

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

**March 9, 2023
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 (Chair)	MOA/Traffic Engineering Department
Kate Dueber	Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC)
Todd Vanhove	Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF), Anchorage Field Office
Luke Bowland	DOT&PF
Adeyemi Alimi	Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)
Jamie Acton	MOA/Public Transportation Department (PTD)
Craig Lyon	MOA/Planning Department
Steve Ribuffo	MOA/Port of Alaska
Melinda Kohlhaas	MOA/Project Management & Engineering (PM&E)
Matt Stichick	MOA/Anchorage Health Department (AHD)

Also in attendance:

Name	Representing
Aaron Jongenelen	AMATS
Christine Schuette	AMATS
Jon Cecil	AMATS
Chelsea Ward-Waller	AMATS
Rhiannon Brown	AMATS
James Starzec	DOT&PF
Carlos Rojas	DOT&PF
Emily Haynes	Federal Highways Administration (FHWA)
Bart Rudolph	MOA/PTD
Kelly Summers	DOT&PF
Laurie Cummings	HDR
Kevin Jackson	DOT&PF
Randy Brown	MOA/PTD
Steve Rafuse	MOA/Parks & Recreation Department
John Linnell	DOT&PF
Phil Olmstead	Nelson/Nygaard Consulting

**Policy Committee Member*

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

CHAIR COY called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m. Kate Dueber represented the Alaska Railroad Corporation on behalf of Brian Lindamood. A quorum was established prior to the arrivals of Ms. Acton at 2:36 p.m. and Mr. Stichick at 2:40 p.m.

2. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

AARON JONGENELEN encouraged public involvement in this meeting of the AMATS Technical Advisory 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 ALIMI moved to approve the agenda. MR. BOWLAND seconded.

Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – February 9, 2023

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

MR. BOWLAND referred to page 4 correcting his disclosure to read, “...will abstain from voting on this matter because the letter is advocating for DOT&PF.”

MR. JONGENELEN pointed out a correction to the Public Involvement Announcement that should read, “...the AMATS Technical Advisory Committee...”, not the AMATS Policy Committee.

MR. JONGENELEN referred to page 4 regarding Anna Bosin’s comment. He will need to clarify with Ms. Bosin that she was speaking on behalf of DOT&PF, not as an individual.

Ms. Acton joined the meeting at 2:36 p.m.

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

Mr. Stichick joined the meeting at 2:40 p.m.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Operating Agreement – Membership Title Change

MR. JONGENELEN noted that the AMATS Operating Agreement was last updated in April 2021 and had changed the Air Quality Advisory Committee representative on the Technical

Advisory Committee (TAC) with the Energy and Sustainability Manager for the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA). The person filling this role recently left MOA service and staff has been unable to receive an answer as to the status of this position. Staff is recommending the position be changed to a representative from MOA Parks and Recreation. AMATS has been working closely with Parks and Recreation (Steve Rafuse) on transportation projects and having a representative on the TAC would continue to enhance this working partnership. If the Operating Agreement change is approved, Mr. Rafuse would be filling this position and Taylor Keegan would be the alternate.

CHAIR COY referred to page 4 of the Operating Agreement, noting that a minor change should be made to the number of comprised officials to the Anchorage Assembly from 11 to 12 members.

There were no public comments.

MS. KOHLHAAS moved to approve. MR. BOWLAND seconded.

MR. LYON moved to amend to change the number of Assembly members from 11 to 12. MS. KOHLHAAS seconded.

AMENDMENT

Hearing no objections, the amendment passed.

MAIN MOTION, AS AMENDED

Hearing no objections, the motion, as amended, passed.

b. Critical Urban Freight Corridors

MR. CECIL informed the Committee that Critical Urban Freight Corridors (CUFCs) are priority freight segments that typically consist of first- or last-mile connector routes from high-volume freight corridors to freight-intensive land and key urban freight facilities, such as the Port of Alaska. They lie within an urbanized area or urban cluster as defined by the Census Bureau. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) established a mileage cap of 122.22 miles of CUFCs for Alaska. DOT&PF (in consultation with MPOs) can designate CUFCs on both state and local networks. To date, Alaska has designated 15 miles of urban corridors.

CHAIR COY opened the floor to public comments.

JAMES STARZEC, DOT&PF

MR. LYON moved to recommend approval of the designation of these Critical Urban Freight Corridors to the Policy Committee. MR. RIBUFFO seconded.

