

Action: Approved | Denied | Other
 Date Action Taken: March 22, 2021
 Verified By: [Signature]
 Clerk's Note: N/A

**City of Wasilla
 Action Memorandum No. 21-17**

Authorizing The Mayor Of Wasilla As A Pre-MPO Policy Board Member For The Mat-Su Valley.

Originator: Public Works Director
 Date: 3/10/2021

Agenda of: 3/22/2021

Route to:	Department Head	Signature	Date
X	Public Works Director	[Signature]	3/10/21
X	Finance Director	[Signature]	3-10-21
	Deputy Administrator	[Signature]	3-10-21
X	City Clerk	[Signature]	3/10/2021
X	Mayor	[Signature]	3/10/2021

Fiscal Impact: yes or no

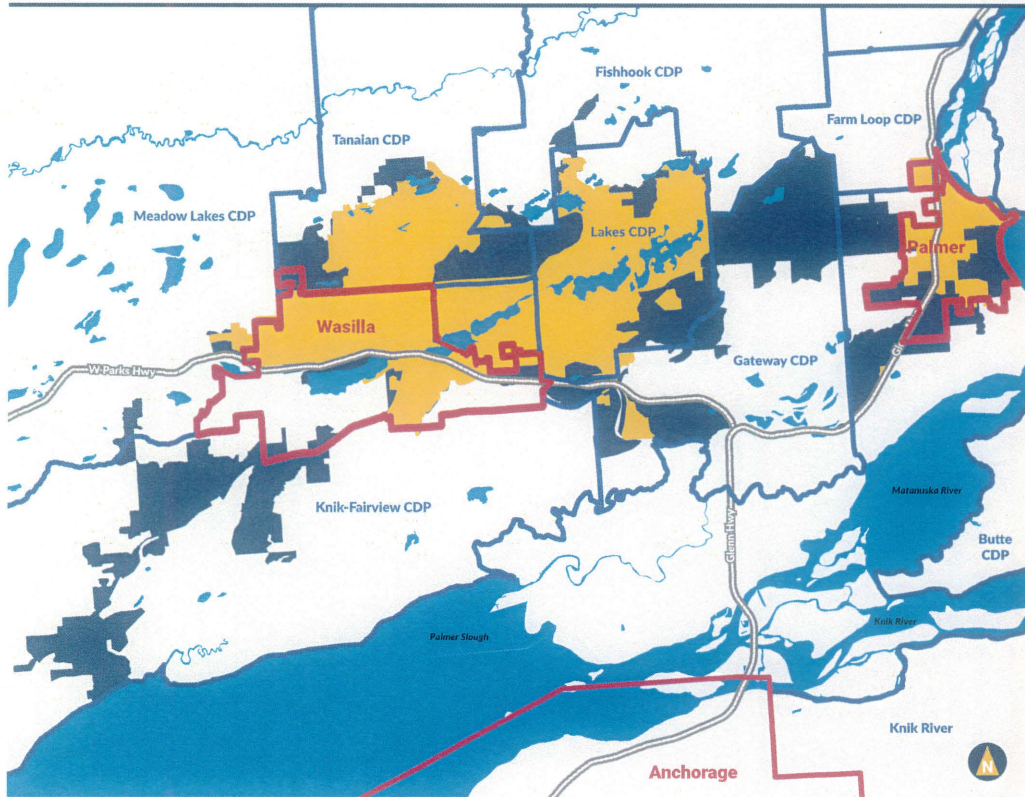
Attachments: March 2, 2021 Mat-Su Valley Pre-MPO Presentation (29 pages)

Summary Statement: The Federal Highway Administration is in the process of reviewing the 2020 Census to determine if the Mat-Su Valley will be designated as a new Urbanized Area, where the population is greater than 50,000 residents with density of 1,000 residents per square mile. The Mat-Su Borough and the State of Alaska expect this to occur. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are federally mandated transportation planning organizations comprised of representatives from local governments and transportation authorities. The MPO's role is to develop and maintain the required transportation plans for a metropolitan area to ensure that federal funds support local, state, and national priorities.

The Mat-Su Borough and the State of Alaska have established a Pre-MPO Steering Committee to determine what type of MPO structure and policy board makes sense for the Mat-Su Valley. The attached March 2, 2021 presentation outlines what a policy board may contain for membership. The MPO is designated by the Governor and this is expected to occur this fall in 2021. This Action Memorandum is proposed to authorize the Mayor as a Pre-MPO Policy Board Member for the Mat-Su Valley.

Staff Recommendation: Approve the Action Memorandum.

2000-2010 CENSUS URBAN CATEGORIES MOST DEVELOPED AREA – MAT-SU VALLEY



LEGEND

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| Borough | 2010 Boundary City Boundary |
| 2000 Urban Cluster | Highways |
| 2010 Urban Cluster | Census Designated Place |



Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
CENTRAL REGION

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

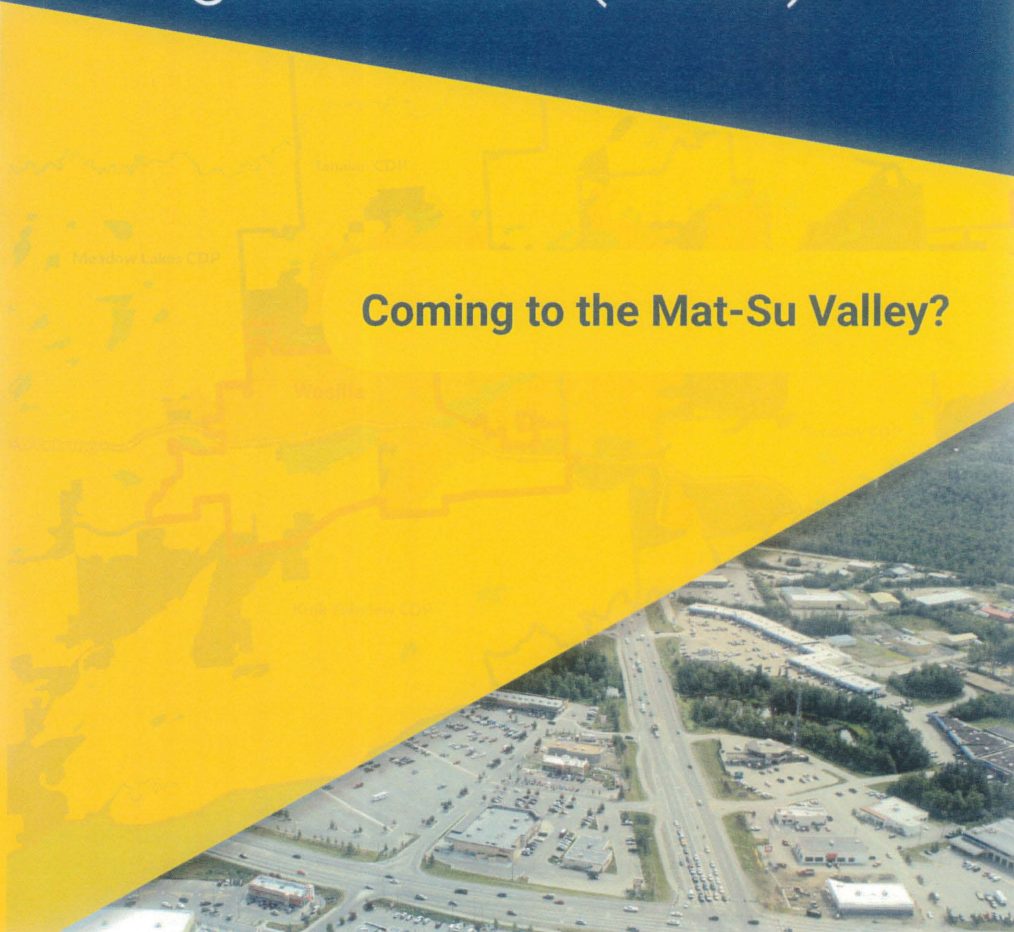
Coming to the Mat-Su Valley?



Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, Central Region

Anchorage Planning Field Office
4111 Aviation Avenue
P.O. Box 196900
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6900

Phone: 907-269-0520
Fax: 907-269-0521
Web: dot.alaska.gov/creg/planning/index.shtml



CENSUS URBAN CATEGORIES

The U.S. Census occurs every ten years. After counting America's population, the Census Bureau publishes a list in the Federal Register identifying all new areas that have seen their growth in population pass a threshold of 50,000 people within the most developed part of the community.

The Mat-Su's most developed area is currently designated an Urban Cluster (see figure on back), meaning it has at least 2,500 and no more than 49,999 residents. After the 2020 Census, it is quite possible growth over the last ten years will move Mat-Su's most developed area into a new category – Urbanized Area. If this happens, the Census Bureau will publish official notification in the Federal Register (a public listing of important federal actions).

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will review the published notification and note all the new Urbanized Areas (where the population is greater than 50,000 residents). If the Mat-Su is included, then the FHWA/FTA will notify Alaska that it must establish a new Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in order to remain eligible to receive federal-aid transportation funds.

The potential new MPO would be responsible for implementation of requirements established by the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962. Specifically, that federal-aid funded transportation projects be based on a "continuing, comprehensive, urban transportation planning process undertaken cooperatively by the state and local governments."

WHAT IS A MPO?

MPOs are federally mandated transportation planning organizations comprised of representatives from local governments and transportation authorities. The MPO's role is to develop and maintain the required transportation plans for a metropolitan area to ensure that federal funds support local, state, and national priorities.



The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962 created the federal requirement for urban transportation planning largely in response to the construction of the Interstate Highway System and the planning of routes through and around urban areas. The Act required, as a condition attached to federal transportation financial assistance, that transportation projects in urbanized areas of 50,000 or more in population be based on a continuing, comprehensive, urban transportation planning process undertaken cooperatively by the states and local governments – the birth of the so-called 3C, "continuing, comprehensive and cooperative" planning process.

WHAT WOULD THE MPO DO?

1

Develop and maintain a Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

The LRTP addresses no less than a 20-year planning horizon. This identifies future goals, strategies, and projects for the MPO.

2

Update and approve a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The TIP is a four-year program for highway and transit improvements. It identifies short-term investment priorities.

3

Develop and adopt a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The UPWP identifies the MPO's budget and planning activities (such as corridor or sub-area studies) to be undertaken in the metropolitan planning area.

4

Prepare a Public Participation Plan (PPP)

The PPP describes how the MPO involves the public and stakeholder groups in transportation planning. The MPO must periodically evaluate whether its public involvement process is really working.

HOW WOULD IT RELATE TO THE BOROUGH AND THE CITIES IN THE MAT-SU?

The MPO is a new type of coordinating body where the borough and the cities within the Urbanized Area are voting members along with the state DOT&PF and the State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) (required for compliance with Air Quality Regulations).

