

**ANCHORAGE METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
Planning & Development Center
Main Conference Room, 1st Floor
4700 Elmore Road**

**August 12, 2021
2:30 PM**

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

Technical Advisory Committee Members Present:

Name	Representing
Todd Vanhove	Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF), Central Region Planning
Matt Stichick	MOA/Anchorage Health Department (AHD)
Brian Lindamood	Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC)
Jamie Acton	MOA/Public Transportation Department (PTD)
Michelle McNulty	MOA/Planning Department
Luke Bowland	DOT&PF
Steve Ribuffo	MOA/Port of Alaska
Kent Kohlhasse	MOA/Project Management & Engineering (PM&E)
Cindy Heil	Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)

Also in attendance:

Name	Representing
Aaron Jongenelen	MOA/Planning
Christine Schuette	MOA/Planning
Joni Wilm	MOA/Planning
Jon Cecil	MOA/Planning
Brad Coy	DOWL
Renee Whitesell	DOWL
Laurie Cummings	HDR Alaska
Josie Wilson	HDR Alaska
Jim Amundsen	DOT&PF
James Starzec	DOT&PF
Wolfgang Junge*	DOT&PF
John Weddleton*	MOA/Municipal Assembly
Emily Weiser	
Shawn Gardner	DOT&PF
Bart Rudolph	MOA/PTD
Jackson Fox	FAST Planning
Adam Moser	DOT&PF
Michael Lukshin	FHWA

**Policy Committee Member*

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

ACTING CHAIR VANHOVE called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. Kim Carpenter and Shaina Kilcoyne were excused. A quorum was established prior to the arrival of Ms. Heil at 2:33 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

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MR. KOHLHASE moved to approve the agenda. MS. MCNULTY seconded.

Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – July 08, 2021

MS. MCNULTY moved to approve the minutes. MR. KOHLHASE seconded.

Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) Seat Nomination

BACKGROUND:

The AMATS Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee is the citizen's forum for bicycle and pedestrian issues affecting the AMATS area. This group serves to make recommendations about bicycle and pedestrian 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. One of the seats is designated as a Bicycle Organization seat.

MS. WILM briefed the Committee on the recommendation of BPAC appointment, Emily Weiser, to the Policy Committee for approval.

There were no comments.

MS. MCNULTY moved to recommend the approval of Emily Weiser to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to the Policy Committee. MS. HEIL seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

b. Revisions to Alaska Administrative Code for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – BPAC Letter of Support

BACKGROUND:

AMATS staff would like to request review of the Letter of Support for revisions to the Alaska Administrative Code for Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety. The AMATS Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee (BPAC) would like to formally support this initiative by the Fairbanks Area Surface Transportation (FAST) Planning, which seeks to improve safety for non-motorized travel in Alaska.

MS. WILM informed the Committee of FAST's proposed revisions to Title 13 of the Alaska Administrative Code. These are already effective in Anchorage but, for FAST, this letter would help them cover those areas and improve their bicycle and pedestrian safety.

In response to Mr. Kohlhase's question if the appropriate state agencies have reviewed the proposed language, MS. WILM explained that the resolution was passed unanimously on March 17, 2021 by FAST's Planning Policy Board, which consists of the FairbanksNorth Star Borough, City of Fairbanks Mayor, City of North Pole Mayor, Alaska DOT&PF Northern Regional Director, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation Air Quality Division Directory, representatives from the FNSB Assembly, and Fairbanks Community Council.

JACKSON FOX with FAST Planning added that the language included in our proposed revisions to Alaska Administrative Code have been reviewed and we are seeking concurrence from DOT&PF Regional offices, as well as DOT&PF Headquarters. All DOT&PF traffic and safety engineers have looked at this language and offered their modifications. What the Committee is seeing in the packet has entered DOT&PF. The Department of Public Safety has not yet commented on these proposed changes. It is our intent to submit these proposed changes and any Letters of Support or resolutions from other communities throughout Alaska to the Department of Public Safety to initiate their review. We do understand that if they consider these changes, they may make some modifications or revisions to that language.

MS. MCNULTY clarified that the Letter of Support is from BPAC and asked if there was any reason the TAC could not recommend to the Policy Committee to also provide a Letter of Support?