MS. KOHLHAAS commented that this is considered a catchup and provides the opportunity for funding and can always be revisited if something later on needs to be added. After hearing this is added to other NHS (National Highway System) roadways that already have a designation, she is comfortable supporting the motion.

CHAIR COY has questions regarding C Street being included but not A Street given that C Street was not part of the initial recommendation.

CHAIR COY passed the gavel and his role as Chair to Vice Chair Vanhove.

MR. COY moved to amend to remove C Street from the list for now. MR. LYON seconded.

MR. COY noted that the Downtown Engineering Street Study, the Seward/Glenn PEL, and other projects are looking at some of these corridors. He had heard significant concerns expressed regarding the amount of heavy vehicles on those roads and was curious if the additional funding would address some of the safety concerns. Is it better to have these roads designated and will that make it safer or better, or will it just entrench some of the freight focus without having due consideration for downtown?

MR. LYON commented, after hearing from Mr. Cecil and Mr. Starzec, that this is an opportunity to get additional funds to help these facilities and an opportunity to help with some of the issues Mr. Coy raised. If the Committee takes it off the list, it removes a category of funding that could be brought to bear for issues along there. As to why C Street was added but not A Street, he did not know the volume of truck traffic or if there are more users on C Street than on A Street.

MR. RIBUFFO did not recall A Street being discussed when the Freight Advisory Committee (FAC) met and looked at this route. With the Chair of the FAC being the president of the Alaska Trucking Association (ATA), he would have thought that, if there was an A Street issue of exclusion here, the ATA representative would have brought it up. All of us on the FAC were silent on that part of A and C Streets.

MR. BOWLAND could see some of the benefit to adding C Street with some of the businesses on the south end of C Street (south of the couplet) that would access other NHS routes. Maybe that was part of the reason for not including A Street on the list.

MS. KOHLHAAS is also looking for ways to have truck traffic that want to head west to not go through 3rd Avenue and around the corner to Minnesota, but to have an opportunity to take a straight shot and then head over to International, if they want to go to the airport. Another goal of hers is to see if there are other corridors that can alleviate some of the cutting through downtown itself.

MR. COY noted that he would be willing to withdraw his amendment, if the following could be looked into and ready to go before the Policy Committee:

1. The understanding of what additional funds would do with regards to safety and the relation with other users.
2. If A Street is going to be a safety benefit for downtown, should it be added?

ACTING CHAIR VANHOVE noted that the designation allows the use of additional federal funds. It does not prioritize them but just allows for big projects moving forward to use other funds.

MR. COY withdrew his amendment. MR. LYON seconded.

MAIN MOTION

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

Chair Coy assumed the gavel and continued to preside over the meeting.

c. Freight Advisory Committee (FAC) Nomination (Carlos Rojas)

MR. CECIL noted that the AMATS Freight Advisory Committee (FAC) is the community forum for freight issues affecting the AMATS area. Specific functions of this group are to assist in promoting public and private participation in the freight planning process and to comment on freight planning issues. Members of this committee may serve up to three rotating three-year terms. Committee bylaws limit members to two consecutive terms.

Carlos Rojas is being nominated to fill the seat representing ADOT Commercial Vehicle Compliance.

CHAIR COY opened the floor to public comments.

CARLOS ROJAS

MR. LYON moved to recommend approval of Mr. Rojas' appointment to the FAC to the Policy Committee. MR. ALIMI seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

Freight Advisory Committee (FAC) Nomination (Dr. Helena Wisniewski)

Dr. Helena S. Wisniewski is being nominated to fill the seat representing academic institutions.

There were no public comments.

MR. RIBUFFO moved to forward to the Policy Committee approval of Dr. Wisniewski's appointment to the FAC. MS. KOHLHAAS seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

**d. Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Resolution – Seward to Glenn
PEL 2023-01**

MS. SCHUETTE presented the two resolutions submitted by the Community Advisory Committee requesting the immediate release of all public comments and responses by DOT&PF on the Seward to Glenn Highway PEL project and to submit their comments on the Travel Demand Modeling to the project team.

Resolution 2023-01 requests the immediate release of all public comments and responses by Alaska DOT& PF on draft documents released in the Seward/Glenn PEL process, and for the PEL process to become a priority within Alaska DOT&PF, as this winter has shown what the continued dangers of failing to address issues along the Seward/Glenn corridor present.