WHO WOULD CONTROL THE MPO?

The MPO would be governed by a Policy Committee consisting of key representatives from the Mat-Su Borough Assembly, City of Wasilla, City of Palmer, the DOT&PF Central Region Director, and a representative from the DEC.

WHO ADVISES THE POLICY COMMITTEE?

A Technical Committee consisting of city and borough officials along with DOT&PF's technical staff and a public transit representative would develop recommendations for review and approval by the Policy Committee.

HOW SOON WILL AN MPO BE REQUIRED?

Formation of an MPO is dependent upon results from the 2020 Census. It typically takes the Census Bureau two years from the time the population is counted to their publication of new Urbanized Areas. If the most developed area of the Mat-Su becomes an official Urbanized Area, then the FHWA/FTA will notify the State DOT&PF that a new MPO is required and must be formed within one year. Thus, the earliest that a Mat-Su MPO would be formed is 2023.

SO WHY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT IT NOW?

An MPO is a brand new way of working together that requires people and organizations to learn a different way of getting things done as it relates to major transportation infrastructure funded by the federal government. This learning process can sometimes take quite a while before people are comfortable with the new way of doing things. The sooner the discussion starts then the easier it will be when the federal mandates must be met.

Illustrative Example



20 YEAR MAT-SU RESIDENTS AT A GLANCE

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough has grown by 20% since 2010. It is projected there will be over 100,000 residents in 2020.

2020 - 107,000 residents



2010 - 89,000 residents



2000 - 60,000 residents



Each blue and yellow person represents 2,000 residents. Each cluster represents 120,000 persons.

Census source numbers: <http://censusviewer.com/county/AK/Matanuska-Susitna>

Mat-Su Valley Pre-MPO

6th Steering Committee Meeting
March 2, 2021

Presented by PDC Engineers | Gardino Consulting | Catalyst Alaska

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Welcome

- Camera on when possible
- Introductions
- Today we will evaluate Policy Board Roles & Responsibilities
 - Organizational Style: Leaning Independent
 - Policy Board Function
 - Policy Board Size & Make-up

Structure Survey - Hosting Options

Which structure should the Mat-Su MPO take?

Pre-MPO Steering Committee

Mat-Su Borough
 Terry Dolan - Director of Public Works
 Brad Sworts - Pre-design & Engineering manager
 Kim Sollien - Planning Services Manager

City of Palmer
 Chris Nall - Public Works Director

City of Wasilla
 Archie Giddings- Public Works Director

ADOT Anchorage Field Office
 Todd Vanhove - Chief of Planning

Valley Transit
 Jennifer Busch - Director

Knik Tribe
 Bob Charles- IRR Roads Manager

Chickaloon Native Village
 Brian Winnestaffler - Transportation Director

Bike and Pedestrian Advocates
 Wes Hoskins-Director, Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation

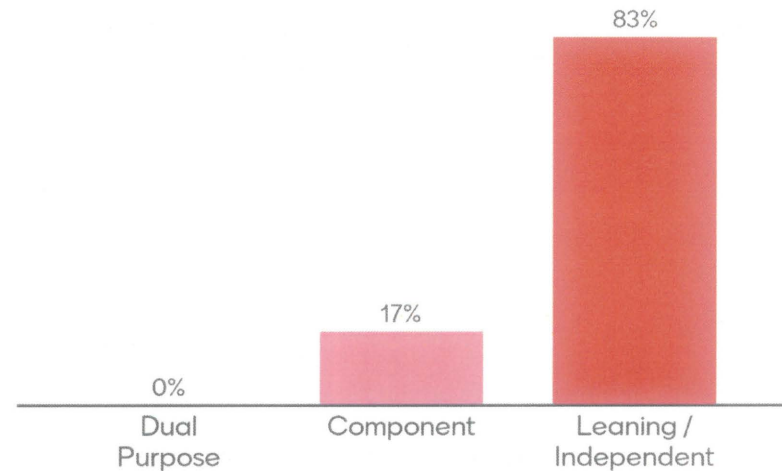
Health & Human Services; Public Transportation Needs
 Jim Beck - Senior Program Officer, Mat-Su Health Foundation

MSB Transportation Advisory Board
 LaQuita Chmielowski

ARRC
 Brian Lindamood- Vice President of Engineering

Non-Voting Ex-Officio

AMATS
 Craig Lyon
 Fast Planning
 Jackson Fox
 City of Houston
 Rep TBD
 ADEC
 Cindy Heil
 RSA Board
 vacant
 TAB
 Josh Cross
 State MPO Coordinator
 Adam Moser



Leaning Independent

- An MPO that “leans” on one of its members for support, receiving some contract services.
- The most common services are employee benefits, goods and services (legal or vehicle)
- “Gratis” benefits are discounted printing or office supplies
- Last, some MPOs will adopt the personnel policies of the affiliate member government/agency with or without significant amendment.

Characteristics of Leaning

- The MPO **board** supervises the director and staff.
- The MPO director does not have a supervisor, other than the MPO **board**.
- The MPO **board** or the member government/agency providing services can sever the contractual relationship with the MPO.
- The MPO **oversees its own administration:** finances, payroll, and purchasing, either directly or through a contractual relationship.

Political & Administrative Autonomy

The term “**political** autonomy” reflects the separation of the MPO from any of the host’s policy positions and any policy interference by the host in MPO processes.

