

**ANCHORAGE METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Planning & Development Center
Main Conference Room, 1st Floor
4700 Elmore Road**

**October 14, 2021
2:30 PM**

Technical Advisory Committee Members Present:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Brad Coy	MOA/Traffic Engineering Department
Brian Lindamood	Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC)
Todd Vanhove	Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF), Central Region Planning
Luke Bowland	DOT&PF
Cindy Heil	Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)
Matt Stichick	MOA/Anchorage Health Department (AHD)
Shaina Kilcoyne	MOA/Energy and Sustainability
Kent Kohlhase	MOA/Project Management & Engineering (PM&E)
Michelle McNulty	MOA/Planning Department
Jamie Acton	MOA/Public Transportation Department
Steve Ribuffo	MOA/Port of Alaska

Also in attendance:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Craig Lyon	MOA/Planning
Aaron Jongenelen	MOA/Planning
Christine Schuette	MOA/Planning
Jon Cecil	MOA/Planning
Bart Rudolph	MOA/PTD
Jeannie Bowie	Kinney Engineering
Jessi Miranda	Kinney Engineering
Kelly Summers	DOT&PF
Kevin Jackson	DOT&PF
Shawn Gardner	DOT&PF
Sean Holland	DOT&PF
Jim Amundsen	DOT&PF
James Starzec	DOT&PF
Wolfgang Junge*	DOT&PF
Renee Whitesell	DOWL
Kathryn Wenger	FHWA
Adeyemi Alimi	ADEC
Philana Miles	DOT&PF
Steven Rzepka	DOT&PF
Joann Mitchell	

Chris McConnell

Nancy Pease

Taylor Horne HDR Alaska

Josie Wilson HDR Alaska

Laurie Cummings HDR Alaska

**Policy Committee Member*

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

CHAIR COY called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. 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

CHAIR COY introduced himself as the Municipal Traffic Engineer.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MR. VANHOVE moved to approve the agenda. MR. BOWLAND seconded.

Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – August 12, 2021

MR. STICHICK moved to approve the minutes. MR. VANHOVE seconded.

Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) 2050

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 (PIP) 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 review and recommend to the Policy Committee approval of the 2050 MTP Vision Statement, Guiding Principles, and the Public Involvement Plan.

CHAIR COY mentioned that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Policy Committee (PC) meetings did not appear on this schedule, and he assumed the TAC meeting will be targeted prior to public outreach. MR. JONGENELEN explained that any item put out for comment, except for the advertising workshop, will come before the TAC and PC for approval to release it for public comment. For example, the Goals and Objectives in November will be on both the TAC and PC November agendas to release it for public comment.

CHAIR COY added that, with the circumstances of COVID-19, he was excited to see staff owning this and providing so much information online. He also expressed appreciation to the consultant.

MR. STICHICK recommended that at least one of the stakeholder meetings be directed toward the UAA/APU Campus. He did not know the best way to reach them, but since this will affect young people, it would be good to find out their interests. MR. JONGENELEN expressed that not every stakeholder they were going to contact was included in the PIP because, in the past, we have had people comment that we missed someone. We have developed an internal list of all stakeholders. He added that the Anchorage School District (ASD) is giving students in government classes extra credit if they attend public meetings. He would like to reach out to ASD to see if, in the future, this could be an option for us to get some of the younger generation involved early and help them realize the importance of these, even if it is just occasionally, and understand the reason for bonds, or why a project is being done a certain way.

CHAIR COY asked for public comments. The following are questions with responses noted in *Italic*.

NANCY PEASE pointed out that there would only be a two-week review period for Goals and Objectives for the 2050 MTP because AMATS' staff is proposing to fast forward the 2040 Goals and Objectives. There was considerable public comment last time around that was not incorporated with the promise that, this time around, the process would double down and take into consideration certain public comments, particularly the Climate Action Plan and VisionZero. She asked for clarification that the plan is just for a two-week comment period on the Goals and Objectives, and, if so, she suggested that is not nearly enough time. *MR. JONGENELEN replied, yes, that is correct.* MS. PEASE commented that community councils are one forum for people to weigh-in collectively. Other organizations, bike groups, and pedestrian groups would also benefit. Using a 30-day calendar, many of these meet once-a-month, so something like a 60-day comment period would be very helpful, or even a 45-day comment period. Two weeks basically says we do not really care about the councils getting together to work on these. Goals and Objectives take time and discussion, and two weeks is kind of an insult. Sorry to be blunt, but if this going to be a fast forward 2040, then no wonder people drop out of the process.

