

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

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

**April 8, 2021
2:30 PM**

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

Technical Advisory Committee Members Present:

Name	Representing
John Crapps	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
Adeyemi Alimi	Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)
Matt Stichick	MOA/Anchorage Health Department (AHD)
Shaina Kilcoyne	MOA/Energy and Sustainability
Kent Kohlhasse	MOA/Project management & Engineering (PM&E)
Michelle McNulty	MOA/Planning Department
Steve Ribuffo	MOA/ Port of Alaska

Also in attendance:

Name	Representing
Craig Lyon	MOA/Planning
Christine Schuette	MOA/Planning
Aaron Jongenelen	MOA/Planning
Jim Amundsen	DOT&PF
Sean Baski	DOT&PF
James Starzec	DOT&PF
John Weddleton*	MOA/Municipal Assembly
Steven Rzepka	DOT&PF
Bart Rudolph	MOA/Public Transportation Department (PTD)
Travis Holmes	DOT&PF
Joe Taylor	
Michael Mancill	DOT&PF
Rori VanNortwick	DOT&PF
Melinda Tsu	PM&E

**Policy Committee Member*

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

CHAIR CRAPPS called the meeting to order at 2:31 p.m. Jamie Acton was absent. A quorum was established prior to Mr. Ribuffo's late arrival.

2. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

CRAIG LYON encouraged public involvement in this meeting of the AMATS Policy Committee. He explained staff would first make their presentation, followed by any comments from Committee members, and the floor would then be open to public comment. As a result of the virtual meetings, the public has been asked to submit an email request providing their name, phone number, and agenda item to AMATS by 6:30 p.m. the day prior to the meeting, but can also participate via Teams and provide testimony when the item is opened to the public for comments.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

MR. KOHLHASE suggested hearing the Spenard Road Project presentation before the TIP amendment due to the specific current limits and discussion on expanding the limits of the project to the west side of the intersection of Minnesota Drive to allow the project to consider the various configurations that may benefit pedestrian/bicycle facilities on the east side to account for the right-of-way construction near that existing building.

MR. KOHLHASE moved to reorder the agenda to hear Agenda Item 6.b. before the action items. MR. STICHICK seconded.

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

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – March 11, 2021

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

Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved.

The Committee voted to hear Agenda Item 6.b. prior to the action items.

6.a. Spenard Road Project Update (Sean Baski of ADOT&PF)

SEAN BASKI with DOT&PF provided a PowerPoint Presentation.

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

- (KK) He is not advocating for a design solution, however, he does think it is important that the project, as the process continues, considers all the options Mr. Baski presented, including the single lane option. He says this because of the Municipality's interest and plans that reflect and desire the pedestrian/bicycle facilities along the street. The project should consider all available options, even if it means a change to the language to allow a broader look at the intersection, including any change that might be needed on the west side.

- (TV) As long as he has been a member of the TAC and participating in the Policy Committee (PC), he cannot remember any other project that the PC gave such explicit and specific instructions. There was significant discussion about whether or not to include improvements to the west side of this intersection, but here we are questioning if they know what they are doing. In a normal situation, the TIP project would say to pave Minnesota Road. We pave Minnesota Road without questioning if the PC was sure that was what they meant. In this case, the TAC is questioning those very instructions.
- (SK) Expressed appreciation for all of these options because this is a very challenging section. During Non-COVID times, this is her daily commute and it is rough. She referred to Lindsey Hajduk's comment requesting more time to review and was wondering what going down to one lane meant for overall traffic. A full acquisition of property is not what we are looking for, so what are the realistic options? She is unsure of what kind of direction the Committee should be giving at this point.
- (MS) Would Option 2, shared-use sidewalk, possibly be feasible without additional land acquisition?
- (SB) *This is the same overall width in a three-lane concept as any of the other options. All are 65 feet in width in a 60-foot space. It is approximately the same impact on the 36th Avenue to Minnesota Road space. The acquisitions are likely necessary on the project. Currently shown in the TIP is \$2.5 million in right-of-way acquisitions. We are starting to get these drawings on paper and are beginning to see what the overall impacts are, and \$2.5 million is unlikely to be enough to accommodate a 65-foot width of active transportation. We are already into full acquisitions, but the question is how many, and how can we reduce the overall width to meet everyone's needs while also not taking out every business along Spenard Road. It is a space constraint.*
- (SB) *Referred to the single-receiving lane option and explained to Mr. Kohlhasse that on the left side of the picture is a 70-foot existing right-of-way with 71.5 feet of need. With that things can be pushed north or south, but are really, basically, fitting within the existing corridor.*