The term “**administrative** autonomy” is used to describe the MPO’s ability to develop its own administrative policies and procedures, such as employee compensation, budgeting, and procurement.

Many MPOs reported that being independent allowed them to control their own agenda and policy decisions **without perceived or real interference**.

MPO Structure Trends @ 2016 survey

Table 3-16 Changes in MPO Organizational Structure in the Past 10 Years

Change in Organizational Structure	Number	Percent
The MPO merged with another MPO	4	5.8%
The MPO became independent	11	15.9%
The MPO became hosted	1	1.4%
The MPO separated from another MPO	2	2.9%
The MPO switched host agencies	5	7.2%
Other	46	66.7%
Total	69	100.0%

MPO Policy Board

- A governing board that sets policy for the transportation planning process in their region.
- Consisting of units of local government who represent at least 75% of the existing metropolitan planning area population (including the largest incorporated city) **Therefore, MSB & Wasilla *must* be included**

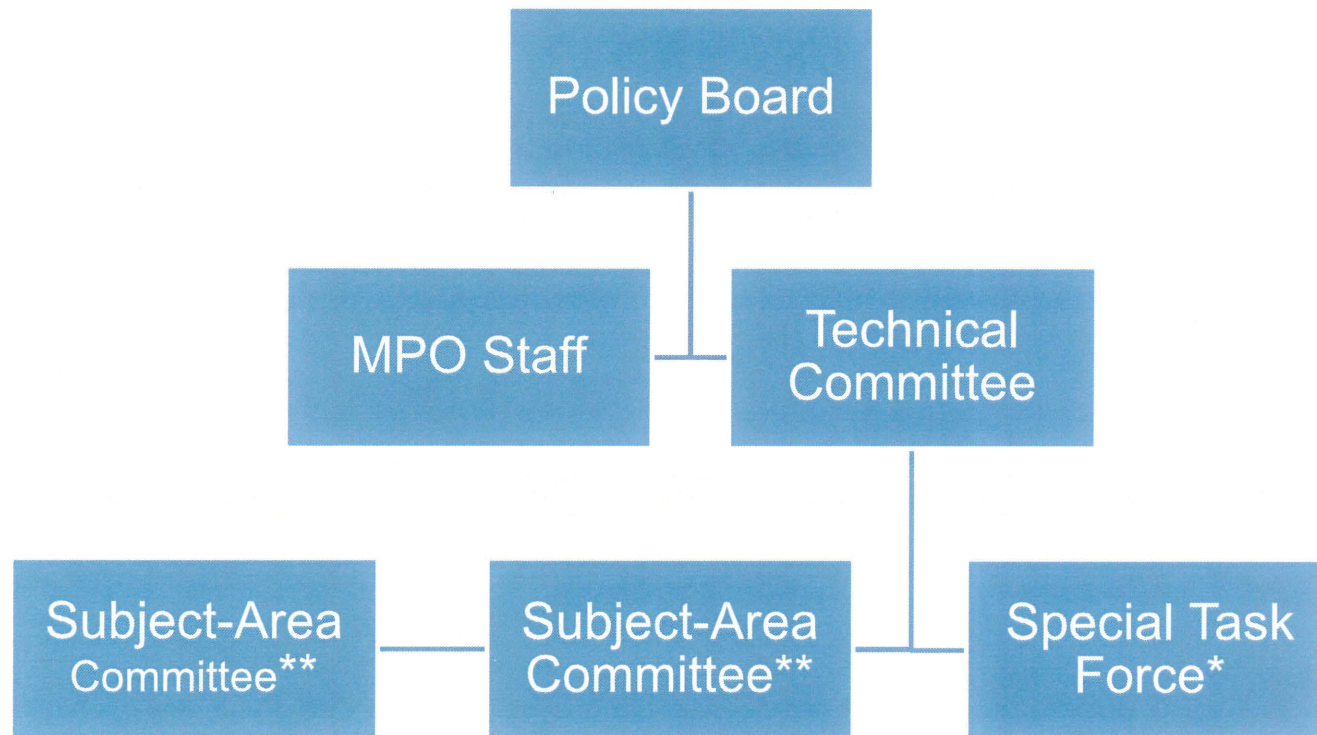
Examples: at least one official from each, DOT assumed.

- City Mayor & MSB Assembly person & DOT
- MSB Manager & City Council & DOT
- MSB Manager & City Mayor & DOT

MPO Policy Board

- Federal law encourages participation by other **important stakeholders** (tribes, transit, bike & pedestrian, health advocates, school districts, military bases, universities, etc.)
- But does not dictate the manner of such participation including such matters as non-voting board membership, the constitution of advisory committees, and voting rights of board members.

MPO Organizational Chart



*Formed when required for special projects or studies.

