

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

**Planning & Development Center  
Training Conference Room, 1st Floor  
4700 Elmore Road, Anchorage, Alaska 99507**

**June 18, 2026  
1:00 PM**

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Policy Committee Members Present:

| Name             | Representing                                                                          |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Katherine Keith  | Acting Director Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities,<br>Central Region |
| Kent Kohlhaas    | Public Works Director                                                                 |
| Morgan Frank     | Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), Air Quality                        |
| Erin Baldwin Day | MOA/Municipal Assembly                                                                |
| <u>Virtual</u>   |                                                                                       |
| Daniel Volland   | MOA/Municipal Assembly                                                                |

Also in attendance:

| Name                  | Representing                                               |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Aaron Jongenelen      | AMATS                                                      |
| Christine Schuette    | AMATS                                                      |
| Rhiannon Brown        | AMATS                                                      |
| Emily Weiser          | AMATS                                                      |
| Leifiloa Felise       | AMATS                                                      |
| Kate Dueber           | Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC)                         |
| Daniel McKenna-Foster | MOA/Long-Range Planning Division                           |
| Ben White*            | DOT&PF                                                     |
| Craig Lyon            |                                                            |
| Connor Eshleman       | DOT&PF                                                     |
| Logan Leaphart        |                                                            |
| Morgan McCammon       | DOWL                                                       |
| Stephanie Mormilo     | HDL                                                        |
| Terry Umatum*         | Don Young Port of Alaska                                   |
| Van Le                | R&M Consultants                                            |
| Lucas Bertram         | MOA/Long-Range Planning Division                           |
| Lindsey Hajduk        | Director of Community Engagement & External Affairs & BPAC |
| Robert Kinnaird       | MOA/PM&E                                                   |
| Adeyemi Alimi*        | ADEC                                                       |
| Galen Jones           | DOT&PF                                                     |
| Taryn Oleson          | R&M Consultants                                            |

|                    |                                       |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Bart Rudolph*      | MOA/Public Transportation Department  |
| Kristina Huling    | DOT&PF                                |
| Brandon Telford    | MOA/PM&E                              |
| Donovan Camp       |                                       |
| Brad Coy*          | MOA/Traffic Engineering Department    |
| Tanya Hong         | MOA/PM&E                              |
| Luke Bowland*      | DOT&PF                                |
| Joe Taylor         | Lounsbury & Associates                |
| Scott Pulice       | Lounsbury & Associates                |
| Emily Haynes       | Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) |
| Adam Bradway       | DOT&PF                                |
| Judy Chapman       | DOT&PF                                |
| Taylor Keegan*     | MOA/Parks & Recreation Department     |
| Michael Nti Ababio | MOA/Long-Range Planning Division      |
| Ryan Harris        | DOT&PF                                |

*\*AMATS Technical Advisory Committee Member*

*\*\*Designated Assembly Member Alternate*

## **1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**

CHAIR KEITH called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. Kent Kohlhasse represented Mayor LaFrance. A quorum was established.

## **2. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT**

AARON JONGENELEN 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**

MR. KOHLHASE moved to approve the agenda. ASSEMBLY MEMBER BALDWIN DAY seconded.

*Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved.*

## **4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – April 16, 2026 and May 21, 2026**

MR. KOHLHASE moved to approve the minutes. ASSEMBLY MEMBER VOLLAND seconded.

*Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved.*

## 5. ACTION ITEMS

### a. AMATS Funding Program (TIP) Administrative Modification #7

MR. JONGENELEN noted that an administrative modification to the AMATS 2023-2026 Funding Program (TIP) is needed to update Table 7: Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), and Table 9: Transit. DOT&PF submitted a recommendation to staff after the documents had already been posted for the Gambell Overhead Signal work removing the AC (Advance Construction) from the fund code, so all will be HSIP funding for that particular project. The Technical Advisory Committee recommended removing the AC entirely from the project.

The committee discussed fleet replacement and expansion funding sources.

There were no public comments.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER BALDWIN DAY moved to approve Administrative Modification #7 with the changes listed in the memorandum. MR. KOHLHASE seconded.

*Hearing no objections, the motion passed.*

### b. AMATS Transportation Plan (MTP) 2052

MS. BROWN noted that they are currently working on the 2052 update and have carried forward all the projects that are still relevant to the 2050 plan, since they have already been scored with AMATS' performance measures and goals. Projects were added and changes to projects were made per discussion during the joint work session held May 18.

