

1552 Orca Street
Anchorage, AK 99501

Craig Lyons
AMATS Coordinator
4700 Road
P.O. Box
Anchorage, AK

Subject: Comments on the Public Draft MTP 2040

Dear Mr. Lyons,

I appreciate the opportunity to provide comments as a private citizen on this important AMATS policy document. It is my hope the submitted comments will make some small contribution to the betterment of the current document and contribute to the next iteration of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). They are intended as constructive contributions to the public dialogue.

Over the years I have seen MTPs come and go in step with the growth of the Anchorage metropolitan area. One enduring characteristic of Anchorage is that is physically constrained to a very large extent with water to the west and south, military bases to the north and Chugach State Park to the east. It does not take much hard thinking to realize that if the City is to accommodate future projected growth, the limited amount of land must be used in the most efficient and effective manner possible. For many years the Anchorage metropolitan area developed following a typical suburban pattern as large vacant tracts of land were converted into residential sub-divisions. The movement of homes south and east was soon followed by commercial and institutions. This is reflected in the number of high-rise towers springing up in mid-town, the growth of the University/Medical District and the suburban sprawl of south Anchorage.

Businesses and residences produce economic value that supports the costs of our schools, police and fire, recreational and cultural opportunities. The transportation system should minimize negative impacts on them. This is particularly relevant within a physically constrained metropolitan area. In fact, wherever possible transportation improvements should add economic value to our city by promoting more cost-effective solutions. Simply expanding road width to provide increased capacity for regional and suburban commuters is not in the economic best interest of Anchorage. As our city continues to grow and mature as an urban area, the approaches to transportation infrastructure development must adapt.

Evidence of this need for change is reflected in the Municipal Land Use Plan with its recommendations for mixed-use development and increased density. There is a marked emphasize in this adopted Municipal document on changing the character of Anchorage's urban form. The focus moves away from accommodating the personal vehicle through a suburban style development pattern. We no longer have the vacant land to support that form of growth. Instead the emphasis is now on redevelopment of under utilized parcels, mixed-use

development and higher densities. This shift leaves less room for personal vehicles as the primary mode of transportation. This also means people will be getting around town using options other than a privately owned personal vehicle. As land rents increase due to constraints on physical supply, setting aside significant acreage for non-productive parking stalls is economically inefficient. The amount of property tax generated by a multi-story, mixed-use development is much higher than if the underlying land was used for simple vehicle storage. The transportation system must match this transition, be willing to accommodate different forms of mobility and to treat each option in an equitable manner. The place to start is the MTP.

It is recognized AMATS staff have a difficult challenge before them as they work hard to meet federal deadlines for required planning documents such as the MTP.. I acknowledge that not every issue raised in my comments can be adequately addressed within the time constraints. It is my hope though that where it is logistically possible, valid points can be considered in the final MTP document. For those that require more rigorous efforts, the next iteration of the MTP could hopefully include the appropriate work elements. I encourage folks to maintain an open mind about how our community is to meet present and future challenges in urban mobility caused by population and economic growth, limited land, fiscal constraint and on-going technological disruptions.

I want to express my earnest appreciation for all the hard work done by those who have toiled so diligently on the current draft document.

Respectfully Yours,



Allen Kemplen

3-9-2020