CHAIR CRAPPS asked for comments from Policy Committee members.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEDDLETON commented that questions should be directed to the Policy Committee because this involves a lot of money and is very impactful on the city, and all roads. His recollection as to why there was a constraint on this was the concept to have a one-way and then use 36th Avenue, but it was very controversial. The intent was to pull the controversy away, so that we could get something going in this area. The main part of this, in order to get it right as a walkable, multimodal area, is in the section that would be McCain Loop North. It is all important, but so much will be going on with Chugach Way soon, and with Cook Inlet Housing's homes being constructed. That was kind of the core thing in trying not to get bogged down in this one-way couplet that was discussed. Whatever we do in this real difficult stretch, we do not want to do anything that would preclude further work on that couplet.

CHAIR CRAPPS asked for public comments.

LINDSEY HAJDUK: I appreciate seeing these alternatives in this Spenard Road presentation and would like more time to review it. For comments, I would like to see this project also consider future improvements to the Spenard-Chugach Way intersection, rather than just bypassing it without active transportation connections. I would also like to factor in signal changes at Spenard-Minnesota and request amending the TIP to allow for considerations to signalization, lane configuration, and railroad impacts on the west side of Minnesota Drive. The Spenard Community Council does not support the couplet, as Mr. Weddleton referred to.

There were no further comments.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #2

BACKGROUND:

Amendment #2 to the AMATS 2019-22 Transportation Improvement Program was released for a 30-day public comment period on February 25, 2021. Nine comments were received during the public comment period and are summarized in the Comment/Response Summary table. There are also changes to the HSIP program for the State's allocation and to Tables 2, 3 and 4. The only one of significance is the deletion of the C Street/Ocean Dock Road Ramp and Intersection Improvements Project. DOT&PF does not believe this project is necessary now with the other changes made.

MR. LYON noted that the majority of the nine comments received were from the Alaska Railroad and the Public Transportation Department requesting changes to their 5307 funds shown in Table 10, which is outside AMATS' allocation, but has to be included in the TIP due to it being USDOT funds. Four comments were received from the Rabbit Creek Community Council relating to TIP projects, but AMATS is a planning entity not a design entity, so we will share those comments with the project managers. He thought that Comment #5 regarding Mountain Air Drive project was a good suggestion to have the language read, "the project would include non-motorized improvements" instead of the current language that reads, "recommend separated pathways".

MR. ALIMI requested of Mr. Lyon (regarding the deletion of the project in the TIP amendment) to make sure we get the consensus from the Air Quality Conformity before the end of April because if we wait until May, the Committee would need to do another Conformity Determination.

MR. LYON expressed that Mr. Alimi has a good point. We had an Air Quality Conformity consultation team meeting for amendment #2, and they agreed to move forward as it is and provided that determination. We need to make sure they agree with the suggested change to delete one project. He spoke with Cindy Heil with ADEC and she suggested we send a note to the interagency consultation team notifying them that this is the project we are deleting, and the deletion would not adversely affect the air quality conformity given now that we are a Limited Maintenance Area. We just wanted their concurrence and there is a time constraint because the EPA is moving to a new standard on May 1, so we would like the emailed

concurrence from the consultation team as soon as possible. He did forward the email to Mr. Stichick who will then forward it to the interagency consultation team.