The committee discussed funding options for the new staff position, updating the Hyder termini, Fairview community awareness and ramifications regarding 15th to 5th Avenues,

The following are comments and questions from the committee with responses noted in *Italic*.

(KK) Expressed confusion regarding the proposal to drop Projects 97-114 to fund Hyder because Non-motorized Line 3 updates the termini from 15th to 5th to 15th to 9th and is reducing the length.

(RB) *That is in one section of Hyder. The PEL project has the greater Hyder project within it. The MTP already had a smaller portion of Hyder: 15th Avenue to 5th. 15th to 5th is what staff is suggesting to reduce the termini and update. Moving the non-motorized projects allows funding for Ship Creek to Chester.*

(EBD) Was concerned about the movement of the Northern Lights Boulevard at Lois Drive crossing not being programmed. It is not a full deletion, but is a significant piece of the pedestrian structure, especially for Safe Routes to Schools. That bridge is in rough condition.

(RB) *In coming up with those projects, staff just based then on the project score and took the bottom- scoring projects for both the long-term and short-term, based on*

*how much funding was needed out of the program. These are just suggestions, based on funding, but other projects of similar cost could be swapped out.*

- (KK) With regard to the changes to 97-114, he could see other projects in this that are very important to pedestrian safety. Making the decision now to drop 20 projects in support of the very highly needed Hyder project is a challenging proposition to make in this meeting.
- (EBD) Felt there are a lot of decisions being asked of this committee right now, such as the determination of where to find funding for staff and where to remove funding from the Complete Streets program, and making space for the Hyder project. These merit some time and consideration, and she did not feel as if she had reviewed these at an appropriate level in order to opine on them in an intelligent way right this minute. She realized there is a timeline to release this to the public for comment and asked what other choices are available to sit with this a bit longer.
- (AJ) *AMATS has a long-term deadline in order to get the MTP done by December 29, 2026, which is federally required to get it updated with the new boundary. A 45-day public comment period is required, which would take place in September and October.*
- (Chair) Even with the strict deadlines, it did seem there were opportunities to still have a comprehensive and thorough conversation ahead of it going out for public comment. She asked if the committee would be willing to hold a special meeting to help with timelines.
- (EBD) She clarified that the public notice requirement is seven days.
- (KK) Noted that it seems one of the options is to postpone voting on this to July, realizing that it would impact the timeline significantly. The other option is to schedule a special meeting. He asked if the timeline for the regular meeting scheduled in four weeks is unachievable, and asked Mr. Jongenelen to describe the implications of not meeting the December 29 deadline.
- (AJ) *With regard to the deadline, staff does not fully know all the impacts because this has never happened in prior years. After talking with FHWA, it would freeze the federal funding in AMATS' boundary, meaning no new phases or starting new projects. Existing projects could continue to move forward with the funding that they have, but everything new would be on hold until the MTP is updated, however long it takes, recognizing that it has a ripple effect. A delay in getting funding obligated for a project can push it out into future construction years. In terms of the July 16 meeting being undoable, staff does not know but has been making attempts to contact the consultant to advise if it is undoable. Maybe the Policy Committee meeting could be moved to an earlier date of July 9. He is being reluctant because staff also has other things that need to be approved in July. If the meeting is moved to July 9, the TAC meeting is on July 2, so staff will have to immediately post the results of the TAC, in addition to what this committee is requesting.*

(KK) With regard to the risk of federal funding freezing on January 1, does that unfreeze when this process is done? If this does not get completed until January 29, is it just frozen to January 29 or for the calendar year?

(Chair) She asked if a Federal Highway Administration representative had joined in the meeting to possibly comment on the impacts.

(AJ) *There was not a representative available online at this time. He had previously asked FHWA what the repercussions are at this point, but FHWA did not know nor will they know until it happens. He added that it is unknown if this impacts just AMATS because everything we do flows into the STIP.*

(Chair) DOT&PF has been working through the boundary conversation in advance of having the MTP required at the end of the year. If it does not appear that the deadline will be met, she encouraged everyone to immediately begin communicating with the Alaska Division, informing them of the situation so they can assist us get through that process. Rushing into decisions now may require reworking them later is a disservice to both staff and the public. If there is concern, then we need to simultaneously mitigate the scheduled release. She requested a Gantt chart or a table of the process to look at when preparing documents.

