

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

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

**October 28, 2021
1:30 PM**

Due to the expected absence of Chair Junge, Todd Vanhove acted as Chair.

Policy Committee Members Present:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Todd Vanhove*	Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF)
Larry Baker	Mayor's Office
Emma Pokon	Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), Air Quality
Meg Zaletel	MOA/Municipal Assembly
John Weddleton	MOA/Municipal Assembly

Also in attendance:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Craig Lyon	MOA/Planning Department
Aaron Jongenelen	MOA/Planning Department
Christine Schuette	MOA/Planning Department
Cindy Heil*	ADEC
Jim Amundsen	DOT&PF
James Starzec	DOT&PF
Kathryn Wenger	FHWA
Bart Rudolph	MOA/Public Transportation Department
Adam Moser	DOT&PF
Jeanne Bowie	Kinney Engineering
Jessica Miranda	Kinney Engineering
Joann Mitchell	Kinney Engineering
Galen Jones	DOT&PF
Tim Sullivan	Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC)
Brad Coy*	MOA/Traffic Engineering Department

**AMATS Technical Advisory Committee Member*

***Designated Assembly Alternate*

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

ACTING CHAIR VANHOVE called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. Larry Baker represented Mayor Bronson. A quorum was established prior to Assembly Member Weddleton's arrival at 1:36 p.m.

2. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

CRAIG LYON 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. As a result of the virtual meetings, the public has been asked to submit an email request providing their name, phone number, and agenda item to AMATS by 6:30 p.m. the day prior to the meeting but can also participate via Teams and provide testimony when the item is opened to the public for comments.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL moved to approve the agenda. MR. BAKER seconded.

Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – August 26, 2021

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL moved to approve the minutes. MR. BAKER seconded.

Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved.

5. ACTION ITEMS

a. MTP (Metropolitan Transportation Plan) 2050

1. Public Involvement Plan

2. Guiding Principles and Vision Statement

BACKGROUND:

The AMATS 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan update is underway. The Vision Statement outlines a future vision of how the transportation system is expected to function. This acts as an overall guide for the plan. The Guiding Principles provide overall direction for the plan update. The Public Involvement Plan outlines how stakeholders will be engaged during the plan, when public participation opportunities will be available, and how long they will last. These three items lay the groundwork for the development of the 2050 MTP.

MR. JONGENELEN provided a PowerPoint Presentation. The Committee is being asked to approve the Public Involvement Plan and the 2050 MTP Vision Statement, Guiding Principles with the recommendation to change the public comment period from 15 days to 30 days.

Assembly Member Weddleton arrived at 1:36 p.m.

The following are questions or comments by the Committee with responses noted in *Italic*.

Public Involvement Plan (PIP)

- (MZ) She would like to know when you plan to intersperse your opportunities with the Federation of Community Councils (FCC) because those folks are going to report back to the community councils, then the community councils will determine whether or not they are going to take action. That is how it typically works. She did see there was outreach to the FCC built into the plan, but she did not see any particular points of outreach. If that is contemplated, that would be helpful. Otherwise, she would recommend all public comment periods be about 60 days because the bylaws of many community councils require introduction at one meeting prior to adoption at the next. What she is hearing from her constituents across the city is that it is just not enough time to put forward timely comments and to have a full community council consider them. She did not know how those interests are balanced, but maybe one of the ways is to schedule specific times with the FCC, so that we can alert community councils that this will be happening and making them aware, and we can help facilitate that communication.
- (AJ) *FCCs are included in all our communication and are fully aware of everything we mail out.*
- (MZ) Appreciated that, but she understood that staff's interaction with the FCC was not simply going to be sending out notices, but actually presenting to the FCC at particular points in time, or is that not the case?
- (AJ) *A presentation can be provided, if the FCC requests it, but we do not automatically assume they want a presentation because we do not know what community councils or different groups prefer. It would be best if they would reach out to us asking for a document presentation.*
- (MZ) Would like to see, in the Public Participation Plan, one way to remedy the dealings of the community councils of not having enough time getting on the schedule of the FCC at key points and making them aware of the key input points and get an overview, so those FCC delegates can go back to their community councils ensuring everyone is aware. Otherwise, we get folks who are upset because they are either feeling pressured at the last minute or the deadline has been missed. Hopefully, that would drive earlier and more substantive participation, instead of all at the very end, which is what we saw with the MTP 2040.
- (AJ) *He pointed out that we actually had almost as much involvement in the very beginning as we did at the very end with the 2040. The public was involved at almost all the stages, we just ran out of time at the very end because of the lengthy comment period. A 60-day comment period is not doable for us for pretty much any of our comment period time. Even in our current state, as we*

have it now, we are just barely meeting the approval schedule of the MTP. One thing to recognize is that when we post items to the TAC or PC agendas, that whole month is an opportunity for groups to get some type of notice from us, above and beyond our regular notification, that the agendas are now available, and this is their time to start reviewing what is being posted. For example, the Goals and Objectives, we intend on sending emails to those on our mailing list to let them know these are available in draft format for the committees to review. We recommend they look at them now allowing them enough time to meet during the comment period in order to submit their comments. Additionally, we will inform them that there are other points they can also comment on. There are multiple opportunities for people to provide their comments on the Goals and Objectives, as well as their ability to provide comments on the Goals and Objectives throughout the plan update.

