

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

**4700 Elmore Road  
Anchorage, Alaska**

**February 25, 2021  
1:30 PM**

*Due to COVID-19, this meeting was conducted virtually.*

Policy Committee Members Present:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Wolfgang Junge	Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF)
Chris Schutte	Executive Director, MOA Economic & Community Development
Cindy Heil	Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), Air Quality
John Weddleton	MOA/Municipal Assembly
Chris Constant**	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
James Starzec	DOT&PF
John Linnell*	DOT&PF
Luke Bowland	DOT&PF
Adam Moser	DOT&PF

*\*AMATS Technical Advisory Committee Member*

*\*\*Designated Assembly Alternate*

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

CHAIR JUNGE called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Chris Schutte, Executive Director, MOA Economic and Community Development, represented Acting Mayor Austin Quinn-Davidson. Assembly Member Constant represented Assembly Member Zaletel. A quorum was established.

**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**

MR. SCHUTTE moved to approve the agenda. ASSEMBLY MEMBER CONSTANT seconded.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER CONSTANT requested to add to the agenda the status of the PEL implementation for the Glenn Highway to Seward Highway contract as Agenda Item 6(a).

*Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved, as amended.*

**4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – December 17, 2021**

MS. HEIL moved to approve the minutes. MR. SCHUTTE seconded.

*Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved.*

**5. ACTION ITEMS**

**a. Citizens Advisory Committee Seat Nomination**

**BACKGROUND:**

*The AMATS Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is the citizen's forum for transportation issues affecting the AMATS area. This group serves to review projects and plans, share information with the public, and bring forth recommendations about transportation planning issues to the AMATS Technical Advisory Committee. Members of this committee serve rotating three-year terms. Committee bylaws limit members to two consecutive terms. Jim Winchester will serve as the Planning and Zoning Commission's representative for the CAC.*

MR. LYON informed the Committee that former representative, Brian Looney, is no longer seated on the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC). The commission is recommending Commissioner Jim Winchester serve as Mr. Looney's replacement on the CAC.

There were no comments.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEDDLETON moved to approve. ASSEMBLY MEMBER CONSTANT seconded.

*Hearing no objections, this motion passed.*

**b. AMATS 2019-22 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)  
Amendment #2 Air Quality Conformity Public Release**

**BACKGROUND:**

*The Municipality of Anchorage contains a limited maintenance area for carbon monoxide (CO) in Anchorage and contains a limited maintenance area for PM10 in Eagle River. Consequently, federal regulations require that AMATS make an Air Quality Conformity*

*Determination on all transportation plans and programs to assure they will not jeopardize compliance with federal air quality standards for CO and PM10 within the Municipality of Anchorage. These regulations require AMATS to determine that future emissions from the transportation network envisioned in these plans and programs remain under the allowable emissions budget established in the State Implementation Plan for air quality; or in the case of a Limited Maintenance Plan, have a future projected pollutant design value low enough to be, reasonably, unlikely to exceed a national air quality standard including projected traffic increases over a 20-year planning horizon. AMATS' proposed Amendment #2 to the 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) includes the addition of a new road project after the FHWA's approval of an Air Quality Conformity Determination for that TIP. Hence, the updated Air Quality Conformity Report is being presented to obtain a new conformity determination for the modified 2019-2022 TIP, including the new Academy/Vanguard Traffic Circulation Improvements project added via TIP Amendment #2. The analysis demonstrates that Anchorage is well-positioned to maintain the CO NAAQS. Anchorage Air Program staff has also determined that the 2019-2022 TIP, including Amendment #2, is consistent with the Alaska State Implementation Plan (SIP) in finding that no element of the Anchorage 2019-2022 TIP, or its amendments will undermine the objective to reduce ambient CO in Anchorage, nor will it interfere with implementation of any CO control measures identified in the Alaska SIP.*

MR. LYON noted that the Air Quality Conformity Determination is ready to be released in conjunction with the 2019-2022 TIP Amendment for a 30-day public review.

MS. Heil expressed appreciation that it is being released for public review.

There were no public comments.

MS. HEIL moved to release the Air Quality Conformity Determination for the 2019-2022 TIP Amendment for public review. ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEDDLETON seconded.

***Hearing no objections, this motion passed.***

## **6. Project and Plan Updates**

### **a. Status of PEL Implementation for the Glenn Highway to Seward Highway Contract**

JAMES STARZEC with DOT&PF briefed the Committee noting that HDR has been selected as the contractor.

There were no comments.