(EBD) She is fine with scheduling a special meeting in advance of their next meeting, but will have a conflict on July 9. It would be fine to schedule something within the next 10 days, since there is a sense of urgency to get this moving.

(AJ) *Staff will be out for the July 4 holiday weekend, along with attending the MPO quarterly meeting in Fairbanks next week. He suggested either Tuesday, July 7 or Wednesday, July 8.*

(EBD) Tuesday is an Assembly meeting, so she preferred not to have it held that day, but would prefer Wednesday, July 8.

(Chair) She pointed out that if this is to be a working session, the committee would be reviewing materials prior to making it an action item. If it is a working session, the next step, beyond consensus of the committee, is more modeling? If the committee could get to consensus on a working document, that would give more confidence in that session of modeling. Could staff start working on that modeling and have an official follow-up by vote at the regularly scheduled meeting?

(AJ) *The problem is that if staff starts the consultants down the modeling path and the committee changes something at the next meeting, staff will have to redo it.*

(EBD) If it were a dedicated meeting in which the committee was going to make decisions, she would like a little more time to spend reviewing this. She could be prepared to make a decision in a couple of weeks and is in favor of a special meeting where they would be making concrete decisions and giving staff the direction that they need to be able to move forward.

(AJ) *Staff availability would be limited to July 1, so it would either be July 1 or July 8.*

(Chair) July 8 would work best for her.

(MF) July 8.

(DV) July 8.

(AJ) *It would be held in this room (Training Room), but it is occupied from 1:00-2:00p that day. Does the committee have a time preference?*

(KK) Preferred morning, but would flex to meet the needs of the committee.

(AJ) *The committee could start the meeting as early as 9:00a on July 8.*

ASSEMBLY MEMBER VOLLAND requested that either AMATS staff or the municipality make an effort to engage with the reconnecting Fairview project, informing the public of what is currently being considered. He will also reach out to Fairview.

MR. JONGENELEN replied that staff can reach out to all the groups notifying them of the upcoming meeting.

CHAIR KEITH opened the floor to public comments.

LINDSEY HAJDUK

ASSEMBLY MEMBER BALDWIN DAY moved to table to a special meeting on Wednesday, July 8, 2026, at 10:00a. MR. KOHLHASE seconded.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER BALDWIN DAY noted for the record that she would have been interested in tabling taking any action today, regardless of the adjustments being made to the tables, for no other reason than the arrival of this document this morning. It is really important if we are going to do the collaborative work together, we really need to have all the information before us to be able to make the decisions. It makes it really hard to do that when we are getting important content the day of the meeting. She watched the previous TAC meeting in which there was a similar request made, noting that it is really critical to have information of this magnitude well in advance of the meeting, so that we can make thoughtful choices and not be doing things last minute.

***Hearing no objections, the motion passed.***

**c. L/I Street Rehabilitation Project**

MR. JONGENELEN briefed the committee, noting that this was an AMATS Pavement Replacement Project that was moved out by the Policy Committee to be its own standalone rehabilitation project.

RYAN HARRIS with DOT&PF and JOE TAYLOR and SCOTT PULICE with Lounsbury & Associates presented the project.

The committee discussed lane reallocation on both I and L streets, traffic calming, NHS facility studies, additional funding needed for road repurpose and redesign options, segregation of projects, and exploring the use of underground facilities.

There were no public comments.

MR JONGENELEN clarified that the action would be to request approval for the project team to move forward with the project, based on current TIP description, including input from the Minnesota I/L Corridor plan. The TIP description reads as follows:

1. Project: Rehabilitate L/I Street from 15th Avenue to 3rd Avenue to reduce lanes, reduce speeds, intersection improvements, and active transportation improvements. Project design should be consistent with the Minnesota I/L Corridor Plan recommendations.

MR. KOHLHASE moved to have the L/I Street project moved forward with the project based on the current TIP description, including input from the Minnesota I/L Corridor Plan. ASSEMBLY MEMBER VOLLAND seconded.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER BALDWIN DAY asked if there was an opportunity to call out at least the exploration of utility undergrounding as part of this project.

MR. JONGENELEN replied that the project team can be asked to look at it, but the question is what the cost would be in the long run. He did not see any reason why they could not.

MR. KOHLHASE added that there is coordination between the municipality, DOT&PF, and the utilities department. The utilities have a requirement in code to spend some portion of the revenue undergrounding. They typically have a 5-year plan, but he did not know if this is on the 5-year plan. There may be an opportunity for the project team to interact with the utilities department to spend that money on this.

