* AMATS Policy Committee members
- \*\* AMATS Technical Advisory Committee members

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

CHAIR KEITH called the meeting to order at 1:15 PM. All Policy Committee members were present with Sheila Selkregg arriving at 1:18 PM. Cindy Heil served on behalf of Alice Edwards. A quorum was established.

**2. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT**

CHAIR KEITH encouraged public involvement in this meeting of the AMATS Policy Committee. He explained that 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**

MR. LYON noted that item 6.b was originally a Business Item and was removed. It was erroneously shown as an Informational Item and should be also be removed from that portion of the agenda.

CHAIR KEITH noted that, following Informational Items, the Policy Committee would offer instruction to the TAC, if any.

*The agenda was approved, as amended.*

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – None**

**5. BUSINESS ITEMS**

**a. Freight Advisory Committee Membership**

MR. LYON explained this group is comprised of freight professionals. It was formed upon a recommendation from the Freight Mobility Study done in relation to the former Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The recommendation was to make this a standing subcommittee. It was formed in 2004 and because over half of the membership left for various reasons, it fell stagnant. It has since been reconstituted. Four of the members are re-appointments and the others are new appointments. He asked that all members be approved, noting that there is a positive recommendation from the TAC to do so.

ACTING MAYOR MATT CLAMAN moved for approval of all 11 candidates for appointment to the AMATS Freight Advisory Committee. CINDY HEIL seconded.

MR. FLYNN stated he formerly served on this committee and one of the topics that remained was getting parties together to deal with planning standards for appropriate radii to accommodate truck turning.

MS. SELKREGG arrived at 1:18 PM.

MR. LYON stated the FAC met informally and a workshop was held regarding what size vehicle is the standard trailer for which streets must be designed (on truck routes). They also discussed coming to agreement on the design standards of DOT versus those set out in municipal ordinances.

MS. SELKREGG asked if the ability for tour buses to turn is also being considered. MR. LYON offered to mention this to the FAC. ACTING MAYOR CLAMAN noted that this is the FAC, which addresses freight. MS. SELKREGG remarked that the tourism industry has voiced concern with respect to the ability for the buses to turn.

***There being no objection, the motion passed unanimously.***

MS. SELKREGG suggested that, if there is a representative of the tourist industry able to join the FAC, perhaps such a change in membership could be brought back to the Policy Committee. MR. LYON noted that an odd number of members is preferable so as not to have a stalemate. MS. SELKREGG suggested that two representatives of the tourist industry might be invited to join.

**b. AMATS Citizens Air Quality Advisory Committee Membership**

MR. LYON stated there are two nominees for the CAQAC and a nominee is being sought for the third seat.

PATRICK FLYNN moved to approve the appointment of Jeff Manfull and George Conway to the AMATS Citizens Air Quality Advisory Committee.  
CINDY HEIL seconded.

***There being no objection, the motion passed unanimously.***

MR. MORRIS thanked three volunteer members who are leaving the committee who participated for six years. CHAIR KEITH suggested writing a letter of thanks to the outgoing members.

**c. Eagle River Small Urban Boundary**

DAVID POST explained that this item is initiated by the need for a statewide update of the road functional classification system. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requires a periodic update of the state's road classification system so there is a systematic basis for road classification. This was last done in 1992. There must first be definition of any new urbanized areas, which affects the classification of a road as a rural collector versus an urban major or minor collector; the same is true for arterials. The most recent decennial census must be used in this process. MR. POST displayed a map depicting the area that rose to the level of an urban cluster, defined as having 1,000 people per square mile and have a total of at least 2,500 people. FHWA recommends that the MPO modify the boundaries of the urban cluster to consider what is likely to function as an urban area, primarily in terms of traffic patterns. The most significant implication of this decision is that roads within the boundary are classified as urban and those outside of the boundary would be classified as rural.

MS. SELKREGG noted that the briefing on this subject indicates the main reason for expanding the boundary is to provide for urban design standards. She asked if state roads would then be more context sensitive. MR. POST replied that engineers are not bound by a road classification to design to an urban standard. If the road is determined to be of rural character, it can be designed in that way. MS. SELKREGG noted there has been a challenge over the years to negotiate with the State for an improved streetscape on State-owned roads built in the municipality to accommodate pedestrians. She asked if the MOA could begin to more clearly define urban standards and work with the State to modify those standards. MR. POST stated this process is not specific to the MOA. The classification system must be applicable throughout the state. MS. SELKREGG noted that the roads built by the State through Wasilla are not context sensitive. She thought there were places throughout the state that have a different standard in terms of numbers of people. She asked if it would be possible to work with the State to establish a set of standards that are more urban-sensitive. MR. POST felt

this was not the format for that effort. The classification system is a starting point, while Ms. Selkregg is looking at something much more detailed. The classification system does not bind the engineer to a specific design. He did not believe the classification has significant implications for the design of the roadway. TOM BRIGHAM, consultant, explained that this classification is a starting point that defines whether a road is urban or rural. The intent is to have continuity around neighborhoods and areas. The issue Ms. Selkregg raises is the next step beyond this default starting point.