MR. STICHICK informed the committee that, yes, he is seeking that consensus from the interagency consultation team and intends to have a response prior to the PC meeting.

CHAIR CRAPPS asked for comments from Policy Committee members.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEDDLETON noted that the Mountain Air connection is important, and he supports it. The use of bond money as the match was under a part of code that is for life safety egress roads. The implication is that they are fairly limited in the way they are built. It could, possibly, be understood to be just enough to handle fire trucks, other equipment, and a significant number of cars during an evacuation, not so much as a normal municipal road. That may not work with an AMATS formula that might require more criteria.

There were no public comments.

MR. VANHOVE moved to recommend approval of the TIP amendment to the Policy Committee. MR. ALIM seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

b. Operating Agreement Update

BACKGROUND:

The Federal Certification review asked AMATS to modify the percentages used to determine if changes to projects constitute an Amendment or an Administrative Modification. Staff drafted the attached modification to the AMATS Operating Agreement to reflect requested changes to that document. The AMATS Policy Committee voted on 3-25-2021 to change the name of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to the Community Advisory Committee. The attached modification reflects that change.

MR. LYON noted the two proposed changes in this Operating Agreement revision pertain to the name change to the CAC and what percentage parameter changes would constitute an amendment versus a modification. He was informed that if he was able to locate another MPO using a lower percentage number than the 75 percent he had submitted, then FHWA would accept that higher number. Otherwise, we would have to apply the lower number. He had found an MPO in South Carolina using 50 percent, so that is now the threshold for the change. If project funds are being added or deleted in the TIP, and it constitutes more than 50 percent of the total cost of the project in the four years of the TIP, it would have to be handled as an amendment. It would be considered an administrative modification if it were under 50 percent of the cost.

MR. VANHOVE had the following questions with Mr. Lyon's responses noted in *Italic.*:

- (Q) Per Section 19 in the Operating Agreement, do we have the actual written amendment that represents approval from FHWA and FTA with both the 50 percent and the Citizens Advisory Committee changes?
- (A) *He has written documentation regarding the 50 percent change, but does not have anything regarding the Citizen Advisory Committee. This is a change that the Policy Committee made that we would forward to FHWA and FTA to just notify them.*
- (Q) Per Section 19 in the Operating Agreement, it says that once changes are made to the Operating Agreement and approved by the Policy Committee, they are to be forwarded on to FTA and FHWA for agreement and processing. Has that been done?
- (A) *That is what we will do once the Policy Committee decides what they want to do with these changes, then we will forward it to FHWA and FTA.*
- (Q) His first question was regarding the process because according to our own Operating Agreement, once the Policy Committee approves amendments, the amendments are forwarded to FHWA and FTA. His second question is where, as a person who is searching the AMATS website, can they find the language in the original Operating Agreement?
- (A) *The website does display our governing documents, including the Operating Agreement and Policies and Procedures. Typically, if the Policy Committee approves something, we need to figure out what specific changes are being made to the Operating Agreement. Theoretically, these could have been done at the same time, but instead, we waited for the Policy Committee to approve the changes and then modify the Operating Agreement.*
- (Q) *That is another procedural question because the Operating Agreement is an agreement signed by the Mayor and the Governor. It is my suggestion that this language never change. Amendments can be done all day long, but those amendments get attached to that Operating Agreement. They do not change the actual wording in that agreement.*
- (A) *The original Operating Agreement was signed by Governor Knowles and Mayor Wuerch in 2001. It has been revised half-a-dozen times in this manner. That has been the method the Policy Committee has used to approve changes during his 18-year time with AMATS, but it is possible that it is being done incorrectly. They are just revisions and not something that connotes a redesignation, which would require new signatures from the current Mayor and Governor.*

There were no public comments.

MR. VANHOVE moved to table this item until such time an amendment can be produced that shows agreement with FHWA and FTA. MR. ALIMI seconded.