CHAIR KEITH restated that the action is to program another \$5 million in funding towards the project and any action on this section of this corridor would be postponed 2 or 3 years, giving approval for the project team to keep working on Option 4 and programming additional funds.

MR. JONGENELEN clarified that updating the cost would be done as part of the next regular TIP action.

***Hearing no objections, the motion passed.***

**d. Seward Highway/Rabbit Creek – Culvert AOP Grant Application**

MR. JONGENELEN noted that this is a request for a letter of support. DOT&PF is seeking an AOP (Aquatic Organism Passage) grant to replace three culverts in the Seward Highway – Rabbit Creek area. AMATS has supported previous efforts for both DOT&PF and the Native Village of Eklutna for AOP grants.

MR. KOHLHASE commented that the municipality supports, adding that the drainage is important to both the municipality and DOT&PF. The municipality has been involved in discussions with DOT&PF regarding this project.

There were no public comments.

MR. KOHLHASE moved to approve the letter of support. ASSEMBLY MEMBER BALDWIN DAY seconded.

*Hearing no objections, the motion passed.*

## 6. Informational Items

### a. Roadmap for AMATS (Boundary Comments from DOT&PF)

MR. JONGENELEN noted that this is a standing item requested by the chair. The idea is to review the boundary and provide any comments or questions during this discussion.

The following are comments and questions from the committee with responses noted in *Italic*.

(Chair) Following up on the conversations on the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) Boundary, the last meeting involved receiving another “same day” letter on the department’s stamps on the boundary changes and proposed changes DOT&PF has been working through. The committee has been provided an itemized list of several principals at the root of the disconnect of where they have the boundary, and from what the Policy Committee approved 1-1/2 years ago. We are hoping to take these items as topics, whether it involves Chugach State Park, the National Highway System (NHS), or an area where there is not any population growth that each can be addressed, documentation on decisions made, and put forth to the Department of Law in the Governor’s Office for approval. The challenge here is that the boundary change does need to be a part of and included in the MTP. It would be most efficient of this committee to do that before it goes out for public comment, or there will certainly be some legwork that may have to happen, whether through comments or narrative. She was not aware of how many projects currently in the MTP that are on the cusp of the boundary, but this would be worth looking at. The letter provides some background and was brought up during the TAC meeting, but they decided to take this up next week as an action item to put forward a recommendation to the Policy Committee for a decision. She would like to understand more from this committee what they would like to see to help get us from where we are and an agreed upon boundary in order to start working through these topics. Or wait for the TAC’s recommendation or perhaps a working session scenario.

(AJ) *Clarified that the TAC did not decide on any action for the next meeting. There was some discussion where staff recommended a work session, but no decision was reached as to what to do.*

(EBD) Requested of Mr. Jongenelen to provide a review of the federal regulations around MPO boundaries. What is the minimum versus the maximum

distinction between areas that must be included versus what can or could be included in an MPO boundary?

(A/J) *He explained the following:*

1. *Federal Regulation 23 CFR § 450.312 talks about the MPO, which one is the minimum that reads, the MPA boundaries shall encompass the entire existing urbanized area (as defined by the Bureau of Census) plus the contiguous area expected to become urbanized within a 20-year forecast period for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan."*
2. *For AMATS, the area that is currently urbanized is the Anchorage Bowl area. The area we expect to become urbanized within the next 20-year period forecast is currently recommended to be the chunk of Chugiak-Eagle River in the northern portion.*
3. *There is an expansion that can go above and beyond that reads, "The MPA boundaries may be further expanded to encompass the entire metropolitan statistical area or combined statistical area, as defined by the Office of Management and Budget." That is the federal OM&B, not local or state.*
4. *When looking at AMATS' metropolitan statistical area, it is actually the entire Municipality of Anchorage and the entire MatSu Borough.*
5. *It does include caveats because there is further language to be read, such as MPO boundaries cannot overlap, meaning we could not expand our entire boundary to cover the entire MatSu Borough because they already have an MPO.*
6. *He replied to Assembly Member Baldwin Day that there are any number of permissible boundaries somewhere in between what shall be encompassed per federal regulation and what could be encompassed as broadly as the statistical area. Typically, they look at items to be incorporated as part of the MPO process, even if it is not part of the urbanized area for coordination or review. Just need to make sure to have a good complete picture of our transportation system for everything that impacts us within our area. That could be corridors, locations such as trailheads, traffic generators, and other impacts. For example, we have JBER in our boundary, even though we do not plan or program projects on JBER, they are a significant impact on our system that we need to account for in our planning process.*

(EBD) Since the municipality is a de facto unified sort of county and city, why has the AMATS boundary not coincided with the existing boundaries of the municipality?

