



Technical Committee Board Meeting MatSu Valley Planning for Transportation

MEMBERS

Adeyemi Alimi, ADEC
Alex Strawn, MSB (**Chair**)
Ben White, Alaska DOT&PF535
Bob Charles Jr., Knik Tribe
Brian Winnestaffer, Chickaloon Native Village
Chris Bentz, Alaska DOT&PF
Crystal Smith, MSBSD
Dan Tucker, RSA Representative
Erich Schaal, City of Wasilla (**Vice Chair**)
Jennifer Busch, Public Transit
Jude Bilafer, City of Palmer
Kate Dueber, ARRC
Lawrence Smith, Trucking Industry Advocate
Randy Durham, MSB TAB
Stuart Leidner, Mobility Advocate
Tom Adams, MSB

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Agenda

Technical Committee

Tuesday, October 14th, 2025
2:00 – 4:00 pm

Meeting Location

Alaska DOT Mat Su District Office at 500 S Seward Meridian Pkwy, Wasilla, Alaska
There is limited parking at the building's main entrance; an overflow parking lot is adjacent to the south.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
 - a. Introduce new staff

The meeting was called to order at 2:00PM.

Members Present:

Adeyemi Alimi, ADEC
Alex Strawn, MSB (Chair)
Ben White, Alaska DOT&PF
Brian Winnestaffer, Chickaloon Native Village
Chris Bentz, Alaska DOT&PF
Crystal Smith, MSBSD
Dan Tucker, RSA Representative
Erich Schaal, City of Wasilla (Vice Chair)
Jude Bilafer, City of Palmer
Lawrence Smith, Trucking Industry Advocate
Brad Schwartz (substituting for Stuart Leidner)

Members Absent:

Bob Charles Jr., Knik Tribe
Jennifer Busch, Public Transit
Kate Dueber, ARRC
Randy Durham, MSB TAB
Tom Adams, MSB



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Visitors Present:

Carrie Cecil, MVP Senior Planner (new staff)
Kim Sollien, MVP Executive Director
Anjie Goulding, MVP Transportation Planning Manager
Patrick (Pat) Cotter, RESPEC
Adam R. Bradway, DOT

2. Consent Agenda (**Action Item**)
 - a. Approval of the October 14th, 2025, Agenda
 - b. Approval of the August 12th, 2025, Minutes

*Motion to approve the Consent Agenda and Meeting Minutes (Tucker), seconded.
Approved unanimously.*

3. Staff Report
 - Staff Report
 - a. Schedule of topics

Kim Sollien provided a staff report introducing **Carrie Cecil**, the newest MVP staff member joining as a Transportation Planner. *Carrie* comes to MVP from the Bureau of Land Management where she worked for five years as a project manager and NEPA compliance coordinator. Her background includes a master's degree in archaeology and a focus on community-centered problem solving.

Kim reported that she and *Anjie* attended the AMPO (Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations) National Conference in Providence, Rhode Island. *Anjie* attended workshops focused on Complete Streets policy and blending federal funding for transit. *Kim* attended workshops on small MPO operations and sustainable transit funding, noting that resources may be available for Valley Transit.

Kim took personal time in September and reported that the organization is entering a busy period with thick packets and multiple action items requiring careful review prior to meetings. She is conducting the organization's first annual audit and will present the first full budget report to the Policy Board on October 23rd.

No questions were raised from committee members.

4. Voices of the Visitors (Non-Action Items)

None.

5. Policy Board August 27th Action Items
 - a. *Motion to postpone action on the letter to Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities Commissioner Ryan Anderson, Deputy Commissioner Katherine Keith, and the STIP Team outlining MVP's FFY24, FFY25, and FFY26 funding allocation questions documented in STIP Amendment #2 until the next Policy Board meeting (**Holland**), seconded. Passed unanimously.*



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Kim Sollien provided an overview of this postponement. The Policy Board deferred action to allow for further review, and a new letter will be considered at this meeting.

6. Action Items

- a. MTP Vision Statement, Goals and Objectives Recommendation for Public Comment Period (Action Item)

Recommended Motion: Motion to recommend the Policy Board approve the MTP Vision Statement, Goals, and Objectives as presented for a 30-day Public Comment Period.

Kim Sollien provided background on the September 2nd special work session where the Technical Committee and Policy Board members participated in collaborative activities to develop the MTP Vision Statement, Goals, and Objectives. Consultants from RESPEC and Joni Wilm from Hanum Consulting facilitated the session, guiding the group through activities to identify transportation network vision, problems, and opportunities, ultimately developing draft goals and objectives.

Staff reviewed the memo documenting the activities and refined goals and objectives for presentation.

Motion to recommend the Policy Board approve the MTP Vision Statement, Goals, and Objectives as presented for a 30-day Public Comment Period (Winnestaffer), seconded. No discussion. Approved unanimously.

