

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

**November 6, 2025
1:00 PM**

Technical Advisory Committee Members Present:

Name	Representing
Brad Coy	MOA Traffic Engineering Department
James Starzec	Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF), Anchorage Field Office
Andrew Reynolds	Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC)
Luke Bowland	DOT&PF
Daniel Mckenna-Foster	MOA/Planning Department
Melinda Kohlhaas	MOA/Project Management & Engineering Department (PM&E)
Adeyemi Alimi	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)
Taylor Keegan	MOA/Parks & Recreation Department
Jim Jaeger	Don Young Port of Alaska Interim Director

Also in attendance:

Name	Representing
Aaron Jongenelen	AMATS
Christine Schuette	AMATS
Rhiannon Brown	AMATS
Emily Weiser	AMATS
Leifiloa Felise	AMATS
Connor Eshleman	DOT&PF
Lauren Little	DOT&PF
Tanya Hong	PM&E
Kristina Busch	DOT&PF
Craig Lyon	
Mark Eisenman	DOT&PF
Morgan McCammon	
Alex Read	DOT&PF
Nancy Pease	
Julee Trudeau	DOT&PF
Laurie Cummings	HDR
Emily Haynes	FHWA
Rachel Steer	
Brian Elliott	DOT&PF
Galen Jones	DOT&PF
Sarah Davenport	
Kristina Huling	DOT&PF
Sean Holland*	DOT&PF
Erin Baldwin Day*	MOA Assembly
James Marks	
Anna Bosin	DOT&PF
Brandon Telford	PM&E

**Policy Committee Member*

***Policy Committee Designated Alternate*

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

CHAIR COY called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Andrey Reynolds represented the Alaska Railroad Corporation on behalf of Brian Lindamood. James Starzec represented the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities on behalf of Ben White. Daniel McKenna-Foster represented the Planning Department on behalf of Mélisa Babb. Mourad Dawoud with the MOA Health Department was absent. Bart Rudolph with the MOA Public Transportation Department was excused. A quorum was established.

2. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

AARON JONGENELEN encouraged public involvement in this meeting of the AMATS Technical Advisory 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. BOWLAND moved to approve the agenda. MS. KEEGAN seconded.

Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – October 2, 2025

MR. STARZEC moved to approve the minutes. MR. ALIMI seconded.

Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Seward to Glenn Highway Draft PEL

MR. JONGENELEN noted that the Seward Highway to Glenn Highway Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) project recently released their Draft PEL Report and Level 2 Screening and Recommendations. These documents are being brought forward for the TAC to review and provide any comments that are due by November 21, 2025. Additionally, AMATS staff will be providing comments to the project team.

The committee discussed the following:

- AMATS staff and DOT&PF meeting to review the comments together.
- Maintaining, using, and improving what is existing. Can the existing capacity be used rather than building new capacity.

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- Do we need this big of a project or is there a way to use what we already have?
 - This project would remove a significant number of housing units and a lot of zoned capacity.
 - The project consists of 11 phases and will take a long time. How will that cost balance out with this project and other projects in the area?
 - The current configuration does not adequately serve the competing demands of regional commuter movement, access multi-modal travel, or neighborhood connectivity.
 - Could the transportation network acknowledge that we have an urban corridor that may have some more congestion and may not look like a freeway or a parkway? Are there opportunities to find a more balanced approach and look at other networks to disperse some of the impacts of the transportation network?
 - Viewing livability as a high priority.
 - More information about when it was identified that the functionality of an NHS roadway network or corridor has to be retained, and what is the definition of those goals and functionalities? Other NHS designations are not acting like a freeway. They are carrying road volume, but are fitting the context of the surrounding land.
 - Why is the goal moving a high corridor, if we could find that the capacity is adequate, especially on 15th Avenue.
 - Looking for a more implementable approach where you recognize a lower volume, and revisiting the model as analysis for the higher volumes.
 - Not trying to gain capacity, but are trying to separate uses and accommodate the existing traffic loads within these areas and balancing that with desires such as Ingra/Gambell going to a 3-lane type facility.
 - A part of the plan highlights connectivity between two major greenbelts and utilizes some of the infrastructure that Parks & Recreation would be maintaining.
 - The assumption that traffic in the future will always be vehicular traffic and will always be the same way will change with the future plan to not be vehicular traffic. This should be considered because that is where the strategy is pointing to.
 - Previous highway-to-highway projects have had implementation and alignment challenges. What happens if, during construction, a significant amount of landfill debris or hazardous material are found? For example, Merrill Field is on top of a landfill. Would this affect the clear zone for some of Merrill Field's runways with the alignment?
 - If Hyder Street cannot be connected or is problematic with north and south because of the way things are currently designed, is the design such that Hyder Street can be a pedestrian boulevard without being a regional connection?
 - Heavy vehicles do travel north and south on A and C Streets through downtown. The freight route seems to be circuitous and winding. Is that the route to be used versus having a straight shot over A and C Streets and 5th and 6th Avenues?
 - If this is the long-term plan, would Ingra/Gambell start to be converted before this was built?
 - The draft shows the 2050 MTP, which does not include a new freeway connection between the Glenn and Seward Highways. It also shows the goal of incorporating the 2050 MTP approaches into the build alternative, which shows consistency with adopted plans, accommodations, and promotion of plans. Does the draft show some identification of not including a freeway connection and incorporating that?