CHAIR KEITH clarified that ADOT uses context sensitive design (CSD) in all its roads. The definition of CSD is to design and build the road to be compatible with the community, respect geography, acknowledge socio-economic considerations, etc.

MS. SELKREGG stated she is interested in the next level of criteria. She was ultimately interested, considering the intimate relationship between State and MOA roads, in having a clear understanding of CSD and perhaps interacting to ensure that the concept of CSD at both levels are similar.

ACTING MAYOR CLAMAN understood that ten years ago when this classification was last done, the area in question was deemed rural. Approving this request creates an urban area. MR. POST explained that the area shown on the map in beige is an identified urban cluster and the boundary must include that cluster. A larger urbanized area boundary was initially presented and the TAC felt it was too far-reaching. The Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map was used in determining the recommended boundary. Boundaries are political and also consider population density. CHAIR KEITH noted that the boundary under consideration is shown in red on the map.

MR. FLYNN noted that the memorandum on this subject states "Other concerns were expressed about impacts to People Mover's FTA funding which varies depending on FTA's consideration of what is rural versus urban." MS. KARZ explained that Girdwood is eligible to receive rural FTA dollars, although they are part of the MOA. Eagle River has, however, always been included in the AMATS boundary, so this is a non-issue. MR. POST stated that FTA has been asked for an opinion on this. The boundary does not

impact 5311 (rural) versus 5307 (urban) funding sources or any other FTA or FHWA funds.

BOBBI WELLS, resident of the Chugiak-Eagle River area stated she has had conversations with Mr. Post with ADOT and Mr. Serrano with FHWA and Mr. Post assures her there will be no direct or indirect consequences to including in this boundary what she refers to as a rural area as compared to the Eagle River area. She had concern that a decision such as this one sets these boundaries “in concrete.” There is an LRTP in this area, as well as a Comprehensive Plan. Within the latter there is a definition of urban and rural and AMATS may have a different definition of these terms for a different reason. She could not imagine construction of larger collectors in rural areas, while allowing maintenance of agricultural areas. She asked for assurance that these boundaries do not establish an area as urban.

CHAIR KEITH asked what Mr. Serrano answered in response to Ms. Wells’ question. MS. WELLS stated she spoke with Mr. Serrano regarding a decision by the MOA to combine the Anchorage Bowl and Chugiak-Eagle River LRTPs into a single document, although the two areas are at different stages of development. She did not specifically address this particular issue with Mr. Serrano. CHAIR KEITH stated the next cycle on the Anchorage LRTP would incorporate the Eagle River-Chugiak LRTP to create one plan. MS. WELLS stated this may benefit the State, but it does not benefit the MOA or her area.

MS. SELKREGG asked if Ms. Wells is concerned that there will be a more urban design applied to parts of Eagle River that she feels are rural. MS. WELLS replied that, with the consent of the Administration and Assembly, this area is attempting to write land use regulations strictly for this area. At the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission an urban/rural boundary will be established. MS. SELKREGG understood that this boundary implies some standards associated with different sizes of roads around different volumes of populations. She asked if the set of standards in place for urban areas would be used in this area. MR. POST responded that there is an initial design standard, which would be urban, but it is not binding on the project managers. MS. SELKREGG understood it would be

possible to do CSD so that a collector in one area might look different than a collector in another area. CHAIR KEITH confirmed this is the case.

MR. POST stated this issue relates to the State functional classification, while the MOA's classification and street typology are separate issues.

MR. FLYNN asked if Ms. Wells is concerned that an area is being identified as urban with a default classification for roadways and she wishes to be able to retain a rural classification. MS. WELLS stated this is her concern. Further, she understood that one of the things that governs this is a designation of "urban" or "rural" collector, while she was familiar with collectors I, II, III. She stated that 51% of the roads in the state are owned by the State. She simply did not want to be told by the MOA that the roads are now designated urban when that is not an appropriate designation for a particular road.

CHAIR KEITH reiterated that this designation simply recognizes the density and population of an area.

ACTING MAYOR MATT CLAMAN moved to approve the Anchorage Northeast Small Urban Area Boundary update. CINDY HEIL seconded.