MR. FOX noted that it would be beneficial for the AMATS Policy Committee to weigh-in on this as well.

MR. STICHICK pointed out that the Committee members participating online do not have the supporting handout and asked how recommendations for shared use bike lanes and shared use markings would be incorporated into state law with these changes.

MR. FOX explained that there are mixed feelings about bike lanes and share land use markings. What we have included in the proposed language is adding a provision to allow that as an option for communities to use on their roadways. Currently, the way the Alaska Administrative Code is written and interpreted by DOT&PF, locally and in the Northern Region, does not allow for bike lane or shared lane use markings on roadways. He understood Anchorage pushed for those and, possibly, the shared lane use markings are being

repealed or Anchorage is not doing it any longer, but we do have some interest in our area in getting these lane markings on some low-volume, low-speed roadways where our local governments have expressed interest in trying them out. The provision simply allows the option for that because, currently, there is no option in Administrative Code to put those on state roadways. It does not direct any community to put them on.

MR. STICHICK asked what would prohibit any locality from applying any shared use marking? Would this apply to state owned and maintained roadways?

MR. FOX replied, if referring to city government, that he did not believe there is any prohibition of that in Alaska Administrative Code at this time. And, yes, it definitely would allow the option to be applied to state owned roadways.

MR. STARZEC suggested that any AMATS letter be through the Policy Committee, as all other Committees are advisory to them.

MS. MCNULTY asked for clarification that the intent of Mr. Starzec's comment is that we ask the Policy Committee to provide the Letter of Support.

MR. JONGENELEN pointed out that, traditionally, we ask the Policy Committee to release everything. If it is the Committee's desire, we would draft a letter saying the Policy Committee, after recommendations from BPAC and careful review, supports it. With BPAC supporting it means AMATS supports it and the document would be signed by the Policy Committee's Chair.

MR. STARZEC clarified that that was exactly the intent of his comment.

MR. STICHICK recommended that, if the letter is being redrafted, to include the proposed markings to that section of Administrative Code as attachments to the letter.

There were no public comments.

MS. MCNULTY moved to recommend the Policy Committee consider the recommendation by BPAC and prepare a Letter of Support of the changes presented by FAST. MR. KOHLHASE seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

6. PROJECT AND PLAN UPDATES

a. MTP 101

MR. JONGENELEN provided a PowerPoint Presentation.

The following are questions by the Committee and the public with responses noted in *Italic*.

- (MS) Has FHWA ever complained that the Municipality uses statewide figures that apply only within AMATS boundaries?

- (AJ) *No, our Performance Measures are relatively new, so we are still catching up with reporting them. Part of what is spelled out in federal regulations is that when we support the State's targets, we are supporting whatever target they set. If they have a statewide target, that means we are also supporting that. It is left up to us, as the MPO, to decide how we want to handle it. If we want to set our own target that is specific for our area, we have a lengthy process in showing the data, where we obtained it, getting DOT&PF to review and say it looks good, and then moving forward with setting our own target. That is a lot of intensive work that he did not believe staff was ready for at this time.*
- (JW) We will be getting some data that is relevant, such as the Climate Action Plan. Is that hard to plug in?
- (AJ) *It depends on what kind of target we want to set. Climate Action is difficult because the Climate Action Plan is pretty weak when it comes to actual actions that transportation can take to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It seems to put a lot of the effort and onus on AMATS to come with all the solutions, so it would really depend on what the data says, and then what the Policy Committee and staff decides is our next step forward. It is probably something we will be looking at for the 2050 MTP update because we are working with Shaina Kilcoyne's group on getting that information.*
- J. Amundsen With regard to the Miles of Existing System by Mode slide, does the 166 miles shown in the pathways include Chester Creek and the Coastal Trail, since they are off-road? The numbers look low to him.
- (AJ) *Will have to verify, but he thinks it is correct.*
- J. Wilson With regard to the Level of Service slide, AMATS will be using a different diagnostic or term other than Level of Service. Do you have an idea of what you are going to use and, if not, when would we hear what that might be?
- (AJ) *I cannot say for sure until we start the update. Our thought was maybe using Vehicle Hours of Delay, which is similar to Level of Service but just a different way of looking at it. A Level of Service is delay, just more impacted by smaller basic things at intersections, so we have to be really careful how we use it. Members of the public have expressed that they do not want to see Level of Service because everyone is moving away from Level of Service. We are trying to see what other options are available and that will be part of the MTP Update discussion.*
- J. Weddleton With regard to the Projects and Fiscal Constraint slide, he noted that the new federal infrastructure plan will be five years or more and asked how that would be done.
- (AJ) *Years ago they did a recovery act and it will be similar. Unfortunately, we do not have a lot of information.*