(A/J) *Based on conversations with the previous director, a lot of that comes from where the population growth and density could be happening. The 2010 and earlier boundary that we have now, which is similar to previous boundaries, was based on where the population was expected to go, plus any important transportation systems they wanted included to account for modeling, impacts on the system, and things like that. The old saying was that they did not extend further on the Seward Highway because there was not much density. We could go further down if there is a desire because it fits into the maximum standpoint allowing it to go above and beyond what we expect to be urbanized over the next 20 years.*

- (Chair) The challenge with this is that it takes work to go through very detailed, zooming in, GIS route-by-route, looking at justification, ensuring we are not bifurcating roads between planning responsibilities. Making sure they do not have a boundary on the center line of a road. She thought they had discussed the direction that AMATS and DOT&PF staff would get together and work on this to help provide information together with the TAC. She also understood that staff does not want to at this time to have those meetings, so she is a bit at a loss as to how to move forward because they still need to have a boundary that can be evaluated and moved forward. Action needs to begin taking place on these because they are not going to solve themselves, and we will not have an MTP approved, should this not be resolved within the next three months when it goes out for public comment.
- (AJ) *AMATS has a Policy Committee approved boundary.*
- (Chair) It is the governor of Alaska that approves the boundary, but has not. Until that point, AMATS does not have an approved boundary. We do have a Policy Committee approved boundary for submission to the governor's office, which has not yet happened. Clear direction has been received from the Attorney General's Office about what changes should be made and that is what we have been talking through since she has been chair of the Policy Committee and hired for that. Her request is to start working through these items as actions and understanding that we just have to. We may end up with the same boundaries, but we still need the justification that can be shared to explain why these changes are occurring outside of population increases.
- (EBD) Is the governor specifically asking for justification of every roadway in Anchorage?
- (Chair) The Attorney General's Office, who advises the governor, and the commissioner's office, who advises the governor on these matters, both need a detailed justification for why we are encroaching into Chugach State Park and why we are also expanding into interstate access.
- (EBD) She appreciated the letter came from Chair Keith outlining some of the questions that need to be addressed. Part of the tension is that this body has done its work and developed a boundary that the Policy Committees feels comfortable with and approves. It is challenging to have a governor come back and say they would like AMATS to do a lot of extra work, duplicate the work they have already done, and provide justification for something that, quite frankly, should be self-evident as to why we would include parts of Anchorage that pertain to our municipality that are a part of us. The entire municipality is not inside AMATS' boundaries. We have made some very clear decisions about why parts of Anchorage are not within the AMATS boundary. To be asked to provide this level of justification for inclusion, when federal regulation clearly states that we have the authority and the capacity to move beyond what is the current-urbanized area, and what is expected to become urbanized within a period of time feels like an exercise in wasting everyone's time. Why it feels like we are sitting in this meeting sort of twiddling our thumbs, is because the issue is not within this committee, the issue is with the governor.

(Chair) Respectfully, the governor has not seen the boundary as it has not yet been forwarded to the governor's office because the state agencies and departments that are involved are not making the recommendation that it be approved because while we may have talked about it, the actual detailed justification as to why these expansions are occurring have not been proved.

(EBD) How long has the boundary been the same?

(AJ) *It is hard to say, but by and large most of it has been the same since at least the early 2000s. There have been small changes over time due to the urbanized areas that are growing, but even with this current boundary, there were minor adjustments with a couple of miles of boundaries being widened down south, and the rest was cleanup throughout.*

(Chair) Show this in a presentation and maybe that is where a work session can come in to show where these expansions exist, if you do not know, because there certainly are expansions in the couple of miles to the south, which is the Seward Highway, where we have had some significant financial repercussions because our joint planning authorities are not aligning. This is all very acceptable in a normal part of the process, but when making those expansions without justification as to how that benefits the transportation system, then are we really doing our due diligence in our jobs? What we have been tasked to do is to go back and look through these challenges and be able to justify, in writing, why they are occurring, which we do not have at this time. We are happy to do the work but we had hoped to do this directly with the municipality. The state could propose, and we have, an acceptable boundary. We do not have detailed feedback on why that is not acceptable.