- Boise, Idaho, is comparable to Anchorage and does not have the interstate going through it but has a state highway-sized road that accommodates Boise. Do we need the designation of the interstate cutting through our urban areas?
- How does the Reconnecting Community Grant, which is ongoing with an analysis, interplay with timing?

GALEN JONES with DOT&PF responded to questions.

MR. JONGENELEN pointed out that this is in part a capacity project. It is moving the capacity from one location to another. If it were not a capacity project, then discussion would be about how the rest of the system could absorb it, and they already did mention that it could not absorb the change in traffic. It is just moving the disconnect from one location to another because you now have this recessed freeway that has bridges that people have to cross to be able to get in and out of their community. It does not look as if it is solving the overall problem with the community. It may be addressing DOT&PF's needs, and it is hard to see what DOT&PF is giving up in this scenario with respect to balance versus what everyone else is giving up. Maybe that could use some more clarification in the report moving forward.

There were no public comments.

MR. MCKENNA-FOSTER moved to recommend the Policy Committee adopt the AMATS staff comments plus the additional comments from the TAC and forward these onto AKDOT&PF. MS. KOHLHAAS seconded.

MR. JONGENELEN noted that staff had already forwarded the comments to DOT&PF and suggested the motion language would recommend supporting AMATS staff comments and sending the additional comments that were discussed today to AKDOT&PF or the project team for consideration.

MR. MCKENNA-FOSTER expressed that the motion would include the discussion regarding the designation of interstate versus the National Highway System. It would also reflect the loss of housing capacity. It would also reflect the loss of housing and zoning capacity and the overall cost of the project in the context of all the projects. Also, the additional disconnection.

MS. KOHLHAAS added that it would be a discontinuous interstate, more than just designation.

MR. JONGENELEN repeated that the comments forwarded would be interstate versus NHS by definition, reflecting the loss of housing and zoning capacity, the idea of a discontinuous interstate, the overall cost of the project in the context of other projects, and the additional disconnection of the neighborhood if this was approved.

MS. KOHLHAAS added that it would also include revisiting the model.

MR. STARZEC suggested staff review the discussion and pull the committee's specific questions to forward to the Policy Committee as suggestions. He also pointed out that the motion is to recommend those as comments to the Policy Committee for them to adopt as part of their comments. Does this committee feel as if we have done our due diligence in reviewing all the comments and have the confidence to say that we have the same relevant questions? He is hesitant to go that far and questioned if the committee should limit themselves to that.

MR. JONGENELEN noted that he will forward today's discussion to the TAC for review prior to sending it to the Policy Committee.

CHAIR COY understood that the project team will already get all of staff's comments and are verbally receiving our committee comments. Is there value in taking the AMATS comments and elevate them to a higher level making official policy comments? Does that apply to all of staff and TAC comments? Does it make a difference to be adopted by the Policy Committee versus the fact that it is still going to the project team either way? Do we want to take ownership of staff's comments to where we are saying they should be adopted versus the recognition that they are also going to the project team?

MR. MCKENNA-FOSTER noted that he and the Planning Director have looked at the technical aspects of these comments, and he felt comfortable that the technical analysis is sound. It is important to put them forward. The Planning Department has an additional meeting scheduled with the project team.

MS. KOHLHAAS also supported the comments. The ones she expressed today were particularly her individual comments. Do we document that there is support but not from the whole committee?

CHAIR COY commented that he did not read them with the intent of taking ownership from the traffic engineering side. These are great questions, but could he vote to agree this is the way he would interpret everything? No, he is not at that point.

MR. MCKENNA-FOSTER noted that the intent of his motion was that he supported the content of these comments, and recommend them to the Policy Committee. He would entertain a friendly amendment.

CHAIR COY offered a friendly amendment for the TAC to forward this to the Policy Committee and request they emphasize and heighten the project team to take these comments, not just as regular public comments but at a higher level, especially wanting the attention for AMATS. In that case, it is not adopting and saying that we agree with everything, but that we are saying these are important and want PC to emphasize these as priority comments. Also, formalize the process of getting our comments today.

MR. JONGENELEN clarified that he had already sent the comments to the project team, emphasizing the comments were AMATS staff comments.

MS. KOHLHAAS asked if the record could show that individual members expressed specific support and the amendment would focus on gathering the TAC comments to be forwarded to the Policy Committee.

MR. JONGENELEN replied that the Policy Committee could be informed that the TAC members support the comments, but the overall body did not have enough time to review all the comments in order to feel comfortable recommending or providing support.