- b. Public Participation Plan Recommendation for approval (Action Item)

Recommended Motion: Motion to recommend that the Policy Board adopt the Public Participation Plan as presented

Anjie Goulding presented the final Public Participation Plan (PPP) following restructuring based on feedback from the 45-day public comment period. Changes included reorganization for reader accessibility, consolidation of legal framework requirements, improved transitions between topics, and question-based headers to address community questions directly. No substantive wording changes were made; modifications were structural and transitional.

The organization received minimal public comments during the comment period, with most concerns focused on project involvement rather than PPP content. All comments were addressed and all were offered opportunity to attend this or future October Policy Board meeting where this plan will go through final adoption.

Motion to recommend that the Policy Board adopt the Public Participation Plan as presented (Tucker), seconded. No discussion. Approved unanimously.

- c. STIP Amendment #2 Carryover Funds and Utilization of MVP funding without MVP coordination- Memo (Action Item)

Recommended Motion: Motion to recommend that the Policy Board approve and send the memo to Alaska DOT &PF



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documenting the lack of consultation on MVP's carryover funding, the 3'C process, utilization of MVP STBG and CRP funds without consultation and for not involving MVP in the discussion about the FFY26-29 STIP prior to its release to the public.

Kim Sollien presented a detailed memo documenting coordination challenges regarding MVP's funding utilization and carryover. The memo identifies five key issues:

1. MVP was not consulted regarding sub-allocations for STBG, TAP, and CRP funds prior to October 1st, nor informed of carryover funding.
2. Two million dollars of MVP's FY24 STBG funding was used for the Bogard Road repaving project (Trunk Road to Road to Wasilla Fishhook) without consultation, despite the Policy Board prioritizing the corridor for funding.
3. MVP's CRP funding was utilized for fleet conversion without consultation; federal law requires formal consultation and MPO sign-off for CRP utilization in urbanized areas with an MPO.
4. The FFY26-29 STIP is in development, and MVP has not been consulted despite not yet having an MTP or TIP in place. MVP's funding is being programmed directly into the STIP.
5. The 3C process (Consultation, Coordination, Cooperation) required by federal regulation is not being followed in a timely manner.

Discussion:

Dan Tucker questioned whether issues stem from MVP's recent formation and catching up.

Brian Winnestaffer asked why DOT&PF does not have a designated TIP Coordinator for MVP, similar to other MPOs, to facilitate regular communication.

Adam Bradway (DOT) responded that he and *Ben White* previously filled this coordination role, but current staffing and process changes have reduced their involvement. He noted that DOT planning staff historically managed the STIP, but it has moved to the Commissioner's office, creating communication gaps. At the most recent MPO quarterly meeting, DOT committed to providing MVP with annual funding notifications and carryover confirmation.

Ben White emphasized that once MVP has an approved MTP and TIP in place, the organization will have greater control over its funds, as other MPOs (FAST and AMATS) have experienced. He noted that the current structure makes it difficult to prevent fund reallocation without established planning documents. He stressed that establishing an MTP and TIP is the priority to resolve ongoing funding issues.

Chris Bentz noted that while the letter documents funding utilization problems, it should also recognize that projects MVP intended to fund were ultimately funded, even if through different mechanisms. He recommended including accounting of which projects moved forward and how they were funded to provide full context.



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Following discussion, **Alex Strawn** suggested relaying to the Policy Board that the Technical Committee desires to amend the letter to include accounting information and to soften the tone by acknowledging that projects were funded as intended, while emphasizing the need for proper consultation and communication.

Kim Sollien noted that the Policy Board packet deadline is tomorrow, making amendment difficult. She offered two options: (1) postpone the letter and provide an amended version with accounting at the next meeting, or (2) move the letter forward and bring additional accounting documentation to the November 4th meeting.

New Motion to postpone the letter to the November 4th meeting to allow staff time to incorporate accounting information and refined language (Strawn), seconded. Vote: 9-Yes, 2-No. Motion passes.

7. Old Business

a. MTP Update

- Review the Project List from past planning efforts (RESPEC)

Pat Cotter provided a verbal update reporting that over 175 projects from past planning efforts have been identified and added to a GIS-based viewer. The viewer includes project attributes such as source plan, potential funding sources, and assigned priority levels. This project list will serve as the foundation for the upcoming project nomination process and will be refined to remove duplicates and verify projects are within the urbanized area boundary

- Travel Demand Model Updates (RESPEC)

Pat Cotter reported that the travel demand model recalibration is nearly complete. One component—the handling of trips between Matanuska-Susitna and areas including Anchorage and Eagle River—falls slightly outside the target acceptable error range but remains within acceptable parameters. RSG (the modeling subcontractor) is tweaking coefficients to improve performance at the screen line across the two Glen Highway bridges. Adam Bradway provided feedback on growth allocation methods, which RSG has incorporated to better reflect Greenfield development patterns typical of the Matanuska-Susitna area.

Chris Bentz requested access to the travel demand model prior to the work session to ensure recommendations align with land use and traffic demand. He requested baseline information from RSG regarding road capacity requirements (e.g., whether Bogard Road requires 4-lane or 2-lane capacity for projected 24,000 vehicles).