*The committee paused briefly.*

(EBD) Part of the challenge here is that it does not really feel like a conversation, as much as a directive. The subtext of the communication is that it seems the committee is receiving from whomever, whether it is Chair Keith as a representative of DOT&PF or the Department of Law. It seems like this is coming across as, "They will not approve AMATS' boundary, unless it is a boundary that they like." That does not feel collaborative, it does not feel like an invitation to a dialog; it feels like they are going to ask AMATS for a justification, reject the justification, and hold the boundary hostage because they do not like other things. That does not feel collaborative or a process by which AMATS or the Municipality of Anchorage stands to gain much from engagement. She requested some clarification whether this is indeed a collaborative process or whether it is communication from the governor stating his intent to withhold concurrence on a boundary until such time as the boundary is what he wants, or what the powers that be desire to see for AMATS. It is difficult to engage in a conversation when it feels like there is a foregone conclusion. She was not sure how any justification or a response that is provided would be managed or will be received.

(Chair) First of all, development of the initial proposed boundary, about 3 years ago, was certainly a collaborative beginning between the state and the municipality going through the boundaries and the teams came together to propose, based

on updated census data, what the best course of action was for a proposal. There have been a lot of changes since that time in federal regulation and interpretation of regulations, and how project delivery has unfolded in the state. That has required us to re-evaluate and look more closely at our planning documents, including the STIP, which have all seen us go into great detail. We have looked in great detail into the TIP approval process and the formatting of the TIPS. We have done a very wholesale healthy evaluation of our planning products and deliverables. That includes the boundary, which is part of that, and the Operating Agreements, which is another topic where we still need to update some things on our boundary operating agreements. Even though the Policy Committee has approved and put forward a recommended boundary, there are still other things that do have to happen with due diligence. She apologized if it seemed non-collaborative. From her perspective, she felt DOT&PF has been begging for engagement on this topic from the municipality and AMATS staff, so that they could collaborate and come to consensus. Items have already identified, just by asking more questions and looking at the maps, the reasoning for where there are expansions and it is totally logical. We can map that out and document it, and move onto the next by having conversations for positive or negative DNR planning processes. These were just the engagements they wanted to have happen and certain parts of the proposed boundary, such as down into the Port, all parties had concurred. In addition to the city, AMATS staff, the Policy Committee, and the state all do need to come to consensus, and the state is an equal partner in that. The state does also need to concur that these changes are not going to impact their ability to run their programs as well. So we all have a decision here. DOT&PF has been asserting their areas of concern and have been consistent in that. Because they have areas of concern, they are being accused of being demanding, but she is just asking to start working through this. If, through this documentation process, you come to the same conclusion, that is great. If DOT&PF needs to change what they have provided as a proposed boundary, then everyone could go through this in a logical or a sequential manner. That process does need to be revisited and is certainly not a directive. As committee members, we have a choice in how seriously we want to take the repercussions of which is not having an approved boundary or an approved MTP at the end of the year with going back to the consequences that Mr. Jongenelen spoke to earlier.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER VOLLAND would be interested in hearing from Mr. Kohlhasé's perspective, but the sense he is getting is that the majority of the committee is not interested in revisiting our current boundary. He was fine working with the current recommended and adopted boundary. He asked how often AMATS make changes or provide justification for their current boundaries. What happens if the governor did not concur?

MR. JONGENELEN explained that it is a requirement to update their boundary or to relook at their boundary after each census is completed, in case any of the urbanized areas have expanded and have been included in the boundary. AMATS has made small changes over the years. In terms of the justification that AMATS sent previously, he was not able to find much, meaning there is not a written process of how AMATS develops their boundary each time. It looks like the current existing boundary is updated based on any changes made to the census, or just cleaning up the boundary making it easier for people to understand. If the governor were not to concur or approve the boundary, he did not know what would happen.

That information would have to come from the Federal Highway Administration. His understanding is that it has never happened in the past. He added that FHWA has informed AMATS that they are not required to open their Operating Agreement as part of the boundary work.

CHAIR KEITH mentioned that the MTP has to include the approved boundary in its submission at the end of the year. When talking about the impacts of not having an MTP by year end, the boundary is directly connected to that and, she did agree that comments from FHWA would be great, as Mr. Jongeneelen has said they are not clear either, so putting something in writing from then is not something DOT&PF has been able to receive. Everyone is still being encouraged to continue to work together to get to that point. She believed the last governor approved boundary on record is from 2010, so if we are moving forward with the current boundary, it would be the 2010 boundary. It could be 2014, when it was updated from the 2010 census data.