**Examples include: Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (AMATS & FAST Planning) or Project Enhancement Committee (FAST Planning)

MatSu Policy Board Formation

- Acting/Interim Policy Board
- Steering Committee consensus as to # of seats
- Local government entities designate appointees

Policy Board Priorities will be:

- Bylaws governing membership
- Decision-making procedures
- Establish Technical Committee

Steering Committee will make recommendations to the Policy Board for consideration

Policy Board

- Official Policy Board will be designated by the Governor
- Must include local governments representing 75% or more of the region's population
- Average 8.9 seats for MPOs under 100,000 in population
- Can rotate board members
- Can be one member, one vote. Can have non-voting seats

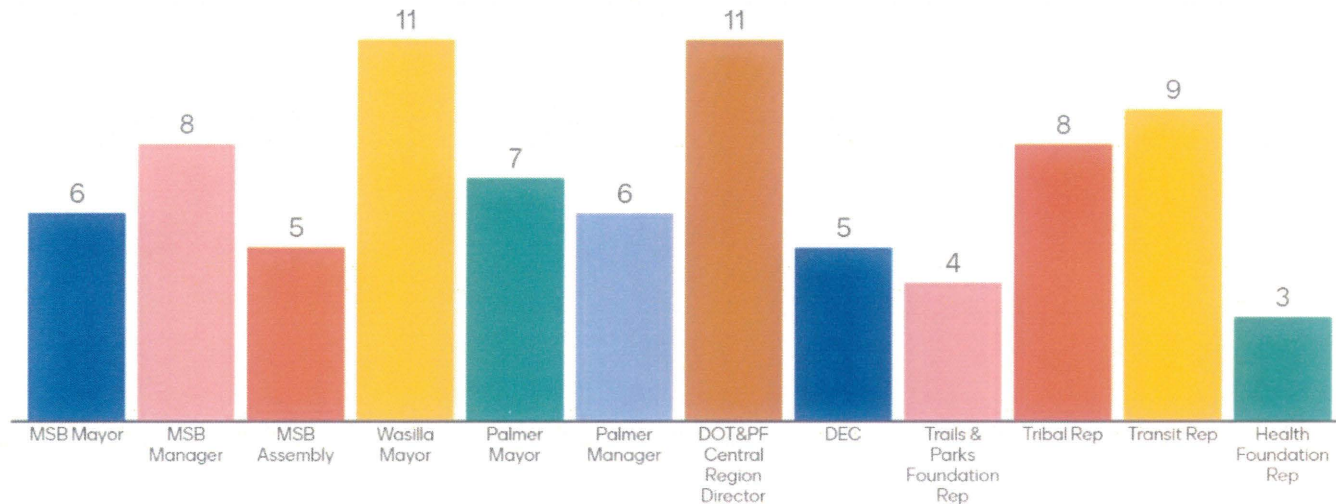
Policy Board Purpose

- Establish the need and priorities of transportation within the Metropolitan Planning Area
- Direct the preparation and implementation of transportation plans, programs, and studies
- Provide overall direction to the Technical Committee and Staff
- Ensure public involvement throughout the planning process

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Which are the most appropriate representatives for the Mat-Su Valley's MPO Policy Board?



State of Alaska



Tribal Representative



Non-Profit Partners | Match Funding



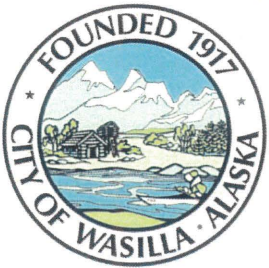
VALLEY TRANSIT

Mat-Su Borough – 2nd Class, Strong Manager



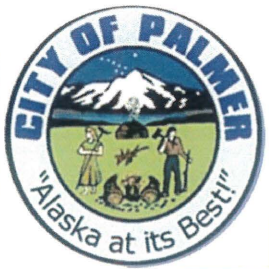
Position	Hired/Elected	Term	Term Limits	Notes
Assembly	Elected (7)	staggered three-year	two consecutive full terms	
Mayor	Elected	three-year term	November 2021 2024	
Manager	Appointed*			* An elected official may not be appointed manager sooner than one year after leaving office.

Wasilla – 1st Class City, Strong Mayor



Position	Hired/Elected	Term	Role	Notes
Council	Elected (6)	staggered three-year		2 nd & 4 th Monday
Mayor	Appointed	three-year term		
Deputy Administrator				

Palmer – Home Rule, Strong Manager



Position	Hired/Elected	Term	Role	Notes
Council	Elected (6)	staggered three-year		2 nd & 4 th Tuesday
Mayor	Elected		Community Relations	
Manager	Appointed		Organizational Manager	

Policy Boards Comparison for Discussion

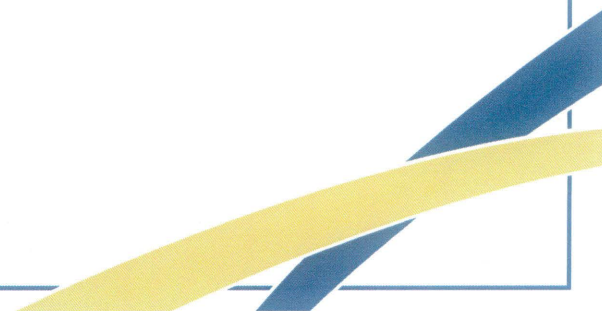
Policy Board	FAST Planning	AMATS	DOT Brochure MSB Example	2016 MPO Assessment
No. Members	7	5	5	5
Meeting Interval	Monthly	Monthly	N/A	N/A
Stakeholders Represented Special considerations for the Mat-Su Valley: Transit Tribal Bike/Ped	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FNSB Mayor 2. FNSB Assembly (1) 3. Fairbanks Council (1) 4. Fairbanks Mayor 5. North Pole Mayor 6. ADOT&PF Northern Region Director 7. ADEC – Air Quality 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ANC Mayor 2. ADOT&PF Commissioner (or designee) 3. ADEC Commissioner (or designee) 4 & 5. Municipal Assembly Member (x2) <p>Non-voting Member: Municipal Assembly Alternate</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MSB Assembly 2. City of Wasilla 3. City of Palmer 4. DOT&PF Central Region Director 5. ADEC 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MSB Mayor 2. MSB Assembly (2) 3. Palmer Mayor 4. Wasilla Mayor 5. ADOT&PF Central Region Director (or designee)

