

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

**August 11, 2022
2:30 PM**

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Technical Advisory Committee Members Present:

Name	Representing
Brad Coy (Chair)	MOA/Traffic Engineering Department
Brian Lindamood	Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC)
Todd Vanhove	Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF), Central Region Planning
Sean Baski	DOT&PF
Adeyemi Alimi	Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)
Matt Stichick	MOA/Anchorage Health Department (AHD)
Craig Lyon	MOA/Planning Department
Bart Rudolph	MOA/Public Transportation Department (PTD)
Steve Ribuffo	MOA/Port of Alaska
Kent Kohlhasse	MOA/Project Management & Engineering (PM&E)
Shaina Kilcoyne	MOA/Energy and Sustainability

Also in attendance:

Name	Representing
Aaron Jongenelen	MOA/Planning
Joni Wilm	MOA/Planning
Jon Cecil	MOA/Planning
James Starzec	DOT&PF
Jeanne Bowie	Kinney Engineering
Kathryn Wenger	Federal Highways Administration (FHWA)
Van Le	R&M Consultants
Jeff Frkonja	RSG, Inc.
Adam Moser	DOT&PF
Wolfgang Junge*	DOT&PF
Ben Coleman	R&M Consultants
Noah King	DOT&PF
Gabrielle Freeman	RSG, Inc.
Galen Jones	DOT&PF

**Policy Committee Member*

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

CHAIR COY called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. Bart Rudolph represented the Public Transportation Department on behalf of Jamie Acton. Sean Baski represented the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities on behalf of Luke Bowland. 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

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

Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – July 14, 2022

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

CHAIR COY noted that Sean Holland represents DOWL and is no longer with DOT&PF.

Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved, as corrected.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue Extension (MLK) Closeout Letter

MR. JONGENELEN informed the Committee that the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue Extension project was nominated for inclusion in the AMATS 2019-2022 TIP. During the development of the project, the MOA and DOT&PF found considerable impacts the project would cause. The benefits of the projects are outweighed by the overwhelming impacts and there is not a clear route forward resulting in a build alternative.

In response to Chair Coy's requested clarification that AMATS does not have to pay back any of the funding because it is being closed out, MR. KING explained that the intention is to close out with FHWA participation. At this point, we do not spend any more money and we will not have to pay anymore match funding.

MR. STICHICK asked if any properties had been purchased to complete the project?

MR. KING was not aware of any.

MR. VANHOVE moved to recommend to the Policy Committee support of the closeout of the project. MR. ALIMI seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

The Committee acted on the TIP Air Quality Conformity Determination first.

b. 2023-2026 TIP Air Quality Conformity Determination

MR. JONGENELEN noted that the Municipality of Anchorage contains a Limited Maintenance Area for carbon monoxide (CO), in Anchorage, and a Limited Maintenance Area for PM10, in Eagle River. Consequently, federal regulations require that AMATS make an Air Quality Conformity Determination on all transportation plans and programs to assure they will not jeopardize compliance with federal air quality standards for CO and PM10 within the Municipality of Anchorage. These regulations require AMATS to determine that the future emissions from the transportation network envisioned in these plans and programs remain under the allowable emissions budget established in the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for air quality; or in the case of a Limited Maintenance Plan, have a future projected pollutant design value low enough to be reasonably unlikely to exceed a national air quality standard, including projected traffic increases over a 20-year planning horizon.

CHAIR COY noted that the air quality standards have been shown consistently for the past 20 years. He asked if there will ever be a time when AMATS will not have to do this, or is it in perpetuity.

MR. JONGENELEN explained that there is a time when it can end. When you trigger nonattainment, you will begin a cycle of two 10-year periods ensuring that you do not fall into non-attainment again, then upon completion of those two 10-year cycles, you are back into attainment. Our CO non-attainment will be done by July 2024.

MR. STICHICK added that our second 10-year plan has been submitted to U.S. EPA, which is essentially an update that will see us through the end of that 20-year cycle.

MR. ALIMI clarified that EPA approved it on November 9, 2021.

MR. JONGENELEN further explained that AMATS will have to continue to do the Air Quality Conformity Determinations for transportation until we finish that second 10-year cycle for PM10 in Eagle River. Once that is finished, we are no longer in a Limited Maintenance Plan and will then go into an attainment area, and will no longer have to complete this. In addition, we can take five years to update our MTP, instead of four years. If we meet any exceedances or have violations, we go back into a non-attainment area.

In response to Mr. Vanhove's question if the monitoring device in Eagle River will continue, MR. STICHICK noted that it would be in perpetuity for PM10 because that was a nonattainment area in the past.

There were no public comments.