JOSIE WILSON asked if emails, such as eblasts, were included when doing their advertising on upcoming public events. The schedule did not clearly state whether email eblasts are sent to people as part of that advertising. As a member of the public, if I want to participate in that, then I should receive an email saying it was coming in three weeks, or whenever. Is that part of the plan? *MR. JONGENELEN explained that one of their strategies for this go around is helping to utilize all the tools available. For example, we recently met with the Public Transportation Department to discuss how to advertise on buses, but not necessarily advertise the upcoming meetings because it is complicated with the advertising and the printing, so we want something generic asking the public to sign up to get information. With Christine Schutte's help, we will do a concerted effort to get people to sign up to either the AMATS or constant contact email list we will have available for the MTP because that is where people can find information and provide their comments as a group or an individual. We want people to be more actively involved via our emailing list versus just waiting to see if it is in the newspaper. It requires a lot of effort to advertise in the newspaper, with not the best number of comments returned. We will still have some mainstays, such as Facebook, but we really want to focus on getting people to sign up and be more involved. For those that do not want to participate via email, there are other ways to contact us, such as the AMATS website. As a project team, we are dealing with how best to reach out to those that do not have access to technology. Community councils might have a better idea how to reach out to a specific population that has limited access.*

MS. KILCOYNE spoke to Ms. Pease's comment regarding the 30-day public comment period, noting that staff would be focused on public advertisement, and we could also focus on community councils by making sure they are having that conversation and ensuring they are ready to comment when it happens. *MR. JONGENELEN commented that it is difficult to work around the community councils' schedules for these plans. We have a very tight schedule and limited budget on this project, and it is the community councils' responsibility to be more involved.* MS. KILCOYNE asked if the schedule could be put out now because her community council does not meet until November 7th, and maybe AMATS could get added to that agenda. *MR. JONGENELEN explained that the problem we run into is making sure anything we put out for the public goes before AMATS committees first. Technically, we are not able to release anything to the public on the Goals and Objectives until the TAC approves it. However, we can provide a heads up, once we have the Public Involvement Plan approved, by sending information to the Federation of Community Councils (FCC) or to other groups. The comments that were carried forward and not addressed in the 2040 are being looked at and will be discussed as part of our review process when bringing it forward next month.*

BART RUDOLPH shared the same concern regarding the comments that were passed over last time and how they are going to be addressed this time. He is a member of the project team and just wanted to clarify that the expectation for those comments made during the 2040 MTP will be reviewed and addressed before staff puts out their recommendations for the Goals and Objectives and will already be included in staff's recommendations. He is hoping that the people who commented during the 2040 MTP will not have to submit the same comments this go around but will be able to see how their comments were addressed. *MR. JONGENELEN noted that this is correct. He had mentioned earlier that the comments will be reviewed because the comments were not only on the Goals and Objectives, but more comments were submitted on project specifics in the MTP. The 38 comments not addressed*

adequately enough in the 2040 MTP because we ran out of time, will be reviewed before we put anything out for public comment. He wanted the public to understand that just because they commented on something does not mean a change will necessarily happen to the document, which seems to be a misconception with different community councils.