“Small” Policy Board (example 3 seats, could be 3-5)

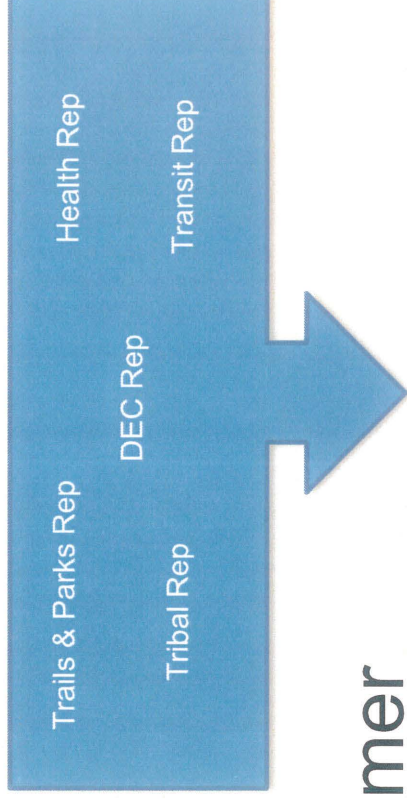
- **Bare minimum** required by law.
- “Consisting of units of local government who represent at least 75% of the existing metropolitan planning area population (including the largest incorporated city)”
- ****MSB & Wasilla must be included****
- For Mat-Su MPO, a DOT representative is also assumed.
- Steering committee recommends the number of seats and which entities hold these seats.
- Entities’ governing boards choose and approve which positions fill seats.
- Governor has final approval of Policy Board.

Examples of potential board make-up by positions:
(Wasilla Mayor & MSB Assemblyperson & DOT)
(MSB Manager & Wasilla City Council Member & DOT)
(MSB Manager & Wasilla Mayor & DOT)

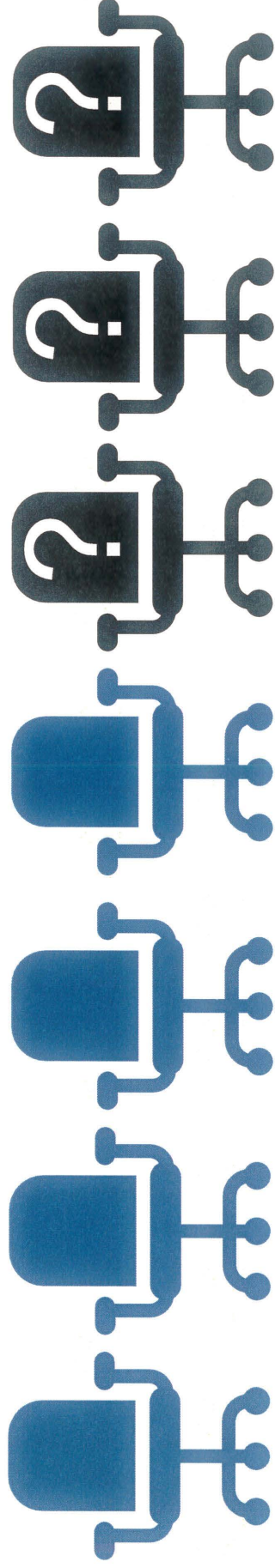
MSB Wasilla DOT



“Medium” Policy Board (example 7 seats, could be 7-9)



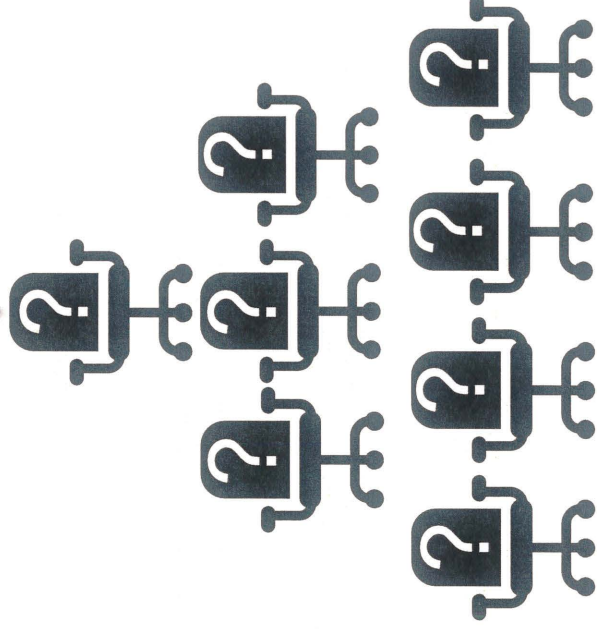
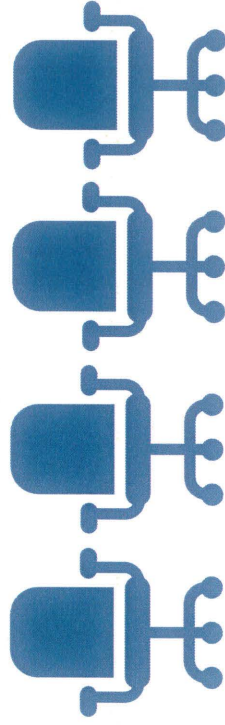
MSB Wasilla DOT Palmer



“Large” Policy Board

(example 11 seats, could be 11-15)