- (TV) *Right now it is anticipated in what we are seeing and reviewing. What we are preparing for is about a 30-40 percent increase in our formula funds alone. Interestingly enough a large portion, the way the Bill is written right now, of those funds will be coming to the State in competitive grants. That is an opportunity because we have not been very successful with that in the State of Alaska.*
- (MS) Would funds with infrastructure investment acts that come from non-traditional departments, such as the Department of Energy or electrical vehicle charging infrastructure necessarily go through AMATS?
- (AJ) *It is so difficult to do that as we would have to look at it on a case-by-case basis. When we do look at available funding, we look at how the State has handled it, where it has gone to, how much has gone to AMATS, and is it something we can reasonably assume will happen again. Will it be one time or happen annually. We will have to be a lot stricter about the State's general funds. The last 2040 MTP was pretty generous in terms of its assumptions, but as we have seen continued no-funding from the State, it is going to be really hard to say that we will get some short-term funding.*
- J. Weddleton Having this posted online is tremendous, but when looking at this you cannot determine timelines. As a suggestion, a note could be added that it would take three years.
- (AJ) *Estimated timelines or a note that, historically, it had taken a certain amount of time to complete the process could certainly be added.*
- (CH) The impact length of time that it takes to do an MTP involves how much time is spent doing a full model update or whether you go through a full goals update. In the past, we did an Interim Update, which said we are going to do an update in this time period and are only going to do some of the steps within it. Then every other year we could redo all the goals and put them out for public comment versus an interim, which would say that we just did the goals and will let them sit for eight years before having to go through the entire goal process again because it does take so much time. A couple of things we did included deciding what the boundaries of the MTP development were and the TAC recommended to the PC what those boundaries would be, then passed a resolution that outlined the timeline of events. That might be something we would want to do again and add into this, given that we have already lost a year.
- (AJ) *That is my plan when we start the 2050 MTP as it will provide everyone a good overall timeline with all the tasks we must do and how long it is anticipated to take. Also, letting them know that even a month delay can result in a 4 to 5-month delay for the rest of the projects meaning we may cut out an entire public comment period, an extra public comment period, or maybe remove something. The Interim 2035 MTP was really nice because all we had to do is just confirm the modeling really had not changed and confirm the fiscal analysis, which bought us a little bit of time. Unfortunately, we cannot do that with this MTP*

update because our modeling year is expiring. Depending on when you set your outer year for the model is when it has to be updated again, and our model year expires in the middle of this MTP update. When we did the 2040 MTP update, we did not go out far enough, but only took it to the bare minimum, so we cannot do an interim update. With this one, he tried to extend it out 10 years to buy some extra time, so maybe the next MTP update can be an interim update that would only take a year or so. Just so everyone is aware, Goals and Objectives, and other things will probably have a reduced timeframe to review them.

(KK) Complimented Mr. Jongenele on a clear and precise presentation.

(MS) Sounds like you can have an Interim MTP for any number of reasons beyond just a fresh update for the transportation model. Is there any possibility that this would still be considered an Interim MTP because we are not updating all the goals this go around? He is just trying to set expectations as to what all we will be addressing this time.

(AJ) *It could be considered that, if that is what makes everyone comfortable. His presentation will include what our expectations are for each of the individual pieces that make up the MTP, including Goals and Objectives.*

(MM) The comprehensive plans and neighborhood plans in Title 21 refer to these as target updates. She suggested calling these target updates making it clearer that we are not updating the entire plan, just certain areas.

7. GENERAL INFORMATION

a. AMATS Q3 Obligation Report

MR. JONGENELEN provided a PowerPoint Presentation.

There were no comments.

8. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

MS. MCNULTY congratulated Brad Coy as the new Municipal Traffic Engineer.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS

10. ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no objections, the meeting adjourned at 3:38 p.m.