

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

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

**February 24, 2022
1:30 PM**

Policy Committee Members Present:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Wolfgang Junge	Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF)
Adam Trombley	Director, MOA Community Development
Emma Pokon	Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), Air Quality
Chris Constant**	MOA/Municipal Assembly
John Weddleton	MOA/Municipal Assembly

Also in attendance:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Aaron Jongenelen	MOA/Planning Department
Christine Schuette	MOA/Planning Department
Luke Bowland*	DOT&PF
Dave Post	DOT&PF
Brad Coy*	MOA/Traffic Engineering Department
James Starzec	DOT&PF
Morgan McCammon	DOWL
Van Le	R&M Consultants
Jason Kewin	Lounsbury & Associates
Taryn Oleson-Yelle	R&M Consultants
Craig Lyon*	MOA/Planning Department
David Gamez	Lounsbury & Associates
Travis Holmes	DOT&PF
Cindy Heil*	ADEC
Bart Rudolph	MOA/Public Transportation Department (PTD)
Scott Thomas	DOT&PF
Ben Coleman	R&M Consultants
Lizzie Newell	
Lance Wilber	MOA/Public Works
Lindsey Hajduk	NeighborWorks Alaska

**AMATS Technical Advisory Committee Member*

***Designated Assembly Alternate*

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

CHAIR JUNGE called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. Adam Trombley, Community Development Director, represented Mayor Bronson. Assembly Member Constant represented Assembly Member Zaletel. A quorum was established prior to the arrivals of Assembly Member Weddleton at 1:41 p.m. and Assembly Member Constant at 1:43 p.m.

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. Each public participant will be allotted three minutes to speak on their topic.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MS. POKON moved to approve the agenda. MR. TROMBLEY seconded.

Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – January 27, 2022

MR. TROMBLEY moved to approve the minutes. MS. POKON seconded.

CHAIR JUNGE referred to page 6 noting a correction to comment #4 that should read, "...DOT&PF to reconstruct the Seward Highway..."

Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved, as amended.

5. ACTION ITEMS

- a. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #3 – Air Quality Conformity Determination, Release for 30-day Public Comment Period**

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 future emissions from the transportation network envisioned in these plans and programs remain under the allowable emissions budget established in the State Implementation Plan (SIP) 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 has proposed Amendment #3 to the 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) to modify the fiscal programming schedule for three roadway projects, one

Transportation Demand Management study, two transit improvement projects, and six projects for maintenance and upgrade of existing Alaska Railroad rail infrastructure, communication system and signaling improvements, and preventative maintenance of passenger railcars and locomotives. Amongst all the project modifications proposed in Amendment #3, only the planned postponement of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Avenue Extension (RDY00004) does not qualify as a project exempt from the requirement to demonstrate conformity per the exempt project types listed in 40 CFR §93.126, Table 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 #3, 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 measure identified in the Alaska SIP.

The Interagency Consultation Team met February 9, 2022 to review the contents of the Draft Conformity Determination report, including the review of the most recent monitor data statistics characterizing the Anchorage CO and Eagle River PM10 Limited Maintenance Areas, which is appropriate to update the conformity for the 2019-2022 TIP Amendment #3.

MR. JONGENELEN briefed the Committee on the above-noted amendment.

There were no comments.

MS. POKON moved to approve. MR. TROMBLEY seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

b. TIP Amendment #3 – TIP Tables, Release for 30-day Public Comment Period

BACKGROUND:

An amendment to the AMATS 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is needed to update Table 2 – Roadway; Table 4 - Plans and Studies; Table 5 - Congestion Mitigation Air Quality; and Table 10 – Transit. The updates are listed below.