- (JW) So this is really a 51-day advance notification. It goes to all community councils plus FCC allowing them time to add it to their agendas, and he did not see a real constraint for the community councils. Having been an FCC Chairman for several years, he commented that relying on the FCC to go to their community councils, then the community councils add the item to their agenda, and then they deal with it would mean they have three months minimum, but it just does not work that way. You should go straight to the community councils and let them decide. The FCC is just a coordinating body for community councils. If you do not go straight to the community councils, and only go to the FCC, that is not correct. Community councils are independent bodies from the FCC, they are not run by the FCC. Having a 30-day comment period kind of gets you to where community councils can respond. With the MTP 2040, a lot of comments were received from the public and the Assembly on the Goals and Objectives way late for staff to incorporate the comments, but he understood that those late comments would influence staff's starting point for this MTP. A lot of the community councils that will be heard now probably have, essentially, the same comments they did then, so your starting point will not be that far off for staff to start working on it.
- (AJ) *That is correct, we will use those comments as a starting point, and we did take key ideas that came from multiple sources. We also said we were going to look at the comments carried forward from the 2040 and the Policy Committee resolution that was passed on the parameters for the 2050. Additionally, we have looked at new plans developed since then, such as the Spenard Corridor Plan, the Non-Motorized Plan, and the Transit on the Move Plan. As well as looking at, again, the comprehensive plan, the Land Use Plan, the Climate Action Plan, and the federal requirements for the MAP-21 and FAST Act (Fixing America's Surface Transportation) making sure that we are in compliance. We have 37 objectives, which is a lot to keep track of and adhere to, so we looked for a way to condense them a little and still adhere to everything. The comments heard from the 2040 did influence the 2050 Goals and Objectives. We set it up so that when people are looking at these, they can see the 2040 and the comments received from the public in one column*

next to it, and other plans that we had looked at to see how consistent we are with them, and then our final recommendation. It is much easier for people to follow along this way.

There were no public comments.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL moved to approve. MR. BAKER seconded.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL moved to amend that there be an FCC meeting presentation in December 2021 as well as an FCC presentation prior to the 30-day comment period commencing with regards to the public review period for the draft 2050 MTP, so Summer/Fall 2023. Between public workshop #3 and the time open for the draft MTP comments being due. ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEDDLETON seconded.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL clarified that the first meeting would be December 2021 (between public workshop #1 and the public comment period for project prioritization criteria). Then the Summer/Fall 2023 (between public workshop #3 and the public review period for the draft 2050 MTP. With the flexibility to schedule them as appropriate, but to give notice to the community councils that these deadlines are coming up. She wants the FCC delegates that are there to take whatever is most important to their community councils to illicit, hopefully, appropriate feedback. Mainly, she wants them to be aware of the comment period and have a brief overview of what you are soliciting comments about.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEDDLETON supports the amendment but recommended being careful in your wording. If you were to go to FCC and say, "I am here to present so that you can bring it back to your community councils", you have shot yourself in the foot. Instead, you could present and say, "Your community councils have been informed with an email sending all of these documents." To make the FCC a critical step in the education process would be inappropriate.

Hearing no objections, the amendment passed.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL moved to amend that the comment period move from 15 days to 30 days, as recommended by staff. ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEDDLETON seconded.

Hearing no objections, the amendment passed.

Hearing no objections, the main motion passed, as amended.

The following are questions or comments by the Committee with responses noted in *Italic*

Guiding Principles and Vision Statement

- (MZ) Is there a national technical assistance resource on equity that could be mentioned in here that we could possibly tap into? She appreciated the Municipal Equity Officer being there, but depending on the expertise held in that position, it is not necessarily always related to transportation. Or maybe if we just need a more general reference to that, then we would know to look

to best practices around the country, and see what that applicability might be here in Anchorage? Her Google search pulled up lots of grants for that work.

- (AJ) *That is a good idea. We could see if there are some nationwide resources that could be incorporated.*
- (JW) He understood the point with the data, and it is fairly clear with the 2019 base year, but when that first Travel Demand Model runs the recommendations, it will incorporate the latest available data. Twelve or eighteen months from now people are going to say that you did not do that and wonder why you did not use 2021. He would suggest, “Incorporate the data available when modeling commences” or “Will incorporate 2019 data”.
- (AJ) *There are multiple sources of data, which is why it is a little difficult. We have traffic data and socioeconomic data with population, households, and projections. If the Census data will hurry up and be available, we can utilize that. It really depends on where we are at that point. We do try to keep it consistent with federal requirements, which does say to use the latest available data. He will see if he can work with the consultants on coming up with adding something more there that can help us in the future, in case someone looks at these three years out saying we did not do what we said we were doing.*

There were no public comments.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL moved to approve the Guiding Principles and Vision Statement. ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEDDLETON seconded.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL moved to amend to include national technical resources with regards to equity and clarification around the data sources, as discussed. ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEDDLETON seconded.