*There being no objection, the motion passed unanimously.*

**d. Other Business Items – None**

**6. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS**

**a. 2009 AMATS Project Construction Status**

MR. LYON noted that the Public Participation Plan (PPP) includes monthly presentations on various subjects. This month of each year there will be an update on all projects within AMATS that are scheduled for construction in the following season. The design phase and right-of-way phases for these projects have been completed. Lake Otis/Tudor is included in this list because it is scheduled to receive Stimulus funding.

**1) ADOT&PF Project Construction:****Old Seward Highway (Brandon to O'Malley)**

ANETA SYNAN stated that the Old Seward Highway (Brandon to O'Malley) project is estimated to begin construction in April 2009. It will widen the existing road to accommodate two lanes of traffic in both directions, a center left turn lane, illumination, curb and gutter, a storm drain, a sidewalk on the east side, and a pathway on the west side. Construction is estimated to be complete by September 2010.

MS. SELKREGG asked if utilities are being buried. The response was that there are extensive buried utilities.

**Old Glenn Highway - Fire Lake to South Birchwood**

JIM AMUNDSON, project manager, stated that clearing would begin this spring for this project. A public open house was held recently to inform the residents of the area.

**Old Glenn Highway - South Birchwood Loop to Peters Creek**

This next phase of the Old Glenn Highway project should be advertised in August. There are historical preservation issues related to the bridge and road, which can be time consuming.

CHAIR KEITH noted there was tremendous public participation in the first phase of this project. MR. AMUNDSON stated there have been two presentations a year on this project and every 6 months there is a presence at the local community council meetings to answer questions. ADOT will continue to field questions through the website and through ongoing communications with local residents. CHAIR KEITH noted that there are design meetings and then an open house before construction so that people become acquainted with the project and its schedule.

MR. AMUNDSON stated that the same thing is being done for Old Seward Highway. A public open house for that project is scheduled for April prior to clearing.

MS. SELKEGG complimented ADOT on this project, particularly inclusion of pedestrian access.

MR. FLYNN asked what level of risk exists of not being able to commit the Stimulus funds given the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) issues on the second phase of Old Glenn Highway. MR. AMUNDSON felt the risks were low. He believed this project should be deliverable in August/September. This is a project that must be delivered by January/February of 2010. MR. FLYNN asked to consider back-up projects in case this process becomes more complicated. CHAIR KEITH felt the risk was somewhat reduced in terms of time, but the cost may increase. MR. AMUNDSON stated the cost could potentially be \$500,000 to \$1 million. The bridge is in poor repair, so there also that risk associated.

## **2) PM&E Construction**

JERRY HANSEN stated PM&E recently scheduled the second annual coordination meeting among various entities involved in road projects. ADOT and the utilities attended the meeting last year, which was primarily concerned with downtown construction. This year's meeting was attended by interested parties, including ADOT, PM&E, AWWU, Police, Fire, Transit, the School District, traffic representatives from the State and MOA, and permit representatives from the MOA and State to review projects planned for this summer. He distributed a list of anticipated municipal construction projects for this year. He briefly reviewed carry-over projects, as well as projects anticipated for construction that are funded and those that are not funded but for which funding is anticipated.

CHAIR KEITH explained that, with hundreds of millions of dollars of work, coordination is imperative.

MS. SELKREGG felt this coordination effort was extremely important and asked that this information be presented to the Assembly at its next meeting.

MR. FLYNN asked what the L Street Slide Replat project constitutes. MS. SELKREGG believed this was initially a four-plex project and now a duplex is planned. MR. FLYNN stated that L Street Slide Replat is the area in which he lives. MS. SELKREGG understood this is a project by Spinell Homes. MR. HANSEN offered to make this inquiry of Don Keefer and provide information to the Policy Committee at a later date.

MS. HEIL asked if there is a website with project descriptions or is it better to contact managers. MR. HANSEN suggested contacting managers with any questions. He explained that the website is being changed to include an interactive map.

### **Chester Creek Trail and UAA Spur, Lake Otis Parkway & Tudor Road**

MR. HANSEN stated that both of these projects are designed by the MOA and constructed by ADOT. Construction on both is scheduled to start this summer. The Chester Creek Trail environmental document lapsed, so it must be redone. The project will be put out to bid this summer and construction will begin later because in recognition of bird nesting.

MR. HANSEN stated that the MOA is working with ADOT on the Lake Otis/Tudor project. Plans for that project are approved and right-of-way is being certified. MOUs between ADOT and MOA are being finalized. Utility agreements are being finalized at this time. There is \$5 million in Stimulus money for this project and he understood nothing could be done until the Legislature has appropriated the money. CHAIR KEITH clarified that legislative authority must be obtained, which is done by line item, and the legislature wants to choose the projects. That should be a bigger problem for State projects. He did not think they have the authority to choose AMATS projects. Authority should be received before the April 19 adjournment of the Legislature.