MSB Wasilla Palmer DOT



Policy Board Size Survey



Pre-MPO Steering Committee

Mat-Su Borough

Terry Dolan - Director of Public Works
Brad Sworts - Pre-design & Engineering manager
Kim Sollien - Planning Services Manager

City of Palmer

Chris Nall - Public Works Director

City of Wasilla

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vacant

TAB

Josh Cross

State MPO Coordinator

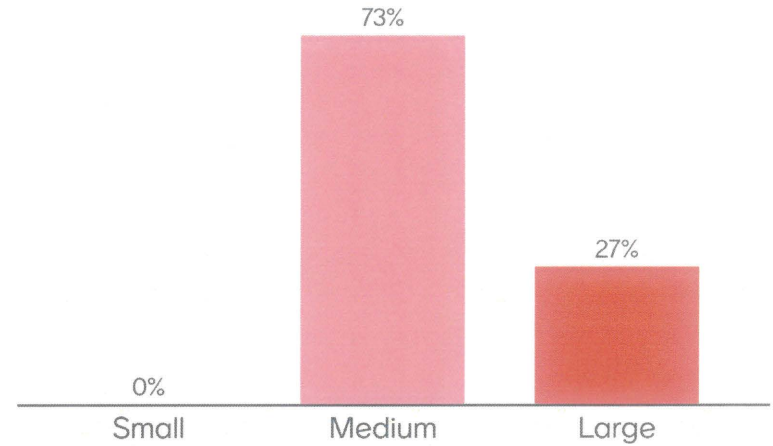
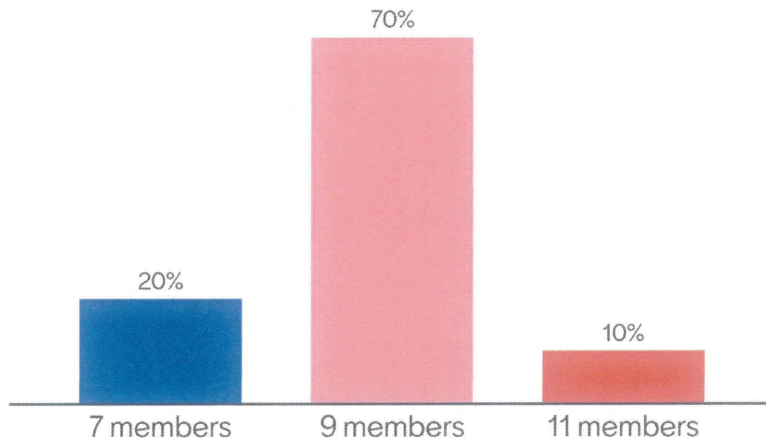
Adam Moser

First Question →

What size do you think the Mat-Su MPO Policy Board should be?

Second Question

How many seats do you think the Mat-Su MPO Policy Board should have?



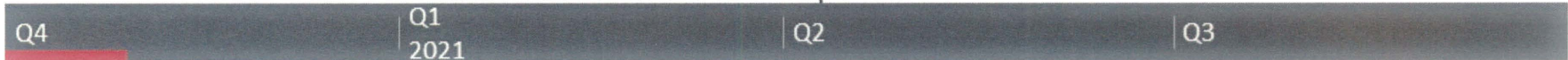
Steering Committee Schedule

- March: Policy Board Discussion
- April: Public Participation Plan (PPP)
- May: UPWP

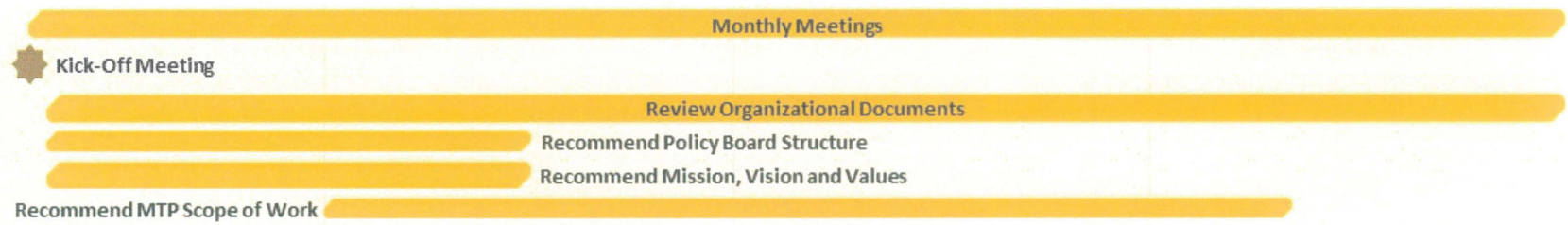
(30 day UPWP | 45 day PPP = public comment)

- June: Joint Steering/Policy Board Meeting
- July: Technical Committee Formation
- August: Policy Board | Technical Committee