Table 2 – Roadway

- Update Table 2 to add \$2.0M for design funding in FY2022 for project RDY00003 Spenard Road Rehabilitation; move \$2.0M in design funding in FY2022 for project RDY00004 - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Avenue Extension to Beyond FY2022; move \$1.25M in design funding in FY2022 - Potter Drive Rehabilitation for project RDY00007 to Beyond FY2022; and move \$4.125M in design funding in FY2022 for project RDY00008 - Transportation Demand Management Projects to beyond FY2022.

Table 4 – Plans and Studies

- Update Table 4 to add \$150K CRRSA funding for project PLN00006 - 92nd Avenue Extension Reconnaissance Study in FY2022. This funding is outside the AMATS allocation and will not impact fiscal constraint.

Table 5 – Congestion Mitigation Air Quality

- Update Table 5 to add \$1.495M to project #CMQ00005 in FY2022 and add \$3.879M to project CMQ00007 - Capital Vehicles in FY2022.

Table 10 – Transit

- Update Table 10 to update Beyond 2022 funding for project #19658 - Preventative Maintenance (5307), to reflect the correct amount; add \$4.785M to project #19634 - Track Rehabilitation (5307) in FY2020; add \$700K to project #31091 - Radio and Communication System (5307) in FY2020; add \$1.475M to project #19635 - Bridge Rehabilitation in FY2020; add \$3.0M to project #19635 - Bridge Rehabilitation in Beyond 2022; add \$285K to project #33245 - Facility Rehabilitation (5307) in FY2020; add \$300K to project #19634 - Track Rehabilitation (5337) in Beyond 2022; and add project numbers to Signal and Detector System (5307) and Facility Rehabilitation (5307).

MR. JONGENELEN explained the details of TIP Amendment #3 noting that the Technical Advisory Committee reviewed this amendment and support their recommendation to release it for a 30-day public comment period with no changes.

There were no comments.

MR. TROMBLEY moved to approve. MS. POKON seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

Assembly Member Weddleton arrived at 1:41 p.m.

c. Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) 2050

MR. JONGENELEN briefed the Committee on the MTP 2050 update.

Project consultants, VAN LE, BEN COLEMAN, and TARYN OLESON-YELLE with R&M Consultants presented the Performance Measures and Project Criteria and responded to questions.

1. Performance Measures – Release for 30-day Public Comment Period

Goals and Objectives for the 2050 MTP have been developed and refined based on public input. To support those goals and objectives, performance measures have been drafted. Performance measures aim to make all objectives measurable, allowing progress and performance to be tracked over time. Specific targets for these performance measures will be determined following performance measure approval, and the determination of who, when, and how often applicable data will be collected and reported has been established.

Assembly Member Constant arrived at 1:43 p.m.

MR. COLEMAN provided a PowerPoint Presentation.

The following was asked by Assembly Member Weddleton with responses in *Italic*.

- (JW) Referred to Goal 6 and asked for clarification that those shown in the Objectives (white) column are federal goals or could they be any source? It seems there would have been some federal goals for advancing equity for those shown in the Performance Measures (blue) column.
- (BC) *Not in terms of the performance measures that are established in law. These are previously set by AMATS. He pointed out in Goal 5 that emissions reductions, carbon monoxide and PM10 (dust) are established federal measures, but those in Goal 6 are local.*
- (JW) With regard to Goal 1B-3 “Incorporate nature-based solutions”, he asked for some examples.
- (BC) *Improving a larger greenbelt buffer. Another example would be, in terms of permeability, having a concrete jungle space with a lot of pavement. One of the big problems with that is the location of water runoff, which creates storm water runoff impacts, unless you incorporate green solutions. If a project has a greenbelt, you are able to absorb more of the water on-site.*

2. Project Criteria - Release for 30-day Public Comment Period

The main component of the 2050 MTP is a fiscally constrained list of recommended transportation projects for the AMATS area. To develop that final list, projects must be identified, analyzed, and prioritized based on need, anticipated outcome, and fiscal constraints. The public and agency stakeholders will provide AMATS with conceptual projects they would like to see in the AMATS area between now and 2050 (coming this spring). Those projects will be evaluated using the draft Project Prioritization Criteria.