MS. SELKREGG stated she lives off of Tudor and the Elmore connection has made a noticeable difference on the traffic at Lake Otis/Tudor. There is a larger back up at Elmore now in the mornings. She asked if that would shift back to Lake Otis/Tudor when this improvement is done. CHAIR KEITH stated the issue is the entire system, including Elmore, Dowling, and Lake Otis/Tudor. When all three projects are completed, there will be real improvements. MS. SELKREGG understood that ultimately people might use Boniface to Martin Luther King to Dowling. CHAIR KEITH indicated this is correct. CHAIR KEITH noted that the modeling shows, when all sections are done, 15,000 to 18,000 cars a day will be taken from Lake Otis/Tudor. MS. SELKREGG asked if the improvement at Lake Otis/Tudor is a 30-year fix.

CHAIR KEITH stated that Lake Otis/Tudor is under sized compared with other larger intersections in Anchorage; after improvements it will be the same as other major intersections. MS. SELKREGG understood that some of the 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> traffic going to Ingra/Gambell might be able to take other routes after these projects are done. CHAIR KEITH stated this would not address the problem on Ingra/Gambell.

**b. Other Informational Reports**

**Direction for TAC**

CHAIR KEITH asked what Ms. Heil understood to be the charge to the TAC relative to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). MS. HEIL noted that last time she was with the Policy Committee she commented on the importance of a schedule for the TIP and one is still not done. She asked that the Policy Committee charge the AMATS staff and TAC to develop a full schedule to complete this work by September 15 for submission to FHWA before the end of September. MS. SELKREGG understood that this schedule must be done. MS. HEIL suggested taking into account finalizing and approving the criteria, ranking and scoring of nominated projects, reviewing and either reaffirming or modifying the Policies & Procedures as a whole before the TIP tables are done as they lay out how the TIP must look, ensuring that air quality conformity is addressed, and confirming that the model for interagency consultation does not need modification.

MS. SELKREGG asked that the Policy Committee be involved in the discussion regarding criteria. MS. HEIL stated the Policy Committee must approve the criteria. MS. SELKREGG suggested this be done sooner than later. CHAIR KEITH asked that the Policy Committee be given the criteria as soon as the TAC compiles them.

MS. HEIL suggested that multiple TAC and Policy Committee meetings be scheduled in order to accomplish the TIP update. She asked that additional meeting dates be identified so that any Policy Committee decisions can be made with an understanding of the full ramifications of those decisions within the TIP.

MR. FLYNN remarked that the Policy Committee asked that the FAC consider truck and bus standards and that the TAC look at back-up projects for Stimulus funding.

MS. SELKREGG wanted a monthly status report on the review of the LRTP in the context of the Knik Arm Crossing bridge. ACTING MAYOR CLAMAN asked what is the status of this project. MR. LYON noted that Mr. Wilber has requested that a work session on this subject be scheduled for the TAC. MS. SELKREGG asked that the Policy Committee be notified of that work session.

MR. POST noted that the Policy Committee adopted Administrative Modification #1 in anticipation of the Stimulus funds. Since that action was taken, the bill has passed. AMATS had anticipated receipt of \$22.8 million in flexible funds, but the amount is \$3.9 million less for a total of \$18.9 million. AMATS had also anticipated \$2.5 million in Transportation Enhancement funds and no funds were received. FTA funding stayed consistent. AMATS anticipated \$6.5 million for People Mover and the actual funding is \$5.96 million. To reduce Table 3, Roadways, by \$3.9 million and provide that information to the Legislature for legislative authority, all the projects anticipated in that table have been forwarded. Those projects include \$2.8 million for Pavement Replacement, \$5 million for Lake Otis/Tudor, and \$3.9 million less in Stimulus funds for Old Glenn Highway so it would be \$11.6 million, with the remaining \$3.9 million from 2010 funding.

MR. FLYNN asked how much is left for 2010. MR. POST replied that the 2010 funds were estimated at \$22 and just under \$10 million of that is being spent.

CHAIR KEITH stated Jewel Lake Road has been selected for pavement replacement.

MS. HEIL suggested that the Policy Committee use a two-page agenda, with the second page comprised of the calendar for all meetings and topics for the entire year as shown in the Public Participation Plan. MS. SELKREGG favored this idea.

**7. SCHEDULED AMATS MEETINGS**

Technical Advisory Committee, April 9, 2009

Policy Committee, April 23, 2009

Technical Advisory Committee, May 14, 2009

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM.