

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

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

**May 26, 2022
1:30 PM**

*This meeting is available for viewing at
[Transportation Planning / AMATS Meetings \(muni.org\)](http://Transportation Planning / AMATS Meetings (muni.org))*

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

Policy Committee Members Present:

Name	Representing
Todd Vanhove*	Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF)
Adam Trombley	Director, MOA Community Development
Emma Pokon	Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), Air Quality
Meg Zaletel	MOA/Municipal Assembly
Forrest Dunbar	MOA/Municipal Assembly

Also in attendance:

Name	Representing
Aaron Jongenelen	MOA/Planning Department
Christine Schuette	MOA/Planning Department
Joni Wilm	MOA/Planning Department
Jon Cecil	MOA/Planning Department
Craig Lyon*	MOA/Planning Department
Sean Baski	DOT&PF
Luke Bowland*	DOT&PF
John Pekar	Kinney Engineering
James Starzec	DOT&PF
Steven Rzepka	DOT&PF
Van Le	R&M Consultants
Kathryn Wenger	Federal Highways Administration (FHWA)
Daniel Volland	
Emily Weiser	Bike Anchorage
Adeyemi Alimi	ADEC
Laurie Cummings	HDR
Cheryl Richardson	
Ann Rappoport	
Jamie Acton*	MOA/Public Transportation Department (PTD)
Bart Rudolph	MOA/PTD
Mark Begich	
Evan Anderson	Staff to Representative Zack Fields
Nancy Pease	
Martin Hansen	

John Weddleton
Joel Cladouhos

**AMATS Technical Advisory Committee Member*
***Designated Assembly Alternate*

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

ACTING CHAIR VANHOVE called the meeting to order at 2:31 p.m. Adam Trombley, Community Development Director, 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

ASSEMBLY MEMBER DUNBAR moved to approve the agenda. MS. POKON seconded.

Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – April 28, 2022

ASSEMBLY MEMBER DUNBAR moved to approve the minutes. MS. POKON seconded.

Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved.

5. ACTION ITEMS

- a. **2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Comment Response Summary and 2023 TIP Interagency Draft**

MR. JONGENELEN noted that the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is the AMATS area project plan for transportation improvements. It is the investment program consisting of capital improvements to the metropolitan transportation system. The TIP is the means of implementing the goals and objectives of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Additionally, the TIP process is used to satisfy the public participation process of the Program of Projects (POP) that is required in U.S.C. Section 5307.

The AMATS TAC recommended approval of the Comment Response Summary and development of the Interagency Consultant draft version with the following changes:

- RDY000018 – 3rd Ave Signals and Lighting Upgrade – change the termini to E Street to Cordova Street
- Move Dale Street Non-Motorized project to the Roadway Table and fund a roadway upgrade project and Non-Motorized Improvements.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL referred to the added projects, Lois Drive and Folker Street, that says to upgrade those to current collector standards and asked what traffic data is being used because she knew we have another project that is meant to upgrade our traffic data overall. She also asked for more information about the intersection of those projects and how they might work together, or if the other two are already based off of existing data. Mr. Jongenele and she had discussed earlier a project that updates the Household Travel Survey data.

MR. JONGENELEN believed these projects are based on existing data. When discussing this with the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA), the MOA said it was based on the data they have today. AMATS' last Household Travel Survey was back in 2012 and the next survey has not yet started, so it would not be based on that information at this time.

MR. TROMBLEY asked for clarification that one of the reasons to upgrade Folker Street is that it provides access to the UMED District.

MR. JONGENELEN replied, yes, that is correct. It has a lot of benefits because it will also match up with the 42nd Avenue project that the MOA is looking at. There are already nice non-motorized facilities located on either side connecting to Tudor and 40th Avenue, so it does help make that connection.

ACTING CHAIR VANHOVE asked for public comments.

MARK BEGICH referred to the 5th Avenue Signals and Lighting Upgrade regarding the two items knocked off the list there and asked what the original estimate was and what the new estimates are going to be, or do they know? The signals and especially the lighting on 5th Avenue is basically junk and should be repaired and upgraded, not just from C Street but from Gambell Street all the way down. If you are eliminating, then you do not know what the differential cost is. If the Assembly would just pass the Downtown Redevelopment Plan and their long-term view of how downtown should be, but if you take out the project that has the backbones of downtown, then you will never get moving forward on the plan the Assembly did just approve. He is a little concerned that you do not know the cost or have a new plan of action because in reality this downtown should match up with what the Assembly just passed as their long-term plan for downtown. Was that taken into account in this project? He understood that the \$550,000 is to look at street and traffic movement and reexamine downtown, which he appreciated, but why not put some of this money at least the next couple years out and anticipate for it. These lights are in need of repair and are great nests for the seagulls.

MR. JONGENELEN explained that we do not know because we stopped looking at the project. He would have to look back to retrieve that information. Although, there is another project, the Downtown Traffic Engineering Study, that is going to be looking at downtown as a whole to make recommendations on roadway upgrades and changes.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER DUNBAR asked the following questions with responses noted in *Italic*.

- (FD) In reference to Mr. Begich's suggestion to move it out a couple of years, is that something we can do? What is the effect of this deletion? Does it push to a later plan? How could we effectuate pushing the project rather than eliminating it, or do we not need to?
- (AJ) *In order to keep the projects in the TIP, we would have to find the funding and these tables would have to be looked at because we are fiscally constrained. The funding would have to come from current projects or other projects would have to be delayed. We can keep it in here, but what project is going to be delayed or not moved forward in order to do that? In terms of carrying it forward to future projects, it is not automatically carried forward if it is not in the current TIP, but it can be looked at and renominated in future TIP cycles.*
- (FD) That is significantly different than the capital plans the Assembly works with where we specify the year and do not have to have a hard and fast knowledge of where the money is and have sort of theoretical dollars at the end of our five-year plans.
- (AJ) *During the first four years of our program we have to know where the funding is going to come from. We need to wait for the 3rd and 4th Avenue projects to move forward to get a better idea of its true cost. Previous work was done with non-federal funds and when bringing in federal funds you tend to double or triple the cost and double the timeframe it takes to complete it.*
- (FD) The Assembly received a number of comments and had a number of discussions about the Academy/Vanguard project. How seriously did the folks that removed those take the idea of not moving forward with Academy/Vanguard, given the pretty intense neighborhood opposition?
- (AJ) *Academy/Vanguard was added in by the Policy Committee, specifically, Mr. Weddleton was responsible for adding that back into the TIP. That project is also underway and has already obligated federal funds, so any federal funds expended to date would have to be paid back by the Municipality of Anchorage, if that project were stopped.*

MR. BEGICH recalled times rearranging AMATS' list. For example, DeArmoun Road was taken off the list and did not have to pay back the federal money. What projects had to be paid back to the federal government that had been removed, delayed, or postponed past the four years? That is always the threat. He thinks there are opportunities for the Committee to reexamine that, as they did when he was Mayor. He wanted to put that on the table because, otherwise, the minute you put a project on this list (unless you are willing to pay back the money according to the statement), then no project can move forward or be eliminated, which does not make sense.

EMILY WEISER, Bike Anchorage, noted that they had submitted a variety of comments on the TIP, but the response from the project team on the Fireweed Lane Rehabilitation (RDY00001) was that our comments would be forwarded to the design team for consideration. We are worried about the language that is currently in the TIP and whether that might be a little bit too restrictive in terms of what the project team will actually be able to consider at the design phase. The language she is looking at is in the Fireweed project description that says, "...the project will include a road diet, changing Fireweed from 4 lanes to 3 lanes (2 with a center turn lane)." That language seems really specific where it will be three lanes with a center turn lane and there is no option, and no flexibility seems to be apparent in there. We are very supportive of reducing it from four lanes, but we wondered if it would be possible to change that language to say there would be a maximum of three lanes, which would then allow the design team to consider other options, such as reducing it to two lanes instead of three. She asked that the Committee consider changing that language or recommend a change to that language to say, "a maximum of three lanes", instead of three lanes exactly.

NANCY PEASE noted that public comments on the draft TIP have repeated deep frustration that the public is speaking into a black hole. Staff processes the comments into a chart, but comments are often misinterpreted. There are also almost no significant or substantive revisions to the draft TIP in response to comments. Testimony heard today is not last minute, it is part of the frustrated public's ongoing attempt to be heard. She thanked Mr. Begich for his comment that, in his experience, project money never had to be paid back. One other misunderstanding that is often put out there is threats of delays and more public comment periods if you make revisions today. Our reading is that AMATS does not have to declare a new public comment period for the TIP, unless revisions to the TIP raise new issues that the public could not have foreseen. The public is talking today about longstanding issues and projects. First, she would like the Committee to add to the TIP an integrated land use and transportation plan. Methods to integrate land use planning and transportation budgeting are needed so that infrastructure truly supports infill and redevelopment and does not induce traffic. Secondly, add a vehicle emissions study. We need methods to monitor and model vehicle emissions to ensure public health, both short- and long-term. Unless we monitor vehicle emissions, we cannot effectively manage them. Thirdly, A and C Streets, add a redesign study for Complete Streets for these two corridors. Currently, wide lanes and high-speed traffic are deterring infill and redevelopment and are posing severe hazards to all modes of travel. We need the same kind of design study for I and L Streets. Every great city has a thriving downtown. A walkable downtown will spur residential development and will revive our historic commercial and cultural centers. Finally, the 92nd Avenue and Scooter Underpass announced to a \$200M mile along the Seward Highway and the 92nd Extension. You can delete this unneeded underpass, which will only induce more driving trips and degrade a low-income residential area. This underpass was so close to the Dimond Boulevard Interchange that it needs a federal highway waiver and is a dinosaur project hatched two decades ago when the Dimond Center was the only regional mall in town. Now we have these that are much more acute elsewhere. If you cannot delete the Academy/Vanguard collector roads, then push them to the out years and see if we cannot use that underpass as a non-motorized shortcut, not a vehicular shortcut that will induce traffic. Some money may have already been spent but it is a drop-in-the-bucket compared to the \$18M in collector roads for that short section through the neighborhoods and, again, it will degrade the neighborhood. She has given two project suggestions that you could delay or downsize to free up some money for these much-needed other projects that fit our local goals and priorities.

BILL HERMAN has lived in Alaska since 1975, in Anchorage since 1998, and lived in the Valley for a while, and was a part of the commuter system with the MOA vans. He was also involved in the Anchorage Climate Action Plan. It was a good plan but there were grandiose goals and very few interim steps and measurements and concerned that we will not have an incremental effort to get to the lofty goals we have in that plan. He did work with AMATS when working for the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and is, somewhat, familiar with the process. It does feel like we need to start having plans that talk about reducing emissions, measuring emissions, Greenhouse Gas emissions, and setting some goals so that when we get to 2040, we hit that 50% reduction discussed in the Climate Action Plan for the municipality. We, and everyone else in the world, really need to start having incremental steps towards these goals and measurements and feedback. He mentioned the difficulty he experienced with the website. While on it yesterday and trying to figure out where the meeting was and when it started; he clicked through various places and read that the meeting was from 1:30p to 3:30p and was getting ready to come here at 1:30, but heard from a friend that it was really at 2:30p. He did get an email from Ms. Schuette helping him get squared away on when and where the meeting was taking place, so he decided to attend in person. He clicked on the meeting link for 'today' and was directed to a live meeting with him being the only participant. He had no idea what he was doing or how he was going to get to the meeting; and was confused as to why he was able to get into an active listening place one day before the meeting. AMATS continually asks for public testimony, but he did not see it being very user-friendly. He was happy to see the bicycle routes being put in and other ways of transportation, but thinks we need to have interim goals to measure the emissions and connect the process to have things correlate with each other with less payment and more ways to transport.

ANN RAPPOPORT, Rabbit Creek Community Council Co-Chair, noted that the council had submitted some extensive comments on the TIP. We were a little frustrated that it seems like all of our comments were pretty much ignored. The council talked about the need to delete two projects, specifically the Academy/Vanguard Road area. Mr. Jongenelen had mentioned that some money had already been spent and would have to be returned. One of the things said of those projects is that we did not think there needed to be all the roadwork and they tie into the 92nd Avenue/Scooter Underpass, which we felt needed to be deleted because it is just a super expensive project and is based on numbers from 20 years ago. As far as back as when the Dimond Mall was the only mall in town. What could be done is a pedestrian underpass, but not a huge, motorized underpass. Perhaps the money that has been spent could be put into improving those pedestrian/bike path opportunities without having it be also available for cars. That is a huge change that would save lots of money that could then be put into some of the broader land use studies talked about by others with integrating land use and transportation plans, so we really have a coordinated plan and development for our city, which also leads into a couple of downtown projects. She has lived in Anchorage for over 40 years, worked downtown for more than 35 years and commuted from South Anchorage to downtown for most of that, lived downtown for about seven years, and also walked to work during her early years. Anchorage is not walker friendly. When we say tourism is a huge part of our economy and having a more walkable downtown would help enhance our tourist experiences, as well as the fact that we are starting to develop a lot more housing downtown and mixed buildings, which is great, but we really need to make it an attractive place for people. That is where there needs to be better studies on I and L Streets and the 4th through 6th Avenue areas to make it more

user-friendly. A and C Streets are awful streets to bike on and with all the stores it is a concrete jungle, and a lot could be done to improve that area as well. The council's comments talked about the Anchorage Climate Action Plan, which does not seem to be noted in here at all, so while there is an item about air quality, it does not mention the Climate Action Plan. Those really need to go hand-in-hand. The fleet replacement expansion for AnchorRIDES is great, but what about considering electric vehicles? She was disappointed there was no mention of those, which would help meet the goals of the Anchorage Climate Action Plan as well as the air quality goals of this plan. There was some other discussion about replacing vehicles that just talks about diesel vehicles. We should not keep looking to diesel vehicles but look for electric, cleaner vehicles over time.

GEORGE DONART echoed the frustration of the idea that if you have already spent money on a project, then you have to complete it. That seems like a huge waste of time. He understood that when trying to plan, it is hard if you change a plan all the time. Also, it was not apparent on the AMATS website how to get into this meeting. As far as his substantive comments go, he felt really lucky living near downtown and has lived there for a long time. There are parts of town that are good with good alternative methods of getting around, but as far as north/south there is not a lot of real safe, easy use of anything, other than cars. If we want to be the kind of city that attracts people as tourists or want to move here, we need to offer more alternatives to transportation than we have right now. A single bus frees up about a mile of freeway and certainly does a lot to cut down on both traffic and parking in a place like downtown. He advocated for the Complete Streets Study for the A and C couplet and I and L Streets and integrating land use planning with transportation and budgeting. As our city becomes denser downtown, there is already access parking and it would make more sense to have people utilizing that access parking for buildings and housing and what not, rather than bringing more traffic congestion. It is up to us. We have to do our part if we are going to stop climate change. We have to be focusing on Greenhouse Gas Emissions. If we do not focus on it, we are not going to do anything about it. The things you measure are what you care about, and we really need to be looking at that. We need to be finding a way to cut our emissions and having a Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan is critical.

EVAN ANDERSON, Staff to Representative Zack Fields in the Alaska Legislature, submitted a letter from ten Anchorage Legislators urging a few specific changes to the draft TIP for this year. In addition, he submitted, himself, six or eight nominations to the TIP back in February. Unfortunately, none of which ended up in the final draft. He won't repeat everything in the letter and trusted the Policy Committee members received it. Thank you for this deliberation and for all the work you are putting into this process. To highlight a couple of items in the letter is 1) with regard to the design study for A and C Streets, I and L Streets, 4th and 5th (and potentially 3rd) Avenues that were all identified in the Anchorage Downtown Plan as needing the upgrade to Complete Streets, these were, unfortunately, not all located in the TIP; and 2) prioritize construction of pedestrian facilities on all major roads where they are missing or inadequate. He was glad to see the two deletions and three additions that do include pedestrian facilities on a couple of major arterial and connector roads, and would like to see those continue to be upgraded to Complete Streets that include protected bike lanes as well, so that all users can access those roads; and 3) other commenters had already spoken to funding plans for integrating land use, transportation policies, Greenhouse Gas emissions reductions, deleting the underpass at 92nd Avenue and the neighborhood connector roads at Academy/Vanguard.

He had always been happiest in Anchorage and living where he can walk and bike everywhere he needs to go. His current address is in Chugiak and, while it is beautiful there, he despises driving in and out on the Glenn Highway. If there was any kind of option for him to take Transit or live closer to the urban core more cheaply and more transit accessible housing, he would jump on it in a heartbeat. He thinks there are a lot of people, in or around Anchorage, who feel the same way. The \$1.27B we are spending on our roads could realistically be spent on pedestrian and bike infrastructure, so that all users, not just those of driving age and licensed to drive and have the economic resources to get around by car. Not just prioritizing one user group, but all.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL moved to refer this for interagency consultation.
ASSEMBLY MEMBER DUNBAR seconded.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL moved to amend the document for the corridor study to include I and L Streets. ASSEMBLY MEMBER DUNBAR seconded.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL noted that the Committee heard about the importance of I and L Streets to the public when studying Minnesota Drive as a corridor. That corridor connects with downtown at I and L Streets. It just makes good sense to include those in the study as it is being put forward. Particularly, about how the traffic moving in and out of downtown along Minnesota intercepts with the residential areas and as it moves into town. She thinks that makes it a more complete study.

In response to Mr. Trombley's question that there would not have to be a corresponding increase to the cost since we are increasing the length, MR. JONGENELEN did not believe so, but thought it was reasonable to assume the \$700,000 shown can accommodate that. He would need clarification of what would be the termini. Do we stop at 3rd Avenue or 5th Avenue, or the length for I and L Streets? Would it be the entire length?

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL revised her amendment to read, "The document for the corridor study includes I and L Streets and the terminus be to 3rd Avenue." ASSEMBLY MEMBER DUNBAR seconded.

MR. TROMBLEY clarified that we will find the money in the existing budget to extend the project.

AMENDMENT #1

Hearing no objections, the amendment passed.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL moved to amend to retain the 5th Avenue Signalization but remove the funding. ASSEMBLY MEMBER DUNBAR seconded.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL explained that the intent is to keep it in the TIP. If a project falls off the TIP before we find or have the money, it is there and ready and we can plug it back in. It is important that we continue to look at the signalization and keep it on our radar. We would want it to be a carryover project and, if for some reason we cannot find the money in this TIP, we can move it into the next TIP. She felt more comfortable if it were moving forward as a carryover versus having to be renominated in the next process.

MR. TROMBLEY asked what would be the ramifications of that since most of these projects have a dollar amount? Can you keep something in there, but remove the funding?

MR. JONGENELEN explained that if it is a project that is underway and might need additional funding, we keep it in the TIP. If it is a brand-new project with no funding, we cannot do that. You have to be able to show funding for the project because it speaks to fiscal constraint. He further explained that if a project is already underway and needs additional funding, we would have to come back with an amendment to the TIP to find additional funding for that project. If it is a new project, we have to find the funding first to even be able to add it to the program. So, right now, there is no funding to keep these projects in unless we pull it from another project.

MR. TROMBLEY used the O'Malley Road Construction as an example noting that it has all zeroes, meaning the project is underway and is looking for additional funding?

MR. JONGENELEN indicated that it could need additional funding if a cost increase happens. We are keeping it in there as a placeholder because it is already underway. If we need to come back and change those zeroes to actual dollars, we will have to do an amendment that includes the public process informing the public where that funding is coming from.

MR. TROMBLEY clarified that the 5th Avenue Signal project is not underway and because it is not underway, you cannot not have a line item for it since it is a brand- new project.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL asked if it was possible to move that into the fifth year, so it is in a future category without any funding?

MR. JONGENELEN replied that we have never done that so he would have to check with FHWA to determine what impacts that has to our program. It is something we can look at, but he was cautious to agree not knowing what that will mean.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL pointed out that because this is going for interagency consultation, we will have the opportunity to make any changes based on the interagency consultation.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL revised her amendment to read, "To put the 5th Avenue Signalization in the fifth year." ASSEMBLY MEMBER DUNBAR seconded.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL asked for clarification that, if for some reason that cannot happen, we can have that reported back and make the appropriate change prior to approving the TIP. She would prefer to proceed that way instead of figuring it out and coming back and making the change later.

MR. JONGENELEN informed the Committee that when doing the interagency consultation, we provide the TIP for their review to determine what impacts it has on air quality. If we make changes to the list of projects from what was shown to them originally, then it would have to go back for another interagency consultation. If we add or delete projects, we have to redo the consultation process.

MR. TROMBLEY asked what amount of time would be added to something like that? If we kick it out to the fifth year, when we go for interagency review, he assumed the project will not show up on this TIP because it is only going out four years? If Ms. Zaletel's amendment did pass, is there a sheet that shows 2027, or is that just hypothetical?

MR. JONGENELEN noted that it would take two months because the Air Quality Conformity Determination would take one month plus a 30-day review period. We send the interagency consultants the whole document, so they see everything and there is no sheet showing 2027, it is just hypothetical for us. When doing the Air Quality Conformity Analysis, they are really looking at the four years of the actual fiscal constraint. He did not know if there is a problem with showing it in the fifth year since it is not something we have ever done before but would have to reach out to FHWA and EPA to see what their thoughts are. Projects can always be added to the TIP later through an amendment process if we find the funding.

In response to Assembly Member Dunbar's question if we could put it in for \$1 or a nominal amount, MR. JONGENELEN stated, no, because when putting it in this program you are telling FHWA that you are intending to move forward with that project. It is specifically not allowed to do that kind of gamesmanship with the program.

Hearing objections to the amendment, Acting Chair Vanhove called for a vote.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL responded to Assembly Member Dunbar's request for clarification on whether to proceed given the discussion and replied, yes, she would like to proceed with the amendment.

AMENDMENT #2

YAY

Assembly Member Dunbar

Assembly Member Zaletel

NAY

Mr. Trombley

Ms. Pokon

Acting Chair Vanhove

The amendment failed, 2 to 3.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL moved to amend Table 8 (Project NHS0004) for the 92nd Avenue/Scooter Avenue project to delete the second sentence that reads, "Project includes an underpass to connect 92nd Avenue (west of the Seward Highway) with Academy Drive (east of the Seward Highway)." ASSEMBLY MEMBER DUNBAR seconded.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL understood this project is partly underway, particularly the Seward Highway portion. The issue really does come from the underpass at 92nd Avenue. Not only is it opposed by the neighborhood and is very expensive, but it also then creates the follow along project needed at Academy/Vanguard. This really feels like the two projects coupled together are not the highest and best use of a fiscally constrained program when there are so many competing demands; and we are really at a point where we need to be looking forward and much more in a multimodal fashion. Those funds could be much better reallocated to other projects that more accurately reflect the comments the Assembly put forward on the last MTP, and what we have heard from the public.

MR. TROMBLEY commented that, with this amendment, obviously the dollar amount would change substantially. Would there need to be a correlating reduction in the \$105M and what would that cost be?

MR. JONGENELEN explained that the tables beyond Table 6 are not part of AMATS' allocation, the AMATS Policy Committee only has two options to either accept the projects as given or say no to them. AMATS does not have the ability to make changes recommended in this amendment because they are DOT&PF projects as they have it in the STIP and it is their funding being put towards it, not AMATS.

MR. TROMBLEY asked for clarification that the amendment cannot be made. The amendment could be to remove the project in total or say nothing and it moves forward.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL asked for a project update and if construction had already started or is it still in the design phase?

SEAN BASKI with DOT&PF noted that the project is currently 99% complete on the design and we are looking to go to construction in 2023. We are finalizing the last small details.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL **withdrew** her amendment. ASSEMBLY MEMBER DUNBAR **withdrew** his second.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ZALETEL thanked staff for their considerable efforts and the public for their thoughtful comments. With regard to the request for an A and C Street corridor study, she thinks it is really important and it is on her radar. If we are going to move forward with a corridor study, it has to go all the way south to Tudor Road because A and C Streets also play such an integral part in how traffic moves and with the walkability and accessibility of Midtown. It is a really great idea and wished we could find the funding. Right now, she knew a lot of the corridor studies are funded with CRRSAA (Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act), which does not require a match. If the opportunity arises, she really hopes we could look to fund a corridor study. It would be very complimentary to the Tudor, Northern Lights, Benson, and Minnesota studies and complete the package. She did acknowledge that, right now, we do not have the funding in this program to do that and it would require a little over nine percent match by DOT&PF.

Assembly Member Dunbar had the following questions with responses noted in *Italic*.

- (FD) With regard to the Academy/Vanguard language that reads, "...improve and align Academy Drive and Vanguard Drive west of Abbott Road...", he remembered that when discussing what portion the municipality would cover, it kind of branches. Some goes north to Abbott Road, and some goes south into the neighborhood. Does this project cover the southern portion as well?

Sean Baski The Academy/Vanguard project has a T-intersection off of Abbott Road. Vanguard is the north/south road coming off of Abbott Road. Academy is east/west that ties into the frontage road, Brayton Drive. Academy/Vanguard project is a connection between Academy and Vanguard that ties west into the Seward Highway.

- (FD) This is all driven by this new, sort of punching Academy through. When coming from west of New Seward and driving along Academy east, the road has a T-intersection with one way going to Abbott and one way going into the neighborhood, why do we assume everyone is going to turn left?
- (SB) *The main traffic draw would be a movement through that. The Municipality of Anchorage advanced the project up to about 75% complete and looked at the needs of the traffic through that space with the assumption that the Seward Highway undercrossing would connect Scooter to Academy. With that assumption, the MOA based all their volumes off of their models and interpretations of what would occur.*
- (FD) If you take a right, you go south to Independence? That is a lot of the concerns of the neighborhood. Is there any money in this project to deal with traffic that might go south to Independence driven by the State's punching through Academy?
- (SB) *Eventually it will connect to Independence. He can speak to what he understood with the MOA project in that there were potential options for including something, but once it became federalized, AMATS only had the connection of Academy/Vanguard, and no additional improvements were part of the scope further south along Vanguard.*
- (FD) If there is increased traffic along Vanguard and Independence, the MOA meets the bond for it basically?
- (SB) *As scoped, the current project that is there does not include anything. Some other mechanism would have to be in place.*
- (FD) On the A and C Couplet Study (one of the frequent comments we received) two projects were deleted and three were added. Why was that not one of the three added? How far up the list is it to be added? If you had a little bit more money, would it have been the fourth project added?
- (AJ) *The study, itself, was not nominated as part of the process. What was nominated was a reconstruction of A and C, the actual construction project. It was scored and ranked up there, but when the scoring committee met, they recognized it had not been reviewed as part of the MTP model. Projects that are going to have an impact on our network, such as lane reduction, we review as part of the MTP model so we can see the entire impacts on the overall network. Since A and C was not, staff recommended it be looked at with the current 2050 MTP model update before moving forward with the project.*
- (FD) Some of the public comments were to do a study, but you have the modeling and the actual project. Is there something in the middle where you do a study like that?
- (AJ) *You can do a study now. But if you were to add a study into the TIP now, where would the money come from?*

(FD) So you are saying that the idea of a study was not scored and not even evaluated versus these other projects?

(AJ) *No, it was not. We did not hear about a study until shortly before the TAC meeting last week from a number of public individuals commenting on this study. Specifically asking for it as a study versus what was nominated.*

Hearing no objections, the motion passed, as amended.

**b. 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #3
Air Quality Conformity Determination**

MR. JONGENELEN informed the Committee that the Destination UMED (More Travel Choices, More Opportunities) Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Study is a recommended action of the UMED District Plan (2016). It will define a policy framework and craft an actionable toolkit to advance realistic implementation of a TDM in the UMED District to reduce traffic congestion, improvement mobility choices and equitable access, and support economic development for the next decade.

Assembly Member Zaletel left the meeting at 3:40 p.m.

There were no comments.

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

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

c. 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #3

MR. JONGENELEN stated that AMATS is the federally recognized Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which is responsible for planning the transportation network within the Municipality of Anchorage. AMATS has proposed Amendment #3 to the 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to modify the fiscal programming schedule for three roadway projects, one Transportation Demand Management (TDM) 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.

MR. TROMBLEY noted that back in late 2020 or early 2021 the city, at the time, was not interested in being a part of the Point Woronzof study. The Airport Director reached out to him recently asking if we would be interested in this and he replied that we are absolutely interested. Since that affects the Coastal Trail, would that need to go into the TIP? A core study has to happen (but not right away). Is that something we should amend in the TIP now or later?

MR. JONGENELEN explained that if it is utilizing federal funds, yes, it will need to be in the TIP. If not, then it would not necessarily have to be in the TIP, unless FHWA says

otherwise with the cold storage facility. Making an amendment or a change of that significance right now means that we would have to restart our whole process, for this amendment, that we have already spent about five months on. It would have to be put back out for public comment, redo the air quality, and go back before the Assembly. If it is federal funds, we can look and see if it needs to be in the TIP. FAA would not be required in this. It would only be if the airport had some FTA (Federal Transit Authority) or FHWA funding.

There were no public comments.

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

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

6. PROJECT AND PLAN UPDATES

a. Downtown Trails Connection Project Update

JOHN PEKAR with Kinney Engineering and Van Le with R&M Consultants provided a PowerPoint Presentation.

ACTING CHAIR VANHOVE asked for public comments.

EMILY WEISER, Bike Anchorage, referred to where the proposed project goes along Ship Creek that there is currently a dirt foot-trail that goes underneath the railroad bridge and the railroad parallels Small Boat Launch Road. At a very high, high tide that trail is entirely flooded. Will that be addressed with this project making sure that stays above waterline at all times? Second question is if the existing Coastal Trail would stay where it is and still connect up to 2nd Avenue with this project?

MR. PEKAR replied, yes, the correct concept for that area and this project is that we would be constructing something similar to the Chester Creek Trail that goes underneath C Street. It has a concrete view section to prevent (when the water level rises on Chester Creek) it from overtopping into the pathway. We are proposing a similar structure for undercrossings. If it is going to be a pathway with bicyclists underneath these structures, then we will need to go deeper than the existing dirt pathways. That is a pinch point in the design of this project. In response to the second question, he noted that this project is not proposing any changes to that segment of the trail.

GEORGE DONART expressed that he uses the Chester Creek Trail quite often and has seen a lot of problems with the C Street underpass. What could be done differently here to not end up with a lot of flooding and ice jamming along Ship Creek, if it is going to be below the level of high tide? Why was this route chosen rather than the 2nd Avenue route that goes next to the Railroad Depot?

MR. PEKAR pointed out that they will have to look at a number of factors. Basically, they will try to make the height of that wall adequate so that, during high tides and flooding activity, they do not get overtopping. He did expect there is going to have to be some type of

compromise made with extreme events that will overtop that facility, and that will be a compromise to be discussed further as this project progresses. This route is currently proposed primarily because it meets the needs of not having any “at grid” crossings. Some of the other previously investigated options all involved “at grid” crossings. The goal of this project is to get a continuous pathway to where we are not impacting the railroad’s operations. It is more to do with public safety that we are after by eliminating those crossings. For that reason, alternatives that had “at grid” crossings were not considered.

MS. WEISER mentioned Mr. Donart’s comment regarding snow and ice under C Street and asked if this section would be plowed in the winter versus groomed? Ship Creek Trail is plowed and is really accessible and the Coastal Trail is currently groomed. That might also affect what happens at the underpass along Ship Creek.

MR. PEKAR explained that, as a designer, he did not have an answer to that because it is a maintenance and operations activity and would have to be decided as a whole and dedicate their efforts towards either of those activities.

There were no further comments.

7. GENERAL INFORMATION - None

8. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

MR. TROMBLEY received a letter from members of the Alaska State Legislature that says the Anchorage Caucus, but he noticed not every Anchorage Legislator was on there. Since it was sent to several Senators and the Policy Committee, he asked staff to draft a response letter on behalf of the Policy Committee to help educate the Legislators on the process involved with getting projects into the TIP.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

10. ADJOURNMENT

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

Hearing no objections, the meeting adjourned at 3:59 p.m.