

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

**Mayor's Conference Room, 8th Floor  
632 W. 6th Avenue  
Anchorage, Alaska**

**February 15, 2024  
1:00 PM**

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[Transportation Planning / AMATS Meetings \(muni.org\)](https://www.muni.org/transportation-planning/amats-meetings)*

**Policy Committee Members Present:**

Name	Representing
Sean Holland	Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF)
Kent Kohlhasse	Municipal Manager, Mayor's Office
Emma Pokon	Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), Air Quality
Kevin Cross	MOA/Municipal Assembly
Daniel Volland	MOA/Municipal Assembly

**Also in attendance:**

Name	Representing
Aaron Jongenelen	AMATS
Chelsea Ward-Waller	AMATS
Jon Cecil	AMATS
Mook Puttong	AMATS
James Starzec	DOT&PF
Brian Lindamood*	Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC)
Sean Baski	DOT&PF
Ben White*	DOT&PF
Luke Bowland*	DOT&PF
Van Le	R&M Consultants
Kate Dueber	ARRC
Adam Bradway	DOT&PF
Zakary Hartman	MOA/Traffic Engineering Dept.
Evan Anderson	DOT&PF
Kevin Jackson	DOT&PF
James Potts	
Sarah Davenport	
Nancy Pease	
Brad Coy*	MOA/Traffic Engineering Dept.
Will Taygan	Chugach Mountain Bike Riders
Craig Lyon*	MOA/Planning Dept.

*\*AMATS Technical Advisory Committee Member*

*\*\*Designated Assembly Alternate*

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

CHAIR HOLLAND called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Kent Kohlhase, Municipal Manager, represented Mayor Bronson. 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 VOLLAND seconded.

*Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved.*

**4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – January 18, 2024**

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

*Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved.*

**5. ACTION ITEMS**

**a. Air Quality Conformity Determination for 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)**

MS. WARD-WALLER noted that the purpose of the Air Quality Conformity Determination (AQCD) is to ensure that the federally funded MTP does not hinder the attainment or continued maintenance of national ambient air quality standards. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) that serve areas designated as maintenance areas for one or more air pollutants must perform a conformity determination prior to approving transportation plans. The AMATS planning area contains both a CO Limited Maintenance Area for the Anchorage Bowl and a PM-10 Limited Maintenance Area for Eagle River. Therefore, a conformity determination must be performed for these two pollutants based on an analysis of monitoring data.

There were no comments.

MS. POKON moved to approve. ASSEMBLY MEMBER CROSS seconded.

*Hearing no objections, the motion passed.*

**b. 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)**

**Appendices**

**Comment Response Summary Public**

**Comment Response Summary Tribal and Agencies**

MS. WARD-WALLER noted that the AMATS 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) began in June 2021, when a contract was signed with consulting firm R&M Consultants, Inc. to help prepare and develop the document. The federal deadline for this document is August 24, 2024. The MTP has a horizon year of 20 years but must be updated no later than every four years. The 2050 MTP planning process had multiple phases, many of which were presented to this committee before the next phase, including: goals, objectives, performance measures, and prioritization criteria; scenario development; a recommended project list based on fiscal analysis; and a plan draft and public comment summary. Changes to the draft 2050, based on the public comments, were recommended by the Technical Advisory Committee and made by the Policy Committee in their November and December 2023 meetings. The updated draft presented today includes those changes.

MR. KOHLHASE thanked staff for having changed the format significantly from earlier versions, displaying the information well, and making it easy to follow.

CHAIR HOLLAND opened the floor to public comments.

SARAH DAVENPORT

WILL TAYGAN

ASSEMBLY MEMBER VOLLAND moved to approve the 2050 MTP with the Comment Response Table. MR. KOHLHASE seconded.

*Hearing no objections, the motion passed.*

**6. PROJECT AND PLAN UPDATES - None**

**7. GENERAL INFORMATION**

**a. Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) Amendment #2 Status Update**

MR. JONGENELEN noted that TIP Amendment #2 was released for a 45-day public comment period and will be before the Assembly as a public hearing on February 27, 2024.