Pat Cotter agreed to schedule time with RSG for questions and will potentially invite RSG to the work session.

- Review Public Involvement Schedule and First Open House, December 3rd, location TBD (RESPEC)



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Pat Cotter outlined the upcoming public involvement schedule:

- Vision, Goals, Objectives public comment: October 24 – November 24 (30-day period)
- Public Meeting/Open House: December 3rd, 4:30-6:30 pm (location being finalized; Palmer Depot and Wasilla Library were considered but not available)
- Public Survey: November 7th (designed to inform project evaluation criteria)
- Project Nominations: November 21st through end of year (following Technical Committee and Policy Board reviews)
- Publicity Plan for project nomination process currently in draft

Pat noted that detailed timeline documentation and visual tools for tracking upcoming meetings and milestones are being developed for committee and public use.

- Review Gap Analysis (RESPEC)

Pat Cotter reported that the gap analysis will compare the existing Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) against federal MTP requirements (23 CFR 450). Initial findings show that LRTP goals align well with MAP-21 national goals, with only one LRTP goal (wayfinding strategies for transit and trails) falling outside national goals, and one national goal (reducing project delivery delays) missing from the LRTP. The gap analysis will be included in the Existing Conditions and Traffic/System Analysis report, with a full presentation expected at the November 4th meeting.

- Evaluation Criteria Work Session October 23rd Location and time TBD

Pat Cotter confirmed that a work session is scheduled for October 23rd from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm at the Menard Center to develop project evaluation criteria and corresponding

weights/rankings. The session will follow the same collaborative format as the September Vision, Goals, and Objectives work session.

b. 26-29 STIP Update from Lauren Little, Chief Engineer DOT&PF

Ben White reported that Lauren Little was unable to attend due to storm response duties. The FFY26-29 STIP remains behind schedule; the target for October release has slipped to November due to the recent severe weather on the West Coast. DOT&PF may attempt to release the draft for the 45-day public comment period by end of October, but it remains uncertain.

8. New Business
 - a. None
9. Other Issues
 - a. Transit update

Alex Strawn reported that Valley Transit and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough have reached agreement on a services contract (*not yet signed*). Borough match funding is



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currently sustaining Valley Transit operations while federal funding remains in flux due to the federal government shutdown and staffing reductions. Federal grant applications and awards are delayed.

10. Informational Items

a. UPWP Quarterly/Final Report

Kim Sollien flagged that the annual audit process is underway and the annual UPWP final report will be submitted to DOT. The report will document accomplishments and expenditures for the fiscal year.

b. Element Agency Branding Update

Anjie Goulding presented the new MVP website and branding developed in partnership with Element Agency. The presentation included the new logo, brand guide, website design, and social media strategy.

New Website Features:

- Streamlined navigation with simplified, community-focused copy
- Landing page featuring embedded introductory video
- Staff bios and contact information
- Meeting information and public involvement opportunities
- Project library (coming soon)
- Plans landing page with document links for all 4 major plans
- Contact and comment submission page
- Get Involved section emphasizing community engagement

Branding Elements:

- Logo and brand guide (colors, fonts, usage guidelines)
- Professional photography and videography (5 edited videos, approximately 60 photos and B-roll)
- Canva templates for flyers, PowerPoints, and other materials
- Branded agendas (new packet includes branded example)
- Additional branded items in development (stickers, coffee cups, beanies)

Social Media:

- Instagram and Facebook accounts (@MVPMPPO)
- Series of introductory posts featuring short videos
- QR code available for Instagram access
- Upcoming posts will introduce Policy and Technical Committee members
- Closed captions available on videos (note: some minor caption accuracy issues, particularly with "MPO" abbreviation)

Future Plans:

- MTP 101 educational video
- Seasonal photography and B-roll for diverse content
- Website translation capabilities for accessibility
- Website browser icon/favicon

The website was praised for professional appearance and user-friendly design. It is currently in round two of review and will be launched following final updates.



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c. MVP Facebook/Instagram Review

Social media accounts launched with growing followers. Committee members encouraged to follow and share with their organizations.

d. Transportation Alternatives Program Public review and comment are open until Friday, Oct. 17, 2025 [Link to the TAP Guidebook](#)

Alaska DOT has released a new Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) guidebook for public review and comment, open until Friday, October 17, 2025. MVP will develop its own criteria for TAP fund allocation.

11. Technical Committee Comments

Dan Tucker expressed appreciation for a productive and lively meeting that generated substantive results.

Ben White reported receiving a federal letter regarding Safe Roads coordination with MPOs. DOT&PF has been given 60 days to compile a list of safe road issues to be addressed by end of FY26. A preliminary list is due Friday, and Kim should expect email communication.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:47PM

Next Scheduled MPO Technical Committee Meeting – Tuesday, November 4th, 2025, from 2:00-4:00 pm to be held via Microsoft TEAMS and at the Alaska DOT MatSu District Office at 500 S Seward Meridian Pkwy, Wasilla, Alaska.