

Chapter

1



MTP 2040

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Introduction

Welcome to the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), a long-range transportation plan for the Anchorage Bowl and Chugiak-Eagle River. The MTP looks into the future and identifies transportation improvements to implement our community's vision. It describes the current status of the transportation system, our transportation goals, proposed capital improvements, and a supporting implementation strategy. The 2040 MTP is an update of the 2035 MTP adopted in 2012 and refreshed with the Interim 2035 MTP in 2015.

Chapter

1

Introduction

The 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) guides how \$2.6 billion will be spent over the next 20 years on transportation capital projects that meet broad community goals and that address federal transportation goals and planning factors. These funds will come from local, state, and federal sources. The MTP is a blueprint for transportation decision-making over the next 20 years. When approved, the 2040 MTP will supersede the 2035 MTP and the Interim 2035 MTP.

Anchorage is growing: by 2040, Anchorage's population is expected to grow by 20 percent and employment is expected to grow by 21 percent (Figure 1-1). Our city's population is not just growing – its demographics are also changing. In the future, we can expect greater ethnic and racial diversity, more households with 65 and older residents, and households with fewer children. The overall population is expected to be less transient and families will be increasingly multi-generational. With Anchorage's changing demographics there are expected to be corresponding changes in transportation needs and preferences. These demographic changes are explored more in

Chapter 5.

Transportation affects almost all aspects of our lives – it influences the health of residents, facilitates economic development, contributes to environmental quality, and much more.

The plan provides a vision for our future and sets forth goals and specific objectives for achieving that vision. The plan serves as the basis for transportation improvement decision-making that will determine how we get around Anchorage in the years to come. The plan's long-term vision is essential because transportation improvements require a long lead time to plan, design and implement. The MTP sets the stage for meaningful future transportation system improvements.

This MTP builds on previously adopted transportation and related plans, including the recently adopted Anchorage Bowl 2040 Land Use Plan, to facilitate multi-modal transportation improvements, with an

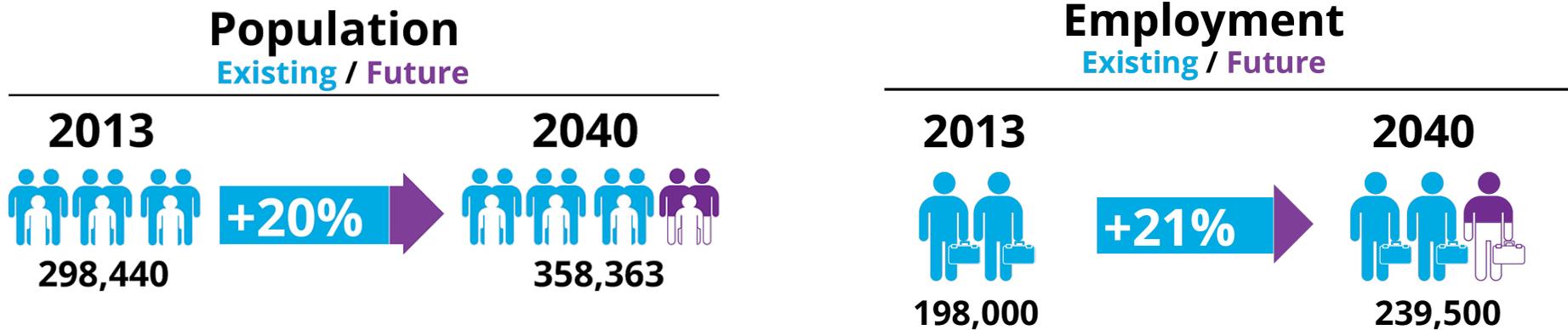


The video is available at <http://www.vimeo.com/221656563>



emphasis on preservation of the existing system, connectivity, mobility, and consideration of land use. This plan was developed with a mix of technical tasks combined with robust public engagement to reflect Anchorage residents' interests and preferences.

Figure 1-1 Population and Employment Growth



Source: AMATS Socioeconomic Projection and Land Use Allocation Report, April 2016

What is AMATS?

Anchorage Metropolitan Area

Transportation Solutions (AMATS) is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) responsible for transportation planning for the Anchorage Bowl, Chugiak, Eagle River, and coordination with Native Village of Eklutna, the federally recognized tribe within the AMATS planning area. Figure 1-2 shows the shape and extent of the land that makes up the AMATS planning area. One of the most important roles of AMATS is the preparation and adoption of the MTP. The following primary groups participate in AMATS planning and decision-making activities as shown on Figure 1-3. For more information on AMATS committees, refer to the Public Participation Plan on the AMATS website

(http://www.muni.org/Departments/OCPD/Planning/AMATS/Documents/PPP/PPP_Final_PC_Approved_1_2017.pdf)

Figure 1-2 AMATS Boundary



The Policy Committee (PC) is the primary decision-making body for AMATS. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) provides recommendations to the PC. AMATS staff, AMATS subcommittees, and the MOA Assembly provide recommendations to the PC through the TAC.

Figure 1-3. AMATS Committee Structure



Transportation Planning Process

The MTP is the primary planning document used by AMATS to guide the long-term development and implementation of Anchorage’s transportation system. AMATS must maintain the MTP for its entire planning area. The MTP is federally mandated and must comply with the Statewide and Metropolitan Transportation Planning regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Transportation. The MTP is generally updated every 4 years, allowing AMATS to incorporate the latest data, identify changes affecting travel demand and traffic patterns, and adjust policies and projects based on changing conditions. The MTP is required to have at least a 20-year planning horizon. The MTP frames a plan for

transportation throughout the AMATS area and serves as the basis for the Anchorage Long-Range Transportation Plan, to be adopted as an element of the Municipality of Anchorage Comprehensive Plan for the Anchorage Bowl and Chugiak-Eagle River areas.

