

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

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

**July 14, 2022
2:30 PM**

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

Technical Advisory Committee Members Present:

Name	Representing
Brad Coy	MOA/Traffic Engineering Department
Craig Lyon	MOA/Planning Department
Kate Dueber	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)
Bart Rudolph	MOA/Public Transportation Department
Shaina Kilcoyne	MOA/Energy and Sustainability
Darcy Harris	MOA/Anchorage Health Department (AHD)
Steve Ribuffo	MOA/Port of Alaska

Also in attendance:

Name	Representing
Aaron Jongenelen	MOA/Planning
Christine Schuette	MOA/Planning
Joni Wilm	MOA/Planning
Sean Baski	DOT&PF
James Starzec	DOT&PF
Susie Serres	DKS Associates
Amanda Riley	DKS Associates
Joann Mitchell	Kinney Engineering
Kathryn Wenger	Federal Highways Administration (FHWA)
Adeyemi Alimi	ADEC
Sean Holland	DOWL

**Policy Committee Member*

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

CHAIR COY called the meeting to order at 2:31 p.m. Kate Dueber represented Brian Lindamood on behalf of the Alaska Railroad Corporation. Bart Rudolph represented Jamie Acton on behalf of the Public Transportation Department. Darcy Harris represented Matt Stichick on behalf of the Anchorage Health Department. Kent Kohlhase was absent. A quorum was established prior to the arrivals of Mr. Ribuffo at 2:37p.m. and Ms. Heil at 2:51 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. LYON moved to approve the agenda. MR. VANHOVE seconded.

MR. JONGENELEN requested to add the Fish Creek Trail Project Update as Item 6.b.

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

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – June 9, 2022

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

Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Peak Hour Excessive Delay (PHED) Targets from the Department of Transportation

MR. JONGENELEN explained that Peak Hour Excessive Delay (PHED) is part of the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) Federal Performance Measures program, which is a subpart of the Transportation Performance Management (TPM). The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) defines TPM as a strategic approach that uses system information to make investment and policy decisions to achieve national performance goals.

Mr. Ribuffo arrived at 2:37 p.m.

MR. VANHOVE asked for clarification about the difference between the current two-year target and the previous targets.

MR. JONGENELEN noted that these are brand new targets for us as an MPO of 200,000 or greater. There were never any previous targets. This is the second performance period and the first performance started back in 2018 or 2020 and MPOs of a million or greater that fell within this non-attainment or limited maintenance were required to set these targets. AMATS, the State, and the MPO did not have to set those targets because we did not meet that threshold. FAST (Fairbanks Area Surface Transportation) Planning MPO did not have to set these targets because they also do not meet the threshold of population.

MS. KILCOYNE asked if the external measures shown on page 4 of the DOT&PF memorandum are what were taken into account in setting these targets.

MR. JONGENELEN replied, yes, that is correct. We increase or decrease targets based on that information.

CHAIR COY noted that the first page of the memorandum refers to Ex. 2021-9.5 hours and asked if that was given as an example or what it was measured at.

MR. JONGENELEN confirmed that 2021 was at 9.5 hours. These are all algorithm based. We do put a lot of the data already collected into a complicated formula provided by FHWA.

In response to Mr. Lyon's question if there is a penalty for not meeting these targets, MR. JONGENELEN explained that there are no monetary penalties, unlike the safety targets, but there are consequences mentioned in the DOT&PF memorandum stating, "State must document actions it will take to achieve target, if the actual performance level is not equal to or better than the established target." For AMATs, there typically is not a consequence and the state will most likely have to discuss how it is taking actions to achieve their target.

MR. RUDOLPH asked how we compare to other cities of the same size. What does it mean if we were at 9.5 in 2021? Are there other cities at 6 or 20?

MR. JONGENELEN noted that an analysis of other cities was not done because they did not factor into this, but he did look at other cities. The 9.5 is comparable to cities larger than ours, such as Boston which was in the 8 to 10 range. Right now, the difficulty is that we do not have any equivalencies to compare with because all size equivalent cities are at the same process point in setting the target. Everything we have to look at are cities of one million or more. It is not an equal comparison, but it is something we could do at the two-year mark when it has been reported and look at the air quality impacts.

MR. RUDOLPH commented that it is odd that we are setting a limit so much higher than what our actual numbers are. It seems like we are giving ourselves so much buffer room to not hit the target and make us look good. It would be important, after we start implementing some things in the next two years, to reevaluate the target because it seems a bit excessive right now, although he did understand the methodology behind it.

MS. KILCOYNE mentioned that the decreased winter maintenance funding also reflects recent warmer winters (not just funding ability) indicating that warmer winters mean less maintenance. From what she has heard from the city, there has actually been more snow, more rain on snow, or freeze-thaw cycles requiring more maintenance.

CHAIR COY asked if it is algorithm-based and do we just try to decrease traffic volumes? Is it more about playing with numbers than what is actually happening?

MR. JONGENELEN pointed out that FHWA, and others, analyze how you are decreasing it. If you are just tweaking the numbers slightly they are going to notice you are not putting forth the effort to decrease it. Doing projects that help decrease traffic volumes, such as a

TDM (Transportation Demand Management) or TSMO (Transportation Systems Management & Operations) type strategies, are going to be key in helping decrease this number. Even at the two-year mark, there may not be a huge drop off because it will take time, but we still need to prove our efforts. We do measure delay, but this is excessive delay.