CHAIR HOLLAND asked how long it takes for an amendment to be processed.

MR. JONGENELEN replied that the minimum is five months. That period includes when the amendment is brought before the committees to be released for the public to view, the public comment period, the Assembly comment period, brought back before the committees, and then to FHWA (Federal Highway Administration) and FTA (Federal Transportation Administration) for final approval. He added that approval of this amendment may be delayed depending on the status of the STIP (State Transportation Improvement Program). The amendment cannot be approved if the STIP is not approved.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER CROSS pointed out that the letter from DOT&PF expressed that they did not like the Illustrative projects this committee had added. He asked if there were any actions we could immediately take to remedy anything we may have inadvertently done to create problems.

MR. JONGENELEN clarified that the STIP is mostly for DOT&PF. AMATS does need to address our certification review corrective actions, and we are already underway with correcting those. Two of those actions are dependent on Amendment #2 being approved due to some changes needing to be made to the TIP. AMATS is moving forward as quickly as we can with our processes, but that does not hold up approval of the STIP because those are Tier II changes. DOT&PF has to work on Tier I changes, which are all DOT&PF responsibilities.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER CROSS noted that it might be advantageous to get ahead of that because there have been some concerns regarding that letter. Maybe make a formal statement on what AMATS is doing in order to resolve these issues in an expeditious manner, so imaginations do not get the best of people.

In response to Assembly Member Volland's question that the MTP and the TIP can have Illustrative projects separate from the STIP, MR. JONGENELEN explained that AMATS can have Illustrative projects in the MTP and TIP.

There were no public comments.

#### **b. March 2024 Policy Committee Agenda Overview**

MR. JONGENELEN noted that this is part of our outreach effort with the PC and TAC committees and the public, informing everyone what is coming up in March and allowing them time to prepare. On the Policy Committee's March agenda will be the Safety Plan for final approval, depending upon the results of the joint work session being held on February 21, 2024, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. in the Permit Center Conference Room. There is also a virtual option for those who cannot attend in person. The public is encouraged to attend; however, it is not a formal public event, nor is it open to public comments. The second item is that staff, after having attended that meeting, will be providing comments on the Seward Highway to Glenn Highway PEL. Lastly, the AMATS' Community Advisory Committee

would also like to provide comments regarding the Seward Highway to Glenn Highway PEL.

There were no comments.

## 8. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

ASSEMBLY MEMBER CROSS mentioned that there will be future conversations regarding the removal of the Eagle River Road project.

## 9. PUBLIC COMMENTS

WILL TAYGAN asked for clarification that approval of the MTP is not taking place today, but after the Assembly and DOT&PF approve it. With regard to next month's Eagle River Road project discussion, is there an option or a way for staff to reduce the cost of that by reducing the mileage and focusing on the more dangerous section that is two miles further out where it starts going down the hill from Mile 3.3 to 5.3 (Mile Hi Avenue to Oriedner Road? Is it possible to break the road and path into a smaller project, making it more affordable?

MR. JONGENELEN explained that neither the Assembly nor DOT&PF approve the MTP. It is required to go to FHWA and FTA for final approval. Typically, that takes one month, but it could take longer. In regard to the Eagle River Road project, we can look into that and see if there is any interest.

SEAN BASKI announced that the Anchorage Transportation Fair will be held on March 28, 2024, at the Alaska Airlines Center from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. AMATS, the Municipality of Anchorage, DOT&PF, and the Alaska Railroad will be among those discussing transportation topics in and around Anchorage. DOT&PF will also be holding a job fair at the Loussac Library on March 21, 2024, from 1:00 to 7:00 p.m.

## 10. ADJOURNMENT

ASSEMBLY MEMBER VOLLAND moved to adjourn. ASSEMBLY MEMBER CROSS seconded.

*Hearing no objections, the meeting adjourned at 1:27 p.m.*