## **7. General Information**

### **a. COVID Relief Funding**

MR. LYON informed the Committee of the funding.

In response to Assembly Member Weddleton's question what the spending process was for funds received previously, MR. LYON explained that the \$11.2 million funding, specifically, goes to urbanized areas with a population of over 200,000, meaning the Anchorage area will be receiving it. These types of funds have never before been received, so a process is not yet in place.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER CONSTANT mentioned that conversations have been held regarding connecting the Campbell Creek Trail over Lake Otis Parkway, somehow, to eliminate the impact and conflict between pedestrians and vehicles while trying to cross Lake Otis on that trail system. He asked if this would be an AMATS project.

MR. LYON replied, yes, the connection over Lake Otis Parkway is in the MTP and in the Draft Non-motorized Plan. The requirement for this funding is that it must be in the plans or is being utilized. That project is not currently in the TIP, so it would have to be amended into the TIP, but we have until September 2024, if the Policy Committee would like to add the project.

MR. LINNELL added that he had received an email containing guidance from FHWA. After briefly reviewing it, he noticed that roads that are classified as "local" or "real low-volume" type roads appear to not be eligible for funding.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER CONSTANT mentioned that the American Rescue Plan is moving forward.

There were no public comments.

#### **b. AMATS FFY21 1st Quarter Project Obligation Report**

MR. LYON briefed the Committee on the Obligation Report.

MR. STARZEC with DOT&PF pointed out that the items listed in the report under DOT&PF Project Numbers (far left column) reflect what is currently programmed for the TIP though Administrative Modification #4. The items listed under Total Obligation + Deobligation (far right column) reflect our best understanding of the project managers needs for the upcoming year. The difference of those two need to be reconciled, either through an additional administrative modification or an amendment, so we can program and obligate those funds, which is why these columns are not yet in alignment with each other.

There were no comments.

### **8. Committee Comments**

ASSEMBLY MEMBER CONSTANT noted that he serves on the National League of Cities (NLC), Transportation and Infrastructure Services Committee and received an email from them noting that the NLC has been asked to participate in a "feedback fire drill for DOT&PF" in regard to how quickly cities may be able to expand transportation capital funds for projects. A survey is being requested for top immediate transportation priorities

and how much funding is needed, and how long would it take to spend the capital based on priorities, caveats, concerns and considerations related to local revenues and reserves being down. It states, "We can assume that these would be directed funds to your MPO with no state obligation issues." They would also address some workforce training in the beginning to not artificially inflict construction costs. He will forward this to Mr. Lyon to assist in coordinating with Chair Junge. Secondly, Senator Sullivan confirmed that the Secretary of Transportation committed that he would visit Alaska. Assembly Member Constant has been engaged with the Senator's Office and DOT&PF's alternative pathways to ensure there is a visit to Anchorage with ample to time to see our local infrastructure. He just wanted to bring this to AMATS' attention, should the Secretary of Transportation arrive, and we have an opportunity to be persuasive.

CHAIR JUNGE announced the following:

1. DOT&PF's Deputy Director Diana Rotkis is retiring, and John Linnell will be taking her place. Mr. Linnell currently serves on the Technical Advisory Committee, but that seat will be filled by Luke Bowland in April.
2. Representative Spohnholz, from East Anchorage, has asked for a meeting March 1 at 1:30 p.m. to discuss AMATS. He believed the general subject would be AMATS planning. Mr. Lyon accepted his invitation to participate.
3. Representative Gillham, Kenai, proposed a bill to change the name of the Glenn Highway to something else that would, possibly, honor Representative Don Young's years of service. We had an estimate of \$2 million to change over 200 signs between Anchorage and Glennallen, but with the caveat that it would not include the City of Anchorage, the City of Palmer, the Mat-Su Borough, the Department of Defense, or any other agency(e.g., the postal service) that would be involved in a name change such as that. We think we have redirected Representative Gillham to rename the new Cooper Landing bypass bridge after Representative Don Young, but wanted to give the Committee a heads up that there was a move afoot to rename the Glenn Highway. The idea may have been introduced because of an article about the gentleman the Glenn Highway was named after being a war criminal back in 1903 and, maybe, naming it after Don Young would be more appropriate. It would not be a federal project, meaning the State would have to come up with the \$2 million and everyone else would need to be in agreement.

**9. Public Comments - None**

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

MS. HEIL moved to adjourn. MR. SCHUTTE seconded.

*Hearing no objections, the meeting adjourned at 2:02 p.m.*