MR. VANHOVE pointed out that the project is already underway.

MR. BOWLAND added that the comments and responses received on this were of higher volume than anticipated, so there was a period where there was not a lot of interaction from DOT&PF. He understood the perception of this as not being a priority for DOT&PF, but he assured the public that this is a high priority for the department.

MR. JONGENELEN clarified that this resolution was passed by the CAC prior to all the comments having been released by the project team. Staff's role is not to make determinations but to present it to the TAC for action.

KEVIN JACKSON with DOT&PF was not aware of the exact dates between the public meetings but thought it was 7 months. As Mr. Bowland stated, DOT&PF did receive a tremendous number of comments and it took a long time to respond to them. He also thought those had all been released just barely prior to that meeting.

MR. LYON added that these things take time especially this one due to the large size of the area with a heavily traveled corridor, and the significant number of comments received. He did not see anything that would make him think it is has not been a priority or that progress has been slowed and he would not support moving this resolution along. Seems like it is in the process and is moving at a speed these projects normally do.

CHAIR COY commented that he had also wondered where the project was for a little while, but now felt like everything is moving forward because between when they passed this and now, he could see that there had been quite a bit of action. Also, from a technical perspective, he is in agreement with the comments that have been expressed.

There were no public comments.

MR. VANHOVE moved to recommend that staff return this letter to the Community Advisory Committee thanking them for their services and informing them that these items have already been taken care of through the PEL process. MR. ALIMI seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

**Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Resolution - Seward to Glenn
PEL 2023-02**

Resolution 2023-02 is requesting that the CAC be able to submit their comments on the travel demand modeling to the project team.

In response to Mr. Lyon's question if these are duplicate comments and the Committee has already seen them, MR. JACKSON noted, to his knowledge, this is the first time the comments had been reviewed and responded to. He had attended the special meeting and did not think the members had the chance to review the team's responses prior to that meeting, but they chose to put forward a resolution anyway.

MR. JONGENELEN accepted responsibility for getting the comments to the CAC just as their special meeting was starting.

MR. JACKSON added that the CAC was late in returning their responses and did not get them to Mr. Jongenelen until last Friday.

MR. BOWLAND asked staff if the CAC would be interested in looking at the responses and maybe revising their resolution based on input from the project team?

MR. VANHOVE commented that a lot of these comments have already been addressed and a lot of the concerns are outside the scope of the project, so they cannot be dealt with. He was highly concerned about forwarding this to the PC without first sending it back to the CAC asking them to please revise their comments to focus on the PEL.

MS. KOHLHAAS asked if it would be possible to inform the CAC that their comments are important to the TAC and the PC, just not in a resolution.

MR. JONGENELEN noted that it could be sent back to the CAC asking them to review it and also forward it to the PC at the same time, but the PC will ask if the CAC reviewed these in light of the comments. So maybe send it back to the CAC for review and decide if they want to make any changes and refine their comments? He agreed that the comments should not have been submitted in resolution form. If a resolution is forwarded to the PC, he would recommend the language be more formal.

MR. STICHICK advocated for making these part of the public record and posting on the website.

MR. LYON felt that it would make sense (since the TAC has responses from the project team and the CAC did receive them but did not have adequate time to review and a number of the comments talked about not doing any pedestrian modeling) to provide a quality response on why there was no pedestrian modeling, which is not what this particular model does. It would make sense to remand this with the project teams responses back to the CAC and let them decide if they want to make any modifications. Some of these comments are a little inflammatory and are not something the TAC nor the PC should be sending to the project team as official AMATS comments, and changes would need to be made in order for him to support this. The CAC needs to be given the opportunity to chew on the responses from the project team a little bit more and decide if they still want to send them all through.

CHAIR COY asked if there was a way to revise the resolution that speaks more from AMATS versus from individuals?

MR. LYON replied, yes, by not using the word 'I' in the comments. The TAC is a technical group of field experts and do not make inflammatory statements like using a 'sledgehammer to drive a nail'. That is not how our MPO is set up.

There were no public comments.

MR. STICHICK moved that AMATS staff recommend to the Community Advisory Committee that they revisit these concerns in light of the responses provided by DOT&PF and recommend the CAC submit any outstanding comments and recommendations directly to the DOT&PF project team. MS. KOHLHAAS seconded.