MR. COLEMAN provided a PowerPoint Presentation.

MR. JONGENELEN noted that the Technical Advisory Committee did review the documents and wanted to recommend changes, but staff advised them to submit their changes during the public comment period allowing staff adequate time to review those changes and determine what kind of effects they would have on the performance measures. He also recommended the Policy Committee submit comments during the comment period as a committee, not individually.

There were no public comments.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEDDLETON moved to release for public comment. ASSEMBLY MEMBER CONSTANT seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

d. Northern Lights Sidewalk Project – Alaska DOT&PF**BACKGROUND:**

The AMATS 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) #NMO00008 Anchorage Areawide Pathway and Trails Pavement Replacement program is intended to fund projects, listed in Table 7, that replace pavement for pathways/trails throughout the AMATS area. This program is similar to the #RDY00012 Pavement Replacement Program for roadways in Table 2. These programs are intended to fund smaller dollar pavement replacement projects, but some projects will require more funding than what the program was intended to cover. In the past, projects from #RDY0012 that exceed this amount were pulled out of the program and put into the TIP as a separate project. This keeps the Pavement Replacement Program within the funding percentages outlined in AMATS' Policies and Procedures. The Northern Lights Boulevard – Minnesota Drive to Seward Highway is one such project.

As outlined in the DOT&PF memorandum, this project can provide significant improvements to the non-motorized users along this corridor but needs more funding. The amount needed, even at the preliminary planning level estimate, will exceed the amount typically used for sidewalk/pathway Pavement Replacement Program projects. To ensure it receives the full amount of funding needed, it is recommended that this project be made a standalone project in the 2023-2026 TIP and receive the full amount of funding listed in the DOT&PF memorandum.

MR. JONGENELEN briefed the Committee on the project. He noted that staff and the Technical Advisory Committee are asking the Policy Committee to approve this project as a standalone, fully funded, non-motorized project in Table 3 of the 2023-2026 TIP.

The following questions and comments were made by the Committee with responses noted in *Italic*.

(JW) What is the full project dollar amount?

(AJ) *We are recommending fully funding the \$5.0M shown in the memorandum.*

(AT) Is this the project that originally showed only \$800,000?

(WJ) *Yes, it is.*

(CC) If this is programmed into the 2023-2026 TIP, does it mean the construction horizon is really 2026? Are we talking about a 4-year delay?

(L. Bowland) *He did not have a schedule established based on the scope that is being discussed here spanning it from \$800,000 to, obviously, very constrained. He can forward that information to the Committee as to where this project will be expected to be delivered.*

- (CC) As long as he has lived in Anchorage, people have been complaining about trying to navigate the sidewalks of Northern Lights Boulevard, so four more years seems like a lot of pain. It would be nice to have a little more insight.
- (WJ) *Believed DOT&PF will be able to do the project development on the front end, and the money we are talking about is the construction phase funding. With the number of right-of-way actions that were involved in this project and the utility agreements and relocations, if we can keep moving forward on it now, you will be able to reasonably see construction in that 2023-2025 timeline, but we have to get the right-of-way in plan now.*
- (CC) The \$800,000 that has been programmed can go toward the design phases?
- (WJ) *That is correct.*
- (AJ) *The \$800,000 is really for the design efforts. They realized they were going to need a lot more to fully fund everything that is wanting to be done. What is being asked here is to separate it out and then specify the right-of-way amount and the construction utilities amounts, and when that will be happening, so it is not really a delay.*
- (CC) Not delaying the \$800,000 to the \$5.0M, he thinks, is reasonable.
- (JW) We are just putting this project out there, but it is being studied. It could be that the right-of-way acquisitions are so much and so burdensome to the businesses that it would not happen. Is that a possibility?
- (WJ) *No. In a world of authority and necessity to do with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements, we have sufficient authority and the necessity to do right-of-way acquisitions, as needed. Typically, the impacts to adjacent property owners (driveway and sidewalk changes) are not necessarily taking out parking areas that would reduce the parking availability to a non-acceptable standard.*
- (JW) Sometimes you just take a couple of feet, but now you have thrown off all the parking and the property owner loses a whole tier of parking.
- (WJ) *As Assembly Member Constant mentioned, the sidewalks on Northern Lights Boulevard are very narrow and very challenging with several large power poles in the middle of the sidewalks, so there is a lot of work that needs to be done there. If you look at Benson Boulevard, kind of in contrast and created much later, and how much width and space you have there, it is a completely different ballgame. He thinks \$5.0M is reasonable for that level of utility relocation and effort...it is a good cost benefit.*
- (AT) Sometimes in private development the municipality requires the developers to bury powerlines. Would this be a requirement in this project, as we move utility poles?