MR. ALIM moved to recommend to the Policy Committee approval of the 2023-2026 TIP Air Quality Conformity Determination. MR. LYON seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

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. AMATS administers approximately \$35 million in federal transportation funding annually through the Roadway, Non-motorized, Congestion Mitigation, Air Quality (CMAQ) Program, and the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) within the urbanized area. The current TIP is approved through 2022.

2023-2026 TIP Narrative

The Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solution (AMATS)'s Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a four-year program that prioritizes and documents the funding of transportation improvement projects within the AMATS area. Projects included in the TIP range from construction and maintenance of major highways and arterials to maintenance and expansion of public transit to construction and maintenance for bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The TIP draws projects from the AMATS Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the Long-Range Transportation Plan for the AMATS area, and from public input. These projects are evaluated for consistency with the goals and objectives in the MTP.

MR. RUDOLPH referred to the narrative in Table 9 and asked if the Program of Projects information on the table in the TIP were also included in the narrative and, if not, would it be possible to put it in the public involvement section. With regard to the CFRs, he asked if the Program of Projects CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) is included in the self-certification list.

MR. JONGENELEN did not have the ability to answer that, but pointed out that the self-certification list was given to him by FHWA, as shown. This is how FHWA requires it to be completed. The comment regarding the Program of Projects and the narrative is a good point and, if everyone agreed, he recommended adding that into the narrative.

CHAIR COY referred to the descriptions, such as Fireweed giving specifics, and asked if having that specified means it is the only alternative that could be improved.

MR. JONGENELEN replied, yes, but he is already planning on submitting an amendment when this TIP gets approved in order to adjust some of that language. It will be an easy change having been recommended by members of the public. It was discussed at the Policy Committee prior to their approval for the Interagency Consultation, but they never made the change.

There were no public comments.

MR. RUDOLPH moved to recommend the 2023-2026 TIP and TIP Narrative with the change adding language about Program of Projects, and a staff review to make sure the self-certification has the required FTA CFR for the Program of Projects. MR. KOHLHASE seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

6. PROJECT AND PLAN UPDATES

a. 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) VisionEval Introduction

JEFF FRKONJA with RSG, Inc. provided a PowerPoint presentation. GABRIELLE FREEMAN was also present and assisted with responding to questions.

MR. RIBUFFO commented that throughout his years as Port Director and sitting on this Committee during the creation of TIPs, it has been mostly a spectator sport because the majority of projects in the TIP have been related to roads and rail and bike paths, and other projects that are not Ports. He thought that since the advent of IJA (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act), there had been a greater opportunity for Ports to put projects into the TIP. Is that an expectation or something we should stand aside and let FHWA continue to rule? Do we just watch and vote for things you think are important—not just from a necessity standpoint but because pragmatically they seem like the right thing to do? A lot was mentioned about models, and he did not know enough about how this process works (nuts-and-bolts wise) having been just a spectator. What is going to be the input to these models?

MR. FRKONJA reminded everyone that this is defining draft alternatives right now and involves several steps. The strategic model can take inputs like wanting more lane miles of roadway capacity, or more transit service, or a policy promoting demand management strategies where, as we have learned recently, there are some activities that allow developers to talk to the Municipality of Anchorage and lower their parking minimums. If you could price the roadway system, then you can change pricing in the transit system. If you could describe a specific investment you have in mind that would benefit the Port, then we could talk about how it would be reflected in the modeling. But you may actually have a question that is more for the previous topic about how to put together your TIP, which we are not talking about in the long-range planning process.

MR. RIBUFFO asked where all that was just discussed fits into the process of creating the TIP.

MR. FRKONJA explained that under federal regulations, investments in the TIP must be consistent with the long-range plan, also known as the 2050 MTP. The planning process will create a document that includes statements in policy and statements you will invest in certain programs like transportation demand management programs, or a program to enhance freight throughput efficiency. The plan generally includes a list of investments,

capital investments, or programmatic investments. Once the plan is adopted, the TIP must be consistent with that. You want to help give input to the long-range plan (the MTP), so that the MTP policy statements and investments are consistent with your goals at the Port.

MR. JONGENELEN added that the MTP is AMATS' first step in helping build future TIPs because we pull projects from the MTP, and the goals and objectives help guide what projects are put into the TIP.

MR. RIBUFFO clarified that if you are currently in it, then you are part of what is assessed, but, if not, then it is just an exercise you participate in that is of no value to you. In his case, it is the Port since it does not have anything in the MTP.

MR. JONGENELEN would not quite say that because, even if it is not something, you could be assessed and included in the TIP and updated to have it in the MTP, or if you are consistent with the MTP, then it is good enough. He would always encourage Mr. Ribuffo to participate because IIJA has changed the game a little and putting projects on the Port into the TIP is more of a possibility than it has been in the past. With regard to having an advantage with a project in the TIP and competitiveness for IIJA grants, it is actually a requirement for any federally funded project to be in the TIP, and consistent with the MTP. Any of the IIJA grants out there have part of their notice of funding opportunity statements in there that talked about being consistent with the MTPs and the TIPS. We often encourage people to let AMATS know if they received a grant, so we can get it into the TIP early when they actually want to get the funding from FHWA.