AMATS is also responsible for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP is generally a 4-year implementation plan that lists projects and strategies using federal funding over the life of the TIP.

Figure 1-4 summarizes the phases of the transportation planning process.

The MTP is the primary planning document used by AMATS to guide the long-term development and implementation of Anchorage’s transportation system.

Figure 1-4 Transportation Planning Process



Guidance for Plan Development

In October 2016, the AMATS Policy Committee gave the MTP project team the following key assumptions and parameters to guide the plan development process:

MTP Update Requirement: AMATS must review and update the MTP at least every 4 years in air quality maintenance areas to avoid a lapse in the MTP Air Quality Conformity Determination.

Air Quality Conformity: The air quality conformity for the current Interim 2035 MTP was approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) on November 19, 2015, and expires 4 years from that date on November 19, 2019. [A grace period of 1 year is permitted by federal regulations. The 2040 MTP will use this grace period extending the air quality conformity to November 19, 2020.]

FHWA Planning Regulations: The development of the 2040 MTP will follow FHWA planning regulations (23 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 450.322) regarding the development and content of the MTP, and shall draw principally from content provided in the 2035 MTP and Interim 2035 MTP. The MTP must have a horizon year of at least 20 years from the date of FHWA approval of the related Air Quality Conformity Determination.

Conformity: The 2040 MTP will follow Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations for Conformity to State or Federal Implementation Plans of Transportation Plans, Programs, and Projects (40 CFR 93[A]), particularly with respect to air quality and transportation modeling, cost estimating, and fiscal constraint, as follows:

- **Air Quality Modeling/Analysis:**
Since the approval of the 2035

MTP in 2012, the EPA has designated the Anchorage Bowl as a limited maintenance area for carbon monoxide (CO) and Eagle River as a limited maintenance area for particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM10). As a consequence, the requirement to meet an emission budget for CO and PM10 has been eliminated, and transportation/air quality monitoring is no longer required to estimate emissions. Thus, there is no requirement for air quality modeling analysis in AMATS MTPs or Transportation Improvement Plans (TIPs). An Air Quality Conformity Determination for the 2040 MTP will be prepared and adopted as part of the 2040 MTP in accordance with the requirements outlined in the

Carbon Monoxide Limited Maintenance Plan.

- **Fiscal Constraint:** Conformity regulations still require a re-examination of project costs to determine whether the MTP is fiscally constrained. Revenue and cost assumptions identified in the 2035 MTP and Interim 2035 MTP will be reviewed and updated as part of the fiscal constraint analysis. Staff will work closely with DOT&PF Central Region in using the financial tool developed for the 2035 MTP and used for the Interim 2035 MTP to demonstrate fiscal constraint, and will review project cost and Maintenance & Operations estimates with DOT&PF Central Region and update as appropriate. [NOTE: Since this guidance was written DOT&PF Central Region is now DOT&PF Anchorage Field Office.]

- **Transportation Modeling:** The AMATS Travel Demand Model updated in 2016 will be used for the preparation of the 2040 MTP. The updated model will be used to confirm the need for projects identified in the 2035 MTP and Interim 2035 MTP, and to identify whether additional projects are required to meet the transportation needs projected to 2040. [Note: Since this guidance was written the 2016 AMATS Travel Demand Model was used for the 2040 MTP.]

- **Socioeconomic Assumptions:** The regional socioeconomic assumptions used for the AMATS Travel Demand Model Update and for this 2040 MTP are provided in the April 26, 2016, report titled “Socioeconomic Projections and Land Use Allocation Report,” prepared for AMATS by RSG with The McDowell Group.

- **Horizon Year:** The horizon year for the MTP update is assumed to be 2040.

- **Knik Arm Crossing (KAC) Project:** The AMATS PC expresses its reservations regarding the need, impact, and cost of the KAC project, and asks that the project be revisited as part of the 2040 MTP update process. [NOTE: Since this guidance was provided, the AMATS Policy Committee on August 24, 2017, determined that the KAC project was not to be included in the 2040 MTP.]

Goals and Objectives: The Goals and Objectives in the adopted 2035 MTP and Interim 2035 MTP for the Anchorage Bowl and Chugiak-Eagle River are based on community values as expressed through the latest Anchorage 2020 – Anchorage Bowl Comprehensive Plan (2001) and Chugiak-Eagle River Comprehensive Plan (2006) Update. MTP Goals and Objectives



will be reviewed and confirmed as still relevant and consistent with adopted land use plans, and will be changed as appropriate, following a review of the current Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan Supplement to Anchorage 2020 – Anchorage Bowl Comprehensive Plan, when adopted. [NOTE: Since this guidance was written, the Anchorage Bowl 2040 Land Use Plan was adopted and used for the 2040 MTP.]

Completed Projects: The 2040 MTP will recognize the completion of projects, strategies, and planning efforts identified in the 2035 MTP and Interim 2035 MTP.

Public Participation: The 2040 MTP public participation activities will focus on AMATS public meetings, a minimum 30-day public review period that includes a work session and public hearing with the Planning and Zoning Commission, and a work session and public hearing with the Municipal Assembly. [NOTE: Since this

guidance was written, the Citizens Advisory Committee replaced the Planning and Zoning Commission.]

FHWA Certification Review: All relevant recommendations and corrective actions

from the 2015 Certification Review by FHWA will be addressed and incorporated into the 2040 MTP as applicable.

