

## **Anchorage's "Interim 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan" Needs Robust Public Input**

**Please Testify on Tuesday, 7/21 at 5:30 in the Mayor's Conference Room to Avoid a Rubber-Stamp of the Parnell/Sullivan Plan, and Ask for Removal of the Knik Arm Bridge**

**Pre-hearing snacks will be provided!**

The current Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is the blueprint that guides changes to the transportation system within Anchorage and Chugiak-Eagle River through 2035 including road and bridge repairs, improving safety, new road segments, enhancing public transportation and biking/walking, etc. A federally-approved MTP allows Anchorage to receive federal funding for transportation projects. The existing MTP, finalized in 2012, contains the Knik Arm Bridge, the proposed UMED road, and limited bike/ped upgrades.

Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions, or AMATS, currently is asking for comments on an *Interim* MTP, which would extend the existing MTP. AMATS expects to complete a 2040 MTP within 3 years. With a new Governor and Mayor, and state and federal transportation revenues in a steep decline, 3 years (Mayor Berkowitz's entire term!) is too long to wait for key MTP changes. And despite what the bureaucrats might say, such changes can be accomplished without any lapse in federal approval as there are many months remaining to complete and receive approval for this interim document. Please testify on July 21 that Anchorage needs an improved MTP, not a tweaking of the MTP approved in 2012.

AMATS needs to remove the costly Knik Arm Bridge from the Interim MTP because:

1. Toll revenues will not be sufficient to build and operate the bridge, so paying for the bridge will adversely impact transportation funding for Anchorage, likely for decades. Official DOT/Knik Arm Bridge estimates of population living near the bridge – and thus numbers of toll bridge users – are (embarrassingly) high compared to estimates by the Mat-Su Borough and by AMATS.
2. It is a shorter distance and would take less time to travel to Anchorage via the toll-free Glenn Highway from Wasilla and Palmer than to take the proposed toll bridge. This means the bridge will have relatively few users for such an expensive project for many years, and perhaps forever.
3. The state needs to stop hemorrhaging money for this costly, unnecessary project. The project has not been and will never be fully funded by the federal government and tolls, and state DOT and AMATS in its MTP should not state otherwise.
4. Residential and business properties continue to be adversely affected through state DOT's acquisition and modification of bridge-related right-of-way.

In addition to opposing inclusion of the Knik Arm Bridge in the Interim MTP, please feel free to testify on other transportation changes needed in Anchorage. These may include building a second three-lane Eagle River Bridge on the Glenn Highway so users in both directions will benefit, connecting the Seward Highway to International Airport Road, re-allocating proposed UMED road money to other projects, expeditiously implementing the AMATS bicycle and pedestrian plans, and other measures.

The draft MTP documents are available at:

[http://www.muni.org/Departments/OCPD/Planning/AMATS/Documents/2015%20Docs/Interim\\_2035\\_MTP/Interim2035MTP\\_Public-Review-DRAFT\\_15y06m26d.pdf](http://www.muni.org/Departments/OCPD/Planning/AMATS/Documents/2015%20Docs/Interim_2035_MTP/Interim2035MTP_Public-Review-DRAFT_15y06m26d.pdf)

Written comments are due by 5 pm on July 27 and can be sent to [amatsinfo@muni.org](mailto:amatsinfo@muni.org) or via mail to: AMATS Planning, 4700 Elmore Road, Anchorage, AK 99507

If you have questions on the MTP, please contact Lois Epstein, at [loisepstein@gmail.com](mailto:loisepstein@gmail.com) or 748-0448.