(WJ) The utility companies collect an undergrounding fee, and they aggregate that fee. He did not know how they plan out the phasing of those underground transmissions. That is something we could coordinate with the utilities to see if that possibility would exist and get the large power poles out of the way. Often times the utilities do not like to underground the transmission mains but are okay with undergrounding the distribution lines.

CHAIR JUNGE asked for public comments.

LINDSEY HAJDUK noted that the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) has had discussions that the Northern Lights Project should go beyond just pavement replacement and be made fully ADA compliant. She was glad to see that this recommendation has come forward. BPAC also agreed there should be a lane reduction, which would take much longer, but she wanted to share that she supported this change for progress in the meantime.

MR. TROMBLEY moved to approve. MS. POKON seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

6. PROJECT AND PLAN UPDATES

a. Highway Safety Corridors within an Urban Environment -DOT&PF

SCOTT THOMAS with DOT&PF provided a PowerPoint Presentation.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEDDLETON noted that he and Assembly Members Constant and Zaletel would be happy to work with Mr. Thomas on fine-tuning some of the language. He pointed out that when reading the *Downtown Anchorage Plan*, comments from DOT&PF mentioned looking at doing a safety corridor downtown. That idea may be in one of the municipality's plans eventually.

There were no public comments.

7. GENERAL INFORMATION

MR. JONGENELEN reminded the Committee that the Seward – Glenn Planning Environmental Linkage (PEL) comment period closes February 28.

8. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

CHAIR JUNGE noted that Anchorage Police Department (APD) submitted a request to discontinue the continuous lighting curfew along the C Street Corridor pursuant to some fatalities between 36th Avenue and Tudor Road with all the hotel development in that area.

DOT&PF reevaluated the continuous lighting curfew rationale and the cost savings behind that with the implementation of all the LED programs we have instituted and found the cost savings are much less now than they used to be for lighting curfews. In addition to that, the new development along those corridors is fairly significant with all the hotels and other development along C Street. We reviewed the entire program region-wide, including Minnesota Drive, C Street, and the Sterling Highway in Soldotna, that fell under lighting curfews. All of those lighting curfews have now been discontinued as a result of the Police Chief's request. He believed the lights were being turned off between 1:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. but will now be on whenever it is dark. Everything is now LED and we are still implementing a few LED timing systems, but for the most part, that program not only has been almost fully implemented, but has completely paid for the cost of the program through the cost-savings.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER CONSTANT pointed out that the C Street bridge to Government Hill continues to operate at less than half capacity with its lighting.

CHAIR JUNGE added that Kirk Warren has been hired as Maintenance and Operations Chief beginning March 7. With regard to COVID related issues, we are recalling all DOT employees back to work effective March 14. The Governor stood down on his initiatives back in mid-January, but we extended it due to the fairly high numbers that were present in January.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

10. ADJOURNMENT

MR. TROMBLEY moved to adjourn. ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEDDLETON seconded.

Hearing no objections, the meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m.