MR. REYNOLDS asked what if there was that much value in the committee adopting the comments that are already being sent to the Policy Committee, were already sent to this committee and the project team. If there is this much concern by those members that have not reviewed it, are we really adding value by adopting or not adopting this? Does a 'no' vote send an unintended message? Is a 'yes' vote valuable enough to move it forward?

MR. MCKENNA-FOSTER was willing to withdraw his motion but, instead, suggested a friendly amendment.

MR. MCKENNA-FOSTER provided a friendly amendment to his motion to send a high-level summary of this discussion to the Policy Committee. MS. KOHLHAAS seconded.

MR. JONGENELEN restated that the main motion is to recommend to the Policy Committee to review the comments discussed at the TAC meeting today.

MR. STARZEC suggested a friendly amendment to note that, as a Technical Advisory Committee, we see a lot of merit in the comments from staff. These are good, valid comments, whether or not we feel confident with our technical delving into it today. He wanted to highlight that staff did a great job putting these comments together.

CHAIR COY suggested a friendly amendment that the TAC still recommends the Policy Committee support AMATS' staff having sent these comments to the project team and include the additional comments from the Technical Advisory Committee.

MR. JONGENELEN restated the friendly amendment made by Chair Coy is to recommend the PC support AMATS staff in having sent their comments to the project team and include the comments discussed at the TAC meeting for consideration.

MR. MCKENNA-FOSTER and MS. KOHLHAAS agreed to the friendly amendments.

Hearing no objections, the motion passed.

b. Seward Highway: O'Malley to Dimond Purpose and Need Comments

MR. JONGENELEN noted that the Seward Highway: O'Malley to Dimond project is underway again, with direction to step back and "take a fresh look at the scope and identify projects that meet the community's needs within the available funding." As part of that effort, the project team gathered stakeholders to participate in the new effort. AMATS is a stakeholder, and AMATS staff attends the meetings. At the last meeting, stakeholders were asked to report back to their groups and gather feedback on the purpose and need of this project. Recently, the Policy Committee updated the project scope in the 2027-2030 TIP:

- Seward Highway: O'Malley Road to Dimond Boulevard Reconstruction - Reconstruct the Seward Highway between O'Malley Road and Dimond Boulevard, which may include: a new undercrossing connecting 92nd Avenue to Academy Drive, minor modifications to the existing interchanges within the project limits, upgrades to the frontage roads with a focus on non-motorized facilities, multi-modal traffic safety, pathway and sidewalk improvements, noise walls, and drainage improvements.

The committee discussed the phrasing regarding the minor modification to existing interchanges that might preclude an option to make a significant design change to the O'Malley and Seward interchange.

JULEE TRUDEAU with DOT&PF assisted with responding to questions.

The committee also discussed the following:

- Looking at non-motorized connectivity, rather than a vehicular undercrossing.
- Prioritizing winter maintenance-oriented development.
- Types of maintenance and equipment that the state has versus the municipality, and how that could impact non-motorized users.
- Having a maintenance stakeholder group or something similar to prioritize the design based on how we would provide maintenance in today's environment would be beneficial for this size of a project.
- It would be nice to get a non-motorized connection, but it does not seem to be that important to have a non-motorized connection in that area. In the 2040 Plan, it does show this area as part of the Transit Supportive Overlay with multi-family on both sides, but overlays are really about multi-modals. If there ever was a connection between Academy Drive and Scooter, it could just be a busway or a bike path.

There were no public comments.

MS. KOHLHAAS moved to recommend to the Policy Committee that we include emphasis on non-motorized safety and connectivity into the project purpose and need. MR. STARZEC seconded.

MR. MCKENNA-FOSTER suggested a friendly amendment to add winter maintenance as a separate bullet, minimizing out of direction travel for land-locked neighborhoods, and discouraging a regional cut-through for motorized travel.

MS. KOHLHAAS and MR. STARZEC agreed to the friendly amendment.

Hearing no objections, the motion passed.

6. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS - None

a. STIP Update by DOT&PF

LAUREN LITTLE with DOT&PF presented the STIP update.

There were no comments.

b. AMATS Video/Local Lens

MS. SCHUETTE presented the Local Lens.

There were no comments.

c. Project Status Report

MR. JONGENENELEN and MR. STARZEC presented the status report.

There were no comments.

d. Next TAC Meeting Overview

MR. JONGENELEN noted that the December meeting will include TIP Amendment #4 and an MTP amendment as action items. The training room will be undergoing an electronics upgrade, so next month's meeting location could possibly be held in the Mayor's Conference Room at City Hall, but that is yet to be determined.

7. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

MR. MCKENNA-FOSTER posted the link to the Planning Department's newsletter and recommended everyone subscribe to receive land use updates.

MR. STARZEC informed the committee that DOT&PF will be sending out the RFP for the Tudor Road Corridor Plan in the next few days.

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

9. ADJOURNMENT

MR. BOWLAND moved to adjourn.

CHAIR COY adjourned the meeting at 2:40 p.m.