MR. RIBUFFO noted that, in our case, sometimes it would be from FHWA or from MARAD. He asked if that mattered.

MR. JONGENELEN replied, yes, we are looking at FHWA and FTA only funding for the TIP and MTPs.

MR. RIBUFFO added that if the Port does not have an FHWA nexus with a project, then we can march on our own merry way and not have to worry how qualitatively it gets assigned a number that gives it a priority in the TIP, because it does not necessarily have to be in the TIP.

MR. JONGENELEN pointed out that a requirement exists that any regionally significant project, regardless of funding source, has to be in the TIP and the MTP. There is no real definition of regionally significant leaving it up to the state and AMATS to make that determination when working with FHWA.

MR. FRKONJA added that, as outlined, the process already done to update the MTP recently had a project nominations process that included some stakeholder engagements. He suggested that Mr. Ribuffo be sure these regionally significant projects that Mr. Jongenelen alluded to are on the radar in this MTP update, so that AMATS is aware the Port is thinking about investing in "X, Y, or Z", and that there is some project definition you could supply to the MTP process.

MR. RIBUFFO expressed that the Port has at least one road project that is legitimately a road project, and one project we would like to do jointly with the railroad that is all on the Port. That might very well be worth putting into the MTP, so that it has the visibility as we write grant applications against them.

MR. STICHICK asked for clarification as to what RSPM is versus VisionEval for formulation of the strategic model.

MR. FRKONJA explained that RSPM stands for Regional Strategic Planning Model and is a specific instance of the VisionEval overall framework.

MS. FREEMAN further explained that VisionEval is the framework and overarching project and includes a suite of models. The RSPM is the specific regional VisionEval model. There is also a state level VisionEval model and another lighter weight, more sketch planning regional tool.

MR. FRKONJA clarified that RSG is the acronym for his firm's name, which is Resource Systems Group. RSG is a sub to R&M Consultants, the prime consultant supporting AMATS on the MTP update.

There were no public comments.

b. Ocean Dock Road Reconnaissance Study

GALEN JONES with DOT&PF and JEANNE BOWIE with Kinney Engineering provided a PowerPoint presentation.

In response to Mr. Stichick's question as to how traffic would be controlled for the railroad crossings, MS. BOWIE noted that she did not yet know if it would be signalized or yield. MR. LINDAMOOD added that it is a fairly formulaic state policy process the Railroad is required to follow and Kinney Engineering, DOT&PF, and ARRC will be involved in the discussions. The whole function of that diagnostic process is to assess the safety of the crossing and to determine what sort of protection needs to be put in place.

MR. STICHICK asked if the bluff remains at its same height with the retaining wall or does it get altered in the process.

MS. BOWIE replied that the retaining wall would be pushed back and made taller.

MR. RUDOLPH referred to Figure C in the presentation regarding the pedestrian access ways and asked if there was a reason why the pedestrian sidewalk goes to the middle of the "Y" and then comes down, instead of just straight across because, for a pedestrian, it seemed very uncomfortable to be standing right at the spot to cross the street when you could just go straight across further up. Similar to the other crossing.

MS. BOWIE expressed that the pedestrian crossings are not set in stone at this point. There are some grade issues and she believed that is the reason for bringing the sidewalk down to that location. MR. JONES added that just to the right is a bridge and to the left is the road

that goes under that bridge, and there is probably a 20-foot grade difference.

MR. LINDAMOOD suggested that instead of crossing the grade you could run the sidewalks along the road that goes underneath the bridge and circle back up. Rather than having the pedestrians go on the up ramp, have them go on the down ramp and cross underneath.

CHAIR COY asked how much pedestrian activity had been observed?

MS. BOWIE noted that they reviewed the pedestrian activity in this location as part of the previous study using the paths going across the bridge. There were approximately 20 pedestrians in a few hours, although, a school group walked that route downtown from Government Hill Elementary School. That path is well-used, but there is no consistency as to how the ramps are being used.

MS. KILCOYNE commented that the study felt as if roads are considered first and pedestrians second with all the crossings and the figuring out of how the pedestrians get around the roads. She did understand the challenge with the grades and it does not seem ideal, but it is a challenging spot.

There were no public comments.

Ms. Kilcoyne left the meeting at 3:56 p.m.

c. Transportation Systems Management & Operations (TSMO) Update

MR. JONGENELEN briefed the Committee on the TSMO update.

There were no comments.

7. GENERAL INFORMATION - None

8. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

MR. VANHOVE announced that STIP (State Transportation Improvement Program) Amendment #4 is out for public review and will close August 15.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

10. ADJOURNMENT

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