

**ANCHORAGE METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
Planning & Development Center
Main Conference Room, 1st Floor
4700 Elmore Road
Anchorage, Alaska**

**July 16, 2009
2:30 PM**

Technical Advisory Committee members Present:

Name	Representing
Jennifer Witt	Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities (ADOT), Central Region, Planning
Kim Rice	ADOT&PF
Todd Cowles	MOA/Port of Anchorage
Lance Wilber	MOA/Traffic Department (TD)
Jerry Hansen	MOA/Project Management & Engineering (PM&E)
Jody Karcz	MOA/Public Transportation Department (PTD)
Lois Epstein	Alaska Transportation Priorities Project
Bruce Carr	Alaska Railroad Corporation

Also in attendance

Name	Representing
Craig Lyon	MOA/Traffic Department
Vivian Underwood	MOA/TD
Aneta Synan	ADOT/PF
Alison Lohrke	DOWL HKM
Sandra Cook	HDR
Dale Paulson	KABATA

*AMATS Policy Committee members

1. CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR WILBER called the meeting to order at 2:26 p.m. Tom Nelson, Cindy Heil and Steve Morris were absent. Jody Karcz arrived at 2:50 p.m. A quorum was established.

2. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

CHAIR WILBER encouraged public involvement in this meeting of the AMATS Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). 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

MR. COWLES moved to approve the agenda. MS. RICE seconded.

MR. WILBER moved *Business Item 5.a, 2009 LRTP Air Quality Conformity*, to *Informational Items* on the agenda. He explained this item was advertised to be released by the TAC Committee today, and copies were sent to the TAC members electronically. However, based on action of the court on July 15 regarding some additional time for a hearing on August 18, he asked the TAC not to take action on this item because it does effect a reflection of the recommendation of the LRTP. The LRTP is still in question, and TAC might not want to put this out at this time.

MR. WILBER added the *AMATS Website* under *Informational Items*.

Hearing no objections, the agenda was unanimously approved as modified.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

MR. CARR moved to approve the May 14, 2009 Minutes. MS. WITT seconded. MR. COWLES noted he was absent from that meeting. *Hearing no objections, the minutes were unanimously approved as written.*

MS. WITT moved to approve the May 21, 2009 minutes. MR. CARR seconded. *Hearing no objections, the minutes were unanimously approved as written.*

MS. WITT moved to approve the May 28, 2009 minutes. MR. COWLES seconded. *Hearing no objections, the minutes were unanimously approved as written.*

MR. COWLES moved to approve the June 18, 2009 minutes. MS. RICE seconded. MR. CARR requested the minutes be corrected to show he was present at the meeting. *Hearing no objections, the minutes were unanimously approved as corrected.*

5. BUSINESS ITEMS - None

a. 2009 LRTP Air Quality Conformity

This item was moved to agenda item 6, Informational Items.

6. INFORMATION ITEMS

a. SOA Legislative Appropriation Report

MR. LYON explained this came from the AMATS Public Participation Plan. Similar items have been presented. Last month was work from the airport and the Port of Anchorage. This month's report is the State of Alaska Legislative Appropriation report. This is the first time it has come up, and is a work in progress. With assistance from Mr. Lamson, this report is a list of projects that were state legislative grants in the last few years that occurred in the Municipality of Anchorage whether managed by the City or the State. All the projects may not be listed, but MR. LYON felt that most of the big projects were included. This report is just a quick version of those projects and their status. He noted that legislative grants tend to go a little faster, so none of the projects are in design, but are either in construction or complete. The report is just an informational item to bring TAC up-to-date. MR. LYON noted again this report is a work in progress and will be refined as time goes on. There may be some things that are missing, but if anyone has other information they believe should be in the report, they should contact MR. LYON.

MR. HANSEN did not believe the 100th Ave Surface Rehab, Minnesota to Victor project was under construction. The shorter site, Victor to Resolution Point is under construction. It should be Victor West, not from Minnesota.

MR. LYON clarified this is the section from Arctic over to Minnesota. It says we are working on the section from Arctic to C Street.

In response to MS. EPSTEIN's question on legislative funding, MR. CRAIG explained there are no projects in the design phase in this report. All the projects in the report are legislative grants that came through the State or Municipality.

MS. EPSTEIN asked if the legislature is funding design in the same way. MR. LYON did not know for certain, but explained the projects in the report are all legislative grants that came through the State or Municipality, and the design phase had been already been completed. Also, some of the projects listed were partially state funded, so it is possible the design portion may have been bond funded. We did not get any legislative grants in the late State capital budget, so the projects on the list were funded in previous years, and that is why for the most part these are in the construction phase because the design phase already happened. Some of these projects are 2 or 3 years old. MR. LYON noted you can use the State grant for design.

MS. EPSTEIN wanted to be clear what this list of projects represents. MR. LYON stated this report represents any state legislative grant that came to either the State or the Municipality with a project that is happening inside the Municipality. MS. EPSTEIN asked if those were only projects that resulted in construction. MR. LYON noted at this point it just happened to be that all the projects were under construction or completed.