There were no public comments.

MR. VANHOVE moved to recommend to the Policy Committee approval of the 2- and 4-year targets. MS. KILCOYNE seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

Ms. Heil arrived at 2:51 p.m.

b. 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Amendment 1

MR. JONGENELEN noted that the AMATS 2040 MTP was approved in June 2020 by the AMATS Policy Committee and received final approval by FHWA and FTA on August 26, 2020. An amendment to the 2040 MTP is needed to add a new project, the Alaska Cargo and Cold Storage warehouse facility. This project is partially funded with Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) federal grant funding from 2020. A project receiving BUILD grant funding must be consistent with State and local plans, including the long-range transportation plans of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, such as AMATS. This project must be added to the 2040 MTP as an amendment.

There were no comments.

MS. HEIL moved to approve. MR. LYON seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

6. PROJECT AND PLAN UPDATES

a. Transportation Systems Management & Operations (TSMO) Plan

SUSIE SERRES with DKS Associates provided a PowerPoint presentation. JOANN MITCHELL with Kinney Engineering and AMANDA RILEY with DKS Associates were also present.

There were no comments.

b. Fish Creek Trail Project Update

MATT EDGE with CRW Engineering briefed the Committee on the project.

MR. RIBUFFO pointed out that a pipeline from the Port to the airport was mentioned in one of the graphics and he asked if it can be seen on the graphic. Is it possible to get a copy of that graphic? What some might think is a tourist attraction is now a critical infrastructure concern for him because people are able to walk up to it where it crosses the creek. That is a bad thing and now they want to put a trail there.

MR. EDGE indicated that the fuel pipeline can be seen if you look closely. If you walk the corridors, you actually see it exposed in Fish Creek in the culverts that come out underneath the railroad. This graphic will be available to the public on the website. The Alaska Railroad (ARRC) is on board with this project because people are already walking down that corridor and trespass along the tracks. There is fencing and it is gated but people cut the fence and walk along that corridor. With regard to crossing the creek, there are options to allow for that fuel line to be relocated by the fuel company, but dealing with that is really outside of the project scope. The only place the pipeline is exposed is in the creek.

MR. JONGENELEN commented that he recently researched all the community councils' CIP (Capital Improvement Program) lists and these are the projects they supported and would like to see move forward. This connection was one of the projects that almost every single community council had on their list of projects.

MR. EDGE thinks they are moving in that direction and have already met with the stakeholders.

MR. LYON asked when to expect early financials showing how much those different alternatives might cost. Currently, homeowners whose back yards have railroad rights-of-way have put fences across that right-of-way, but it is legally not their back yard. He wanted to make it clear that we are talking about putting a trail through a right-of-way that belongs to the railroad and they are gracious enough to potentially donate or allow it to be used. The homeowners have put fences, structures, decks, and treehouses in the right-of-way that is owned by the Alaska Railroad.

MR. EDGE noted that the financials will be available this fall as part of the draft DSR (Design Study Report) and published after the public open house.

In response to Ms. Wilm's request for clarification that it is 30 or 40 feet into the Alaska Railroad's right-of-way, MR. EDGE stated that it is about 30 feet. He added that it is natural for people to build to the edge of the bluff, but, again, it does not belong to them.

CHAIR COY opened the floor to public comments.

JOANN MITCHELL asked if the access points will just be at Northern Lights and at the Coastal Trail connection or if there will be access points along there.

MR. EDGE replied that there are no connections planned right now. Along the eastern side of the estuary there is a public right-of-way that extends from the neighborhood down into the estuary that would allow them an access point.

MS. WILM noted that this connection was discussed as part of the planning process for the Spenard Corridor plan and received a lot of community support. It is a good connection for pedestrians and bicyclists. To reiterate, a lot of people have been using the corridor and are walking very close to the railroad, and that is a liability for ARRC. The connection will create more of a separation and will be more protected. She did not know if Mr. Ribuffo's concern with the fuel line would help in keeping the public away with a trail separating it from that facility.

MR. EDGE added that fencing the entire trail will be required to separate it from the railroad.

7. GENERAL INFORMATION - None

8. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

MR. JONGENELEN and the Committee recognized and expressed great appreciation to Ms. Heil for her service from 1992-2022, as she is retiring. This is her last AMATS meeting. She was presented with an engraved hydro flask.

MR. LYON expressed that, for him, having served a large portion of that time working with Ms. Heil and AMATS, he would not have been successful at his job without the "mom" of the committee providing assistance and instruction with the process.

MS. HEIL commented that she served 6 years on the Policy Committee and the remaining time was served on the Technical Advisory Committee. It was a wonderful opportunity to participate in something that is really important for the community and very rewarding. She felt the public did not understand what all takes place behind the scenes and how difficult the job is.

MS. KILCOYNE informed the Committee that all the action and activity with electric vehicles includes a draft plan for the corridor (Fairbanks to Anchorage) and the state that is being worked through the Alaska Energy Authority (AEA). A public comment period is open until July 27 with the plan being due August 1. The draft can be viewed on Alaska Energy Authority's website and the link Mr. Jongenelen had previously provided.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

10. ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no objections, the meeting adjourned at 3:31 p.m.