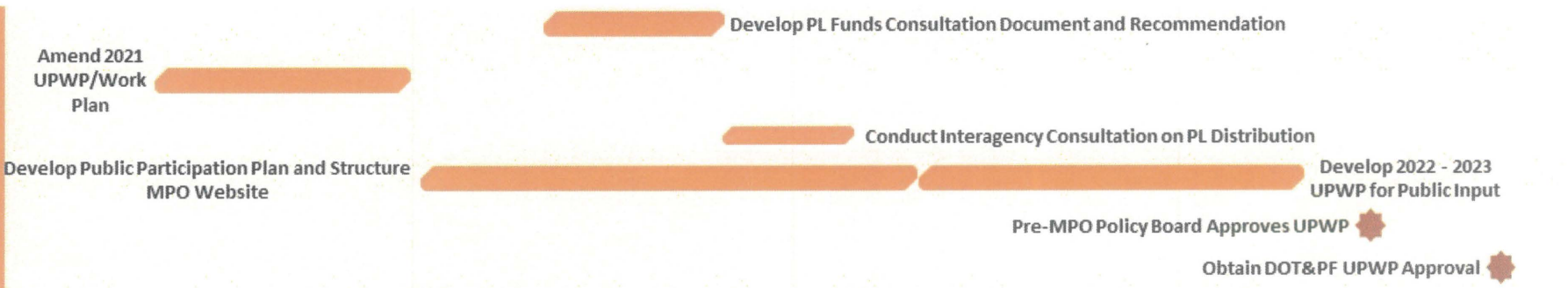
Mat-Su Pre-MPO 2021 Proposed Work Plan



Pre-MPO Steering Committee



Develop UPWP/Work Plans



Pre-MPO Policy Board



Boundary Development



Amended 10/29/2020

“Medium” Policy Board (example 7 seats, could be 7-9)

Mat-Su Borough – 2nd Class, Strong Manager



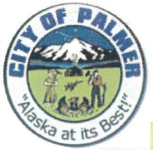
Position	Hired/Elected
Assembly	Elected (7)
Mayor	Elected
Manager	Appointed*

Wasilla – 1st Class City, Strong Mayor

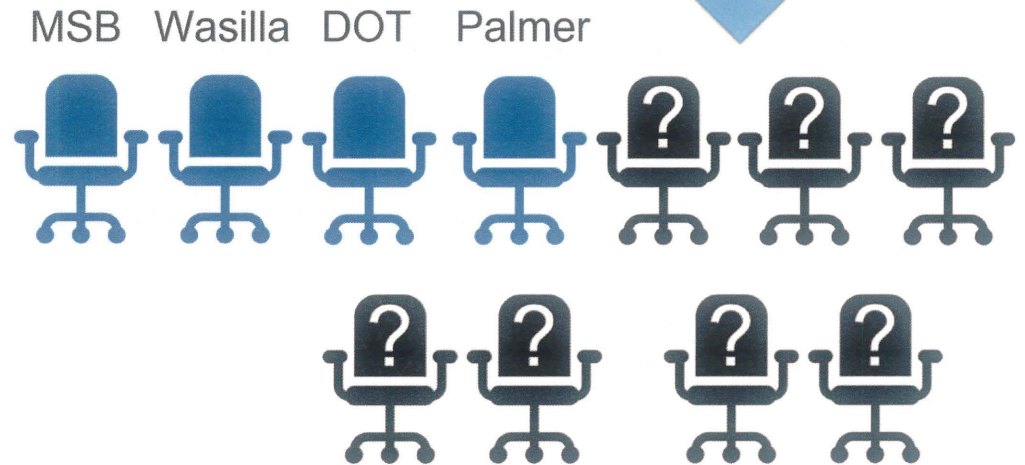
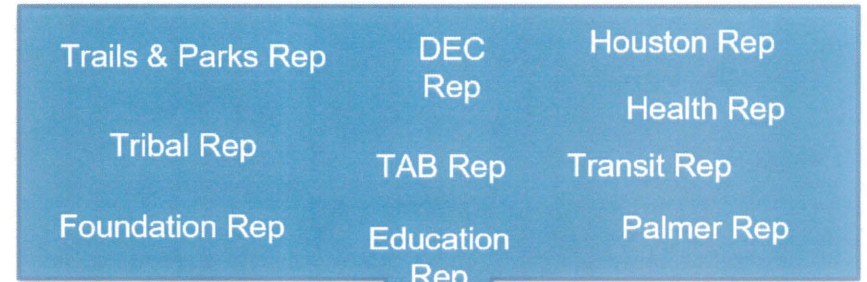


Position	Hired/Elected
Council	Elected (6)
Mayor	Appointed
Deputy Administrator	

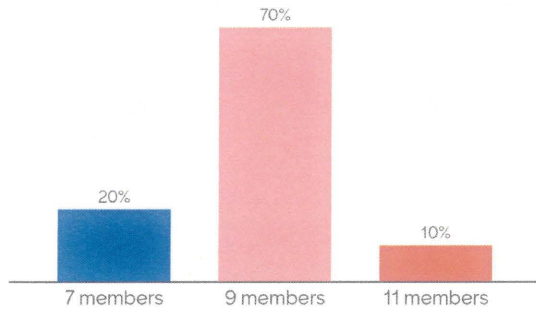
Palmer – Home Rule, Strong Manager



Position	Hired/Elected
Council	Elected (6)
Mayor	Elected
Manager	Appointed



How many seats do you think the Mat-Su MPO Policy Board should have?



Homework



- Steering Committee Members need to reach out to their governing bodies and work with them to determine which **positions** (not individuals) will fill MPO Acting Policy Board seats to represent the organization or local government entity.

For example:

- MSB Steering Committee members talk to: **Mayor & Assembly.**
- City Steering Committee members talk to: **Mayor and/or Manager and/or City Council (depending).**
- Non-profit Steering Committee members talk to: **Each other and own Governing board.**
- Tribal Government Steering Committee members talk to: **Each other and own Governing Council.**

Questions?

www.MatSuMPO.com
MatSuMPO@gmail.com