MR. LYON opposed the motion because this is a very large and important project that has had, as Mr. Jackson stated, a lot of comments already, so it definitely has a lot of community interest. If they are coming from AMATS, then they need to come to the Policy Committee. He would not support sending them directly to DOT&PF without it coming back to the Policy Committee.

MR. STICHICK accepted Mr. Lyon's friendly amendment to send them back through the Policy Committee and recommend the next go around does not come through as a resolution. MS. KOHLHAAS seconded

CHAIR COY passed the gavel and his role as Chair to Vice Chair Vanhove.

MR. COY recommended adjusting the motion that, instead of having these sorts of comments, we ask them to revise it so that it speaks less to comments and to a higher level of what their priorities are for the project, and what they are trying to accomplish. That could be a higher level for what the Policy Committee could support and would make more sense for AMATS to do.

MR. JONGENELEN recommended sending this back to the CAC for them to review the information from DOT&PF, revise their comments, and submit back through the TAC and the PC as comments, not in a resolution. Those comments could then be submitted to the project team. If there is a desire to do a resolution on high-level things, we can do that another time.

MR STICHICK accepted a friendly amendment to submit it through the TAC and PC. MS. KOHLHAAS seconded.

Hearing no objections, this motion passed.

Chair Coy assumed the gavel and continued to preside over the meeting.

Mr. Ribuffo left the meeting at 3:55 p.m.

6. PROJECT AND PLAN UPDATES

a. Destination UMED Study Update

PHIL OLMSTEAD with Nelson/Nygaard Consulting provided a PowerPoint presentation.

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

(MK) Does the boundary cover Tudor Road?

(PO) *Yes, Tudor Road is the southern boundary. There was a lot of conversation around not just the street network and safety and access within UMED, but those arterials that surround UMED.*

(MK) There is interest in having easier crossings between Piper and Elmore.

(BC) Did not think it was that far. Is it bounded by Elmore?

(PO) *Lake Otis to Baxter, so, yes, it does cover Elmore and Piper. One of the things heard and identified is that those are very long blocks. If one gets dropped off at the bus stop on the south side of Tudor (in between one of those midblock crossings), we observed during the few times having been there that people are making a run for it across Tudor.*

(BC) Is Scott Thomas with DOT&PF part of some of the committees?

(JC) *Yes, there was a conversation with Scott Thomas last year regarding safety issues.*

(BC) Will you be looking at a crossing in the area of Wright Street with potential HSIP funding? When will things come before the TAC for action?

(JC) *This is a study. There is nothing for the TAC of PC to approve, but staff will provide the Committees with the final results from Nelson/Nygaard.*

(AJ) *Reiterated that staff will bring it to the TAC and PC for a final review and basically an approval to just accept the study as presented. It is not as formal as the MTP where it is codified in the federal regulations.*

(MK) There was a pricing category for parking. She was having difficulty envisioning meter parking in that area. Where would that be?

(PO) *This is one of those strategies that falls into that bucket of a later phase. Price-parking within the district was already done by UAA. The majority of the remaining parking is free. At this time, we are not contemplating parking meters on streets. It is more about giving individual institutions the technical resources to be able to manage their parking better with a potential tool like pricing and deferring to them to recognize their autonomy to manage their parking as they see fit. Again, it is one of the core TDM*

(Transportation Demand Management) strategies when we look at other successful case studies. It is finding the right time and how much we want to turn that knob (so to speak) within UMED. There is not a lot of on-street parking within the core of the district as you move into the residential areas. The vast majority (almost 18,000 spaces) of parking is off-street.

There were no public comments.

b. Transportation Systems Management & Operations (TSMO) Plan Update

MS. SCHUETTE briefed the Committee on TSMO.

MS. KOHLHAAS is particularly interested in the performance measures and the monitoring and being able to manage them. As the team is preparing the presentation, that is an aspect she would particularly like to see.

There were no public comments.

c. Public Input Platform - Introduction

MS. SCHUETTE presented the platform.

There were no public comments.

7. GENERAL INFORMATION - None

8. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

MR. VANHOVE announced that he is retiring May 1 and is hoping to have his position filled in time to have his replacement accompany him to the April TAC meeting.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

10. ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no objections, the meeting adjourned at 4:26 p.m.