MR. JONGENELEN explained that the boundary was updated and then later on there was a section of urbanized area that extends into the inlet that was not included in the boundary, is federally required to be included. So in 2014, they had to go back and update it to extend that small portion where the lower jaw area would be that extends into the mudflats. That had to be included in the boundary, which he thought was included in the 2014 change.

CHAIR KEITH added that the lack of a documented process was one of the things discussed earlier with wanting to do to make it more transparent and easier for staff to help document decisions of the Policy Committee on individual topics and what the state and the municipality in the AMATS forum can do to make this an easier process for the public, which is a must action that we have takeaways from. This is the same process that FAST MPO has gone through and may have already been approved by the governor's office.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER BALDWIN DAY asked how would Chair Keith like to receive feedback on the May 21 memorandum because there are some assumptions in this memorandum that she would disagree with the premise of some of the items. She was not sure how Chair Keith or the commissioner would like to receive feedback on the underlined assumptions is where they are running into problems. It would also be helpful to understand because it is still unclear what exactly is the governor or the Department of Law's issue with this. Have there been functional challenges related to the MPO boundary? What is the problem that we are trying to solve with this exercise? Additional layers of bureaucratic cleanup is not a good enough justification to expend this amount of time and energy trying to resolve something. It would be far more effective if the committee understood what is the beef. What is the problem that we are trying to solve here rather than coating it in layers of fluffy language and requests for clarity? If we could just get to the heart of this, then maybe we could get some place. The fact that this has been veiled in layers of superfluous language and a lot of jargon has made it really difficult to understand what is at stake. What is really at issue? Without understanding what the problem is that we are trying to solve and having that problem, itself, identified clearly and agreed upon is really difficult to make progress on anything, if we cannot agree on what it is that we are trying to solve.

CHAIR KEITH noted that in the past few years and because of the MPO or the joint planning authority between the state and the cities, several projects have been postponed like the Chena bridges in Fairbanks that because it was a project outside of the MPA, it was vetoed through the Policy Board process. It postponed construction and a contractor, but did get resolved after a year of extensive travel, time, and before FHWA issued direction moving

the project forward. She also provided clarifying information at the last committee meeting about the Safer Seward Highway project, but since it was removed from the MTP, the planning phase and environmental document needed in order to clarify the development and future design of that project is now at risk of federal funds. When talking about increasing safety along the Seward Highway, that problem becomes more challenging to work through, so if there is justification as to how and why that should be included, that is why dialog is being asked for in order to justify or warrant that risk to contact the community and the public when improvements are needed. Justification is real, it is not bureaucratic administration. Not wanting to be in any way directive, DOT&PF is just asking everyone to come to the table and walk them through why this is the case and make sure everyone understands the consequences and what will be different, then we can get to where we need to go.

MR. JONGENELEN noted that there are only three minutes remaining of the meeting.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER BALDWIN DAY commented that the fact that the Safer Seward Highway is the only project that has been pointed to as something that has been at issue with respect to the MPO boundary, is part of the challenge here. What is challenging about that is, again, this is the only problem that anyone has been able to point to saying this is why our boundary deserves review. At the same time, number 7 in the letter we received states, "Boundary decisions should be separated from individual project disagreements." That feels disingenuous because the only thing that has been brought forward as a rationale for talking about our boundary is the Safer Seward Highway. Yet we are being told that individual project disagreements should be separate from boundary decisions.

CHAIR KEITH added that the committee, at one point, increased the boundary specifically the Safer Seward Highway and nothing else.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER BALDWIN DAY understood that the extension of the boundary had nothing to do with the Safer Seward Highway. A portion of the Safer Seward Highway project would have been in the MPO boundary regardless of any other changes. The committee would have been in this situation even if that .8 mile extension had not happened, the Safer Seward Highway would still have fallen within the purview of the MPO. She wanted to talk about what needs to be talked about, rather than talking around what needs to be talked about.

There were no public comments.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER VOLLAND asked staff to bring an action item to the next meeting to vote on to affirm and uphold the current boundary.

CHAIR KEITH added that the language of that action item would be helpful to keep it a bit more open, but making a decision on the boundary would be excellent as an action item.

***Having reached the meeting time limit, the meeting adjourned at 3:01 p.m.***