Hearing no objections, the motion passed, as amended.

b. 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Administrative Modification #5

BACKGROUND:

An administrative modification to the AMATS 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is needed to update Table 5 - CMAQ and Table 10 - Transit.

Table 5 – Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ)

- Updated to reflect increase in project CMQ 00004, Traffic Control Signalization to take into account cost of living increases and inflation.

Table 10 – Transit

- Updated to reflect changes in Alaska Railroad 5307 funds and the MOA Public Transportation Department 5307 and 5340 funds.

MR. LYON briefed the Committee on the TIP modifications shown above.

The following are questions or comments by the Committee with responses noted in *Italic*

- (JW) Asked for clarification on reading the Transit table. The Transit Centers/Support Facilities have increased substantially?
- (CL) *Referred to the Memorandum noting that the Transit Centers/Support Facilities did increase from \$750,000 to \$1.8 million. He asked Bart Rudolph with the Public Transportation Department to explain the increase.*
- (BR) *He did not have that information at hand and would have to do some research.*
- (JW) The column says 2021, is that calendar year or a state fiscal year? Does the newly added bus route have bus stops that could be the reason for the increase?
- (BR) *It does include that. When we do these TIP amendments, we usually clean it up to reflect what was spent or requested from FTA to match what was actually done, more or less, different than forecasting what we actually need. We did build 70 bus stops for the Route 85 and that could be part of it, but he was not certain.*
- (CL) *FTA funds are significantly more flexible in what they can do retroactively. 2021 is a federal fiscal year from October 1 to September 30.*

There were no public comments.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEDDLETON moved to approve the 2019-2022 Tip Administrative Modification #5. ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

c. 2022-2023 UPWP (Unified Planning Work Program)**BACKGROUND:**

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is required by federal law under Title 23, amended 23 USC 134 as interpreted by FHWA in 23 CFR 450.308, when federal funds are used for transportation planning. The Draft 2022-23 UPWP defines the transportation planning activities and products to be developed by AMATS and other transportation planning agencies during the fiscal year (January 1 – December 31). It is the basis for allocating federal, state, and local funds for short- and long-range transportation planning activities within the Municipality of Anchorage.

UPWP tasks are grouped into 'Work Elements' in the following categories:

- 100 Element: Plans and Programs
- 200 Element: Subarea and Special Studies
- 300 Element: Air Quality
- 400 Element: Data and Modeling
- 500 Element: Program Administration and Public Involvement
- 600 Element: Public Transportation

MR. LYON explained that this is the work program for what staff will be doing with our planning funds for the next two years. The Committee is being asked to release the draft narrative for a 30-day public comment period. Federal rules require this, but do not require a public comment period on the budget, which will come before the Committee later.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEDDLETON clarified there is a budget for this coming in December 2021 because it does feed a little bit into the budget the municipality is working on now since a portion of the Planning Department is AMATS funded.

MR. LYON pointed out that the amount we expect on our global transportation plan looks at right-of-way vacations, road projects, and we also budget a certain amount for the Planning Director's time. The difference is how much staff time we put in the safety plan because that is new.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEDDLETON stated that we had been using the state's safety criteria, but thought we wanted to have our own safety plan.

MR. LYON replied that safety plans are common and are designed to look at the whole city, but we are trying to dial it down a little more than what was done with VisionZero.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEDDLETON asked when that will start.

MR. LYON replied that we are currently working on the RFP, but still have to do the TORA because it was part of what was included in Amendment #2 and was just adopted last month. If we can get an RFP on the street the first quarter of next year, we would be happy, but it might not be until the second quarter.

There were no public comments.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEDDLETON moved to send the UPWP out for a 30-day comment period. ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

6. Project and Plan Updates

a. AMATS Q3 Newsletter

MR. LYON informed the Committee that the newsletter is available. He commended Christine Schuette for doing a spectacular job creating the newsletter allowing more information available to the public.

There were no comments.

7. General Information

a. Ocean Dock Road Reconnaissance Study – Kinney Engineering

GALEN JONES with DOT&PF, JEANNE BOWIE, JESSICA MIRANDA, and JOANN MITCHELL with Kinney Engineering provided a PowerPoint Presentation.

In response to Assembly Member Weddleton's question where the money comes from, MR. JONES explained that it is a Department owned road, so he believed it was a state match. MR. LYON added that it is also the city's and AMATS' allocation.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEDDLETON added that, at some point, we are going to be tearing out that north extension that has the sheet pile. He did not know where all of that came from, but it will have to go somewhere. Maybe it could be used for their road and save some money.

There were no public comments.

b. Seward/Glenn Mobility Project – HDR Alaska – *Postponed to November*

8. Committee Comments - None

9. Public Comments - None

10. ADJOURNMENT

ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEDDLETON moved to adjourn. ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL seconded.

Hearing no objections, the meeting adjourned at 2:28 p.m.