MR. HANSEN noted two other projects for the list. Mountaineer Drive on the Hillside is a legislative grant, and Bluebell, and there may also be some out in Eagle River. MR. LYON will add them to report.

MS. WITT noted 92nd Avenue at Birch should probably be added to the report as we do have some State money that likely to be inadequate to complete construction is completed.

MR. LYON indicated with the cancellation of next week's Policy Committee meeting, he will probably present this report with updated information at their August meeting. MR. WILBER suggested for formatting purposes adding some numbers to itemize the projects, adding some dollar figures, and adding project phases would also be good.

b. Quarterly Obligation Report, Memo – Draft

MS. ANETA SYNAN presented the draft AMATS FFY09 Project Obligation Report for the Third Quarter. MS. SYNAN explained the report basically compares the program project funds with the latest estimate for project need. In this case, in this report funds were expected to be added to several projects, but there is no action required by the TAC or the Policy Committee. The reason for this is that each of the projects are either in the construction phase and policy and procedures allow those adjustments to be made automatically, or the request was below the \$250,000, and MR. LYON and MS. SYNAN have authority to approve that.

MS. SYNAN detailed those projects. The first project expecting to need additional funds is the Old Glenn Highway from O'Malley to Brandon. The unanticipated right of way costs exceed the initial estimates by \$491,000. This additional obligation will cover actual costs for acquisitions, temporary construction easements and ROW services, and this project is in construction. The second project is the Eagle River Loop Road reconstruction project. That project needed an additional \$450,000 to cover additional design costs and an additional \$1.7 million in construction costs. The third project is the Lake Otis Parkway surface rehabilitation and safety project, and an additional \$150,000 is needed to cover additional construction costs for this project. Fourth on the list is the Chester Creek Trail Connection, and this is just to inform the TAC that in May staff approved an additional \$150,000 to complete design documents. This was in addition to the \$2.2 million that the Policy Committee approved as part of the second quarter obligation report.

Final adjustment to increase funds for projects is for the Ship Creek Trail. An additional \$95,000 is needed to cover final construction administrative costs. The physical part of construction of this project is completed, but this adjustment is now needed, and that is offset by the obligation of \$175,000 that was excess in design funds.

Overall the anticipated obligations in this report does exceed the revenue that is now anticipated, and under the policy and procedures this report is suppose to be balanced within 5% and this were currently looking at a 10% imbalance right now. There are several things that could

happen in the next few weeks that will bring AMATS within the 5% requirement, and so staff is proposing to renew an updated obligation report in August, and staff hopes to have these numbers fixed by then.

MS. SYNAN noted the numbers could change as there is the possibility a couple of projects might slip and not obligate this quarter, and that would free up some funds. Also, MS. WITT is checking to see if there are excess funds that ADOT headquarters has that could be funneled to AMATS.

MS. WITT clarified there may be some transportation enhancement funds that were coming to the State under the stimulus package that currently are assigned to a project in another region that is on the cusp, and if the project is not able to make it, there could be up to \$2.6 million in stimulus money that could go to projects like Chester Creek. However, she noted there are several issues impacting this. The timing may not work because it won't be known until the first quarter, and there's not much legislative authority for it, those and other kinds of issues, and LB&A has been reluctant to duplicate legislative authority for contingency projects. If not, ADOT will have to take another look to see if there are any excess obligation funds from past projects.

MR. CARR expressed concern that the amount is over \$3 million. MS. SYNAN explained that according to AMATS Policies and Procedures, funds cannot be taken from projects that are in construction, or from funding that's already been obligated. At this time, there were not a lot of projects funds could be pulled from because almost all were in construction.

CHAIR WILBER stated no action is required from the TAC. This report was to advise the Committee of the situation. MS. SYNAN explained the difference in the funds needed and what is going to be approved in the TIP is over \$2.6 million. If funds could be found and the number decreased by 50%, or \$1.3 million, then the obligations would be within the 5% requirement of the policies and procedures. If we are unable to find other resources, MS. WITT indicated the other option would be to look at next year's AC to cover the costs as a last resort.

MS. WITT explained that on the regional side, stimulus money was going to be applied to the rut repair for the Glenn Highway between Airport Heights and the Glenn Highway. She noted it would be a late obligation at this time of the year for the winter construction season. Also, they may use regular funds to pick up even more rut repair between Eklutna and the Parks/Glenn Interchange. There is quite a bit of funding available between the regular program and the stimulus program. The biggest challenge for using stimulus money for any regular programmed funds is legislative authority, and not being able to have flexibility in converting regular authority over to stimulus.