MR. LYON asked for clarification that this is being tabled until some sort of agreement has been received from FHWA and FTA. He is not exactly sure what we are waiting for because we have not submitted anything to them yet. Usually, we would not do that until we have a modification to our Operating Agreement.

MR. VANHOVE explained that, it is his understanding, the Policy Committee has already agreed to this and we are in the process of making a change to it. He thinks that before we make the change, we need to get their approval.

MR. LYON clarified that our process has always been to bring an item before the Policy Committee (PC) and the PC makes a decision in the form of a memorandum, but they did not have a business item before them with an Operating Agreement change, which is what we have before us today. It is an actual Operating Agreement with the approved changes, which is the official revision that would go before the PC. Once the PC approves it, it would be forwarded to FHWA and FTA for their concurrence.

MS. MCNULTY asked if this item is tabled and has not yet gone to the PC, can it still be forwarded to FHWA and FTA? How does this affect the timing? If we table this, can it still go before the PC for them to move forward, if they choose to?

MR. LYON does not have an Operating Agreement amendment to send to the federal government. He does have a memorandum showing that the PC agreed to the changes. Once those changes have been approved by the PC, we would then change the documents that say "Citizens" to "Community", and those documents are the Operating Agreement and the CAC bylaws. This is the specific Operating Agreement change that he will be forwarding to FHWA and FTA. As occurred with the change from Citizens to Community Advisory Committee, the TAC tabled it followed by the PC bringing it up for discussion. The PC can decide to hear the Operating Agreement change at any time.

Hearing objections to table this item, CHAIR CRAPPS called for a vote.

YAY

Mr. Vanhove
Mr. Lindamood
Mr. Bowland
Mr. Ribuffo
Mr. Alimi

NAY

Mr. Stichick
Ms. Kilcoyne
Ms. McNulty
Mr. Kohlhase
Chair Crapps

Upon clarifying that a tie-vote would result in the motion failing, Mr. Stichick changed his vote to Yay.

This motion passed 6 to 4.

MR. KOHLHASE moved to reconsider Agenda Item 5.a. MS. MCNULTY seconded.

MR. KOHLHASE stated that his reason for reconsidering is that he would like to propose an amendment to the language that would read, "To allow the project to consider improvements on the west side of Minnesota, as may be required, to accommodate multimodal transportation along the project corridor."

Hearing no objections, the motion to reconsider passed.

MR. KOHLHASE moved to amend the Spenard Road project language description in the second sentence to read, "The project shall include approved improvements to the Minnesota intersection, as may be required, to accommodate multimodal transportation on the east side along the project corridor." MS. MCNULTY seconded.

MR. BOWLAND indicated that this does not necessarily accomplish exactly what we might want to do with the project and not looking into a lot of the details when it comes to the traffic impacts with the options we have been presented today. It might be a little bit cleaner just to delete the entire second sentence regarding the improvements to the Minnesota intersection, except ADA requirements. If that sentence is removed, it does not really restrict our options, but it also does not require us to do anything to the intersection. He would not support the amendment.

MR. KOHLHASE proposed a friendly amendment to his motion to delete the second sentence of the project description. MS. MCNULTY seconded.

Hearing no objections, the amendment was approved.

Hearing no objections, the main motion was approved, as amended.

6. PROJECT AND PLAN UPDATES

a. Seward to Glenn Highway PEL

MR. VANHOVE provided an update noting that negotiations have been completed and the contract is being finalized.

There were no comments.

b. Spenard Road Project Update (Sean Baski of ADOT&PF)

This item was heard prior to the action items.

7. GENERAL INFORMATION

a. COVID Funding Update

MR. LYON provided an update.

There were no comments.

b. AMATS Newsletter

CHRISTINE SCHUETTE introduced the AMATS newsletter.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEDDLETON expressed his appreciation noting that it was very nice.

There were no further comments.

8. COMMITTEE COMMENTS - None

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

10. ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no objections, the meeting adjourned at 3:56 p.m.