JOSIE WILSON referred to metrics for success not being for just one big goal and not this is how we will approach it, rather that we want to try to get 50,000 substantive comments and 2,000 engagements between community council leaders. She asked if any thought had been put into what the success looks like for the outcome. *MR. JONGENELEN replied, no, but that is a good point. We are approximately one year behind with the schedule, and this was overlooked, but this is something that can be carried forward for the entire plan. He will present it to the consultants, or it might be something he could work on himself.*

CHAIR COY noted that his neighborhood community council often has working groups when there is a task deadline, and it seems we have enough items here that do have fast turnaround deadlines. If we get the word out to the community councils, then we could recommend that, because of the fast turnaround, they be ready to address it in a quick manner. That might be one approach to ensure the community councils have ample time. He asked for clarification that even if some comments are not received during that timeframe that the comments will still be reviewed over the duration of the project. *MR.*

JONGENELEN replied, yes, that is correct. Our goal for this is to get to a point where we can say this is good enough and move forward. The MTP development is a growing process as we go along, and we are trying to recognize that we need to be flexible on our development of this. As we move forward and receive more comments on criteria, the financials, and the projects, we might find something we missed with a goal or objective. He wants to allow for that time and flexibility, but if we spent 60 days on the Goals and Objectives this go around, then that eats into our time later when people are able to view the entire document, and not have the time to address any comments. There can be some flexibility in the schedule if we think 15 days is too short, but he will have to push back against the 60 or even 45-day because that is far too long for us. It really eats into our ability to move on to the next step, which is criteria development.

CHAIR COY commented that the trade-off of doing a longer time up front is that you have a shorter time at the back. He has seen more feedback from people at the end of a project because they have the bigger picture. With the TAC agenda published, these documents would be available to the public prior to being officially released. *MR.*

JONGENELEN added that any comments or changes recommended by the TAC must go before the PC for approval. If the PC approves it with any changes, we make those changes before it is released to the public. We notice it as a 30-day public comment period, but you really must include the previous month since it is also posted for the TAC, so the public can start reviewing them at that time and submit their comments either at the committee meetings or send their comments in while we are proofing it through the committees. CHAIR COY reiterated that the public could attend the TAC meeting and voice their concerns or ideas in-person.

CHAIR COY referred to the Travel Demand Model and the comment regarding 2019 and that he knew the 2040 model had a 2013 base year. He asked if this model is being updated to have a 2019 base year? *MR. JONGENELEN explained that it will be updated to a 2019 base year. The Seward to Glenn Highway PEL model effort is helping with that. We currently have an RFP out to get a consultant on board to update that MTP model. He further explained that*

the reason our model is so finicky, and we always seem to have to constantly update it is because EPA regulations have requirements for areas of non-attainment; but we are on a Limited Maintenance Plan. The base data used in the model has a 10-year period before it expires. The 2040 model used 2013 data and will expire in 2023, while we are still in the middle of our MTP update, so this will have to be updated, and will expire in 2029. Hopefully, we will not have to update our model for the next MTP update, just update it for Land Use and TAZ allocations, but some of the base information will remain as is. CHAIR COY mentioned that consultants, in using that model for other projects as they are refining MTP projects and implementing, often must do a lot of massaging of specific things using tools like select zone runs and select link runs. Is the new model going to be able to provide some of those additional resources to understand those aspects? MR. JONGENELEN is hoping so, but he can forward any specific questions to the model update project manager. His goal is to do what is called a "Vision Eval", which is like a policy model because one of the problems with our Travel Demand Model is that it is harder to incorporate things like policy level changes, such as parking, pricing, and MTP tasks. The Vision Eval would be a model used to incorporate policy changes at the municipal level to do a VMT (Vehicle Miles Traveled) tax and what that would do to the transportation network; and gives us a more holistic picture of everything without having to fine tune each intersection. It is basically two models that work in sync with each other and have two separate roles that are similar allowing us to look at the whole picture. Whereas, if we were to put forward a policy now, we would have to do so much work on the model just to be able to incorporate how the model is affected that it becomes difficult, time consuming, and costly, so we often do not get to do that. There will be multiple updates and he is not sure how much the model can do above and beyond what it has done in the past.

CHAIR COY asked if everything is on track and ready when we need it for this project? MR. JONGENELEN noted that we have had some significant delays with the MOA Purchasing Department, so the MTP model update has been significantly delayed. He knows AMATS' staff has been trying their best and Purchasing's staff has been trying to help, but there have been some hiccups. We are moving forward as though everything is on track and will adjust the schedule, as needed. Whomever we get on board for the model update will probably be an awesome consulting team and will easily work with staff. Thankfully, the Seward to Glenn Highway project is doing some of the base update and that will keep us moving forward by utilizing some of their information. We cannot use everything because theirs is more localized to the plan area, and we will have to do AMATS-wide ensuring all the TAZ allocations are appropriate for what we need.