c. 2009 LRTP Air Quality Conformity

CHAIR WILBER updated the TAC on this project noting the draft Air Quality Conformity on the LRTP approved by the Policy Committee was to have been released at the regular July 9 TAC meeting. Staff had a consultation meeting that included KABATA, but not everyone from FHWA and EPA were able to attend. Another consultation meeting is scheduled for next week. In addition, based on the actions of the courts, the LRTP public process is still in limbo. CHAIR WILBER explained the LRTP amendment shows the Knik Arm Crossing in the out years because that was the guidance given to the staff. If there are any questions or any changes to that project as a result of court action, it would impact the Air Quality Conformity, and it should be held until after the court is done with its actions, and the Policy Committee provides direction on the LRTP. It can then be determined how the LRTP will proceed and the conformity can be configured accordingly. This conformity was drafted because of the Knik Arm Crossing, and if it changes the conformity changes. CHAIR WILBER noted the LRTP is tied to the TIP, and projects in both plans and the conformity need to be consistent. Without an approved conformity, there cannot be an approved TIP. This means funds cannot be obligated in advance for projects primarily in construction in TIP.

CHAIR WILBER clarified the TIP we are operating under is the 2009 adopted TIP. The draft conformity is based on the 2010-2013 TIP showing the Knik Arm Crossing in the out years.

MS. EPSTEIN expressed concern about access to federal funding without an approved conformity and an approved TIP. CHAIR WILBER noted in the past federal money could not be obligated for construction. If money has already been obligated, it can continue to be spent. Any project that was an exempt project, primarily safety projects, could advance. Any project that would have a capacity expansion of any kind would not advance. MR. LYON indicated that money could not be obligated for new construction starts for the new fiscal year in 2010, but if construction were underway in 2009 construction could continue in 2010.

MS. WITT discussed implications of not having an adopted TIP. In particular, it could impact the ability to obligate stimulus funds on the national highway system after October 1, and there is an estimated \$11 million identified for a stretch of the highway from Anchorage to Hiland. AMATS needs to make sure there have been no changes in the guidelines or regulations that would further penalize us for not having an adopted TIP.

CHAIR WILBER discussed the delays in court action and explained the impacts should the court act on August 18 and the possibility of an extension for another 30 days. If that happens, the a conformity release and a program release would be done concurrently because the Policy Committee would have to first initiate that process, and it would require the Policy Committee to hold a special meeting after August 18, or act at its regular meeting on August 27. Once the clock has been started, both would need to go before the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Assembly, and then back to the Policy Committee which may take a month.

MS. WITT indicated a need to have a work session to better understand the ramifications and impacts of court action. A work session on the conformity was scheduled for July 30 at 2:30 p.m. MS. EPSTEIN will be unable to attend as she will be out of town.

d. Other Informational Items

MR. WILBER reported that the Municipality of Anchorage is updating its website. One of changes made to the AMATS front page is that people who want to dial up to our AMATS agenda, if they want to join our mailing least, all they have to do is type in their email and press send, and Tana automatically gets that and it goes into our constant contact.

MS. EPSTEIN asked about the Bicycle Plan, and MR. WILBER advised that staff is working to adjudicate comments received to create a public hearing draft. The Plan should be out for a 30 or 40 day review by the first of August, and is scheduled before the Planning & Zoning Commission on September 14. He noted that AMATS role will be to make a recommendation for its approval as an element of the Long Range Plan, and can expect to see it sometime in October.

MR. COWLES noted the Port is still conducted free tours of the Port on Sunday.

MS. KARCZ discussed the Transit service change starting July 20. Originally, the Transit Department had significant budget cuts during the first quarter and was scheduled to lose all its Eagle River service except for park 'n rides. The price of fuel came down, and Transit was able to restore all but 30% of its Eagle River service. She noted that if you are a commuter, or going to be driving around on July 20, watch for Municipal employees changing out the signs at 1,300 bus stops. New schedules will also be coming out.

MR. HANSEN reported that project bids coming in have been great. He noted bids for the first phase of Spenard Road will be opened today, and tomorrow is the opening for 9th Avenue. PM&E is still planning on putting out 40th Avenue this year to get that project under contract. He noted there are some issues over off of 48th & VanBuren. MR. HANSEN stated PM&E has gotten out most of the projects they were planning to for this year. He will ask DOT about the Lake Otis and Tudor Intersection. MS. RICE noted the funding requests went to the State, but it is taking 6 weeks because of the backlog. She had not checked to see if there was an anticipated bid date for the Lake Otis & Tudor intersection project.

MS. WITT is anticipating that the STIP will be available for internal review by the end of the month noting it will be important to coordinate the STIP with the TIP on the National Highway System. She will be working with MR. LYON on this. MS. WITT reported there are two new established safety corridors, one on Knik Goose Bay Road, and one on the Sterling Highway. She advised extra caution when driving and asked everyone to watch out for people in all the work zones, as well as the safety corridors. DOT has been getting a lot of complaint from people saying that state is just using the safety corridors as a way to generate revenue. DOT will be hosting a booth at the State Fair that addresses the Safety Corridors, why they work and how.

7. SCHEDULED AMATS MEETINGS

Policy Committee, July 23, 2009 - CANCELLED

Technical Advisory Committee, August 13, 2009

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.