CHAIR COY referred to the Downtown Comprehensive Plan update noting that it might be something to look at to see how to incorporate it into AMATS' plans.

There were no public comments.

MS. KILCOYNE moved to recommend to the Policy Committee approval of the 2050 MTP Vision Statement, Guiding Principles, and the Public Involvement Plan. MR. VANHOVE seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

b. 2019-22 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 10 – Transit 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 modification adding that these are minor changes and do not require a public comment period, just a recommendation to the Policy Committee for approval.

There were no comments.

MR. LINDAMOOD moved to approve. MS. ACTON seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

c. 2022-23 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**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 what staff will be doing for the next two years with our planning funds. These are not TIP funds, capital projects, etc., but are planning funds utilized by AMATS staff, Mr. Starzec with DOT&PF, and the Public Transportation Department. The budget does not require a public comment period, but the work program does. Having just received the allocation, we are still determining where to place those dollar figures. The Committee is being asked to recommend the draft 2022-23 UPWP Narrative to the Policy Committee to release it for a 30-day public comment period.

There were no comments.

MR. VANHOVE moved to forward the draft 2022-23 Unified Planning Work Program to the Policy Committee for a 30-day public review. MS. KILCOYNE seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

6. PROJECT AND PLAN UPDATES

MR. LYON mentioned that the AMATS 3rd quarter newsletter is out and can be found on AMATS' website.

7. GENERAL INFORMATION

a. Ocean Dock Road Reconnaissance Study – Kinney Engineering

GALEN JONES with DOT&PF and JEANNIE BOWIE with Kinney Engineering provided a PowerPoint Presentation.

There were no comments.

b. Seward/Glenn Highway Mobility Project – HDR Alaska

TAYLOR HORNE and JOSIE WILSON with HDR Alaska provided a PowerPoint Presentation.

MR. RIBUFFO asked for clarification, when speaking to quarters, if those were federal, state, or the local municipality's quarters. MR. HORNE explained that he was referring to calendar quarters.

MR. JONGENELEN informed the Committee that the 2050 website was blocked for anyone working on future projects. Please contact the municipality and submit a help desk ticket if you want any municipal employee to be able to view the website once it goes live.

There were no public comments.

8. COMMITTEE COMMENT

MR. VANHOVE commented about the IIJA (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act) that ADOT and others have already started distributing what little information they have. The Commissioner is making statewide presentations regarding this information. The anticipation is a large increase in funding for both transportation and other programs. Currently, we are looking at a trillion dollars with \$500 million of that going to USDOT, which filters down to about a 40 percent increase in formula funds to DOT&PF. That would take our annual program from roughly \$550 million per year to over \$770 million per year for the State of Alaska. We are already engaging with DOT&PF executives and Legislators in

making sure we have our portion of the match money in line because of the significant increase. The other portion of this IIJA bill, that we are looking at, is the potential for grants and grant opportunities, which is something the State of Alaska currently does not do a very good job of going after. We are really trying to up our game in developing resources and figuring out how we can obtain secure grants. The Port of Alaska will have \$2 billion for Port grants available. This is not only for ADOT and other DOTs around the nation as some communities, municipalities, and others could be looking at grants and other funding opportunities.

MS. HEIL announced that the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) Clean Air Science Advisory Committee will be holding public and peer review document meetings in November and December of this year and revisiting the PM-2.5 National Ambient Air Quality Standards and are looking at dropping the annual standard from 12 to as low as 8, and the PM-2.5 24-hour standard from 35 to 30. Anchorage does not appear to have a problem with this, but that does not mean it will not happen in the future. Although, Anchorage has had individual years of going above 30 micrograms per cubic meter in which the standard is based on a 3-year rolling average. However, if more and more people choose wood heat due to increasing energy prices, that could cause some concern.

CHAIR COY thanked everyone noting that he has now been with the Municipality's Traffic Engineering Department for six weeks.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

10. ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no objections, the meeting adjourned at 3:58 p.m.