

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

Date: August 25, 2021

Kittelson Project No: 25697

To: Eric Taylor

From: Holly Spoth-Torres

Subject: Joint Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee and Freight Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

JOINT STAC & FAC MEETING SUMMARY

SUMMARY:

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) held a Joint Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC) and Freight Advisory Committee (FAC) meeting on Wednesday, August 25, 2021, from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. using the virtual platform Microsoft Teams. A toll-free call-in number was available for those who couldn't join virtually, and the meeting was open to the public.

The project team gave a presentation on the draft Financial Technical Memorandum #3 and the nine Driving Factors that may influence transportation during the planning time frame. Each Driving Factor and associated comments are formatted into a separate table below. There is a table for general comments as well. Attendees participated in two interactive polls during the meeting, and those questions and results are included in this report.

After the meeting, a recording of the meeting and the presentation were posted on the project website (www.alaskamoves2050.com). Members of the STAC and FAC were emailed to alert them that the meeting materials were available to view.

ADVERTISEMENTS:

The STAC and FAC members were invited to the meeting with an Outlook calendar invite. A public notice (attached) was posted on August 11, 2021, on the State of Alaska's Public Notices website (<https://aws.state.ak.us/OnlinePublicNotices/>) and the meeting information was posted on the project website (www.alaskamoves2050.com).

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OVERVIEW

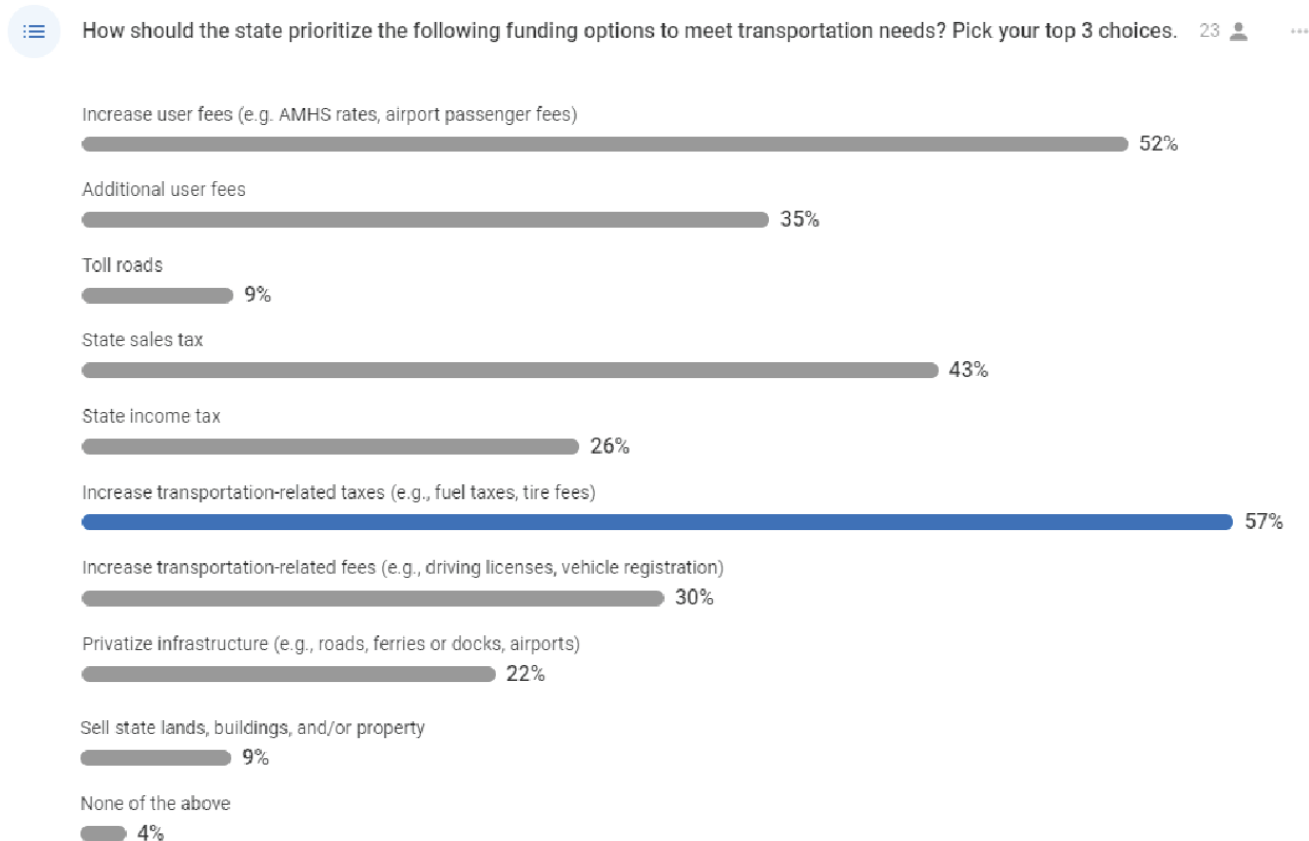
Agency	Comment	Answer (if applicable)
STAC & FAC Members		
Alaska Municipal League	This doesn't account for local match, right?	Correct. We'll clarify this in the final report.
Port of Alaska	In the numbers for AMHS, is that only counting ferries? Or cargo deliveries as well? No funding is going to ports.	Correct. We'll clarify this in the final report.
Alaska Trucking Association	What is the difference between statewide aviation & AIAS?	AIAS is Anchorage international. Statewide aviation refers to all other airports that DOT manages such as the rural airports.
Roads and Highways Advisory Board	Is funding from motor vehicle registration shown? That is a funding source.	Correct. Motor vehicle registration, including commercial vehicles, is a significant contributor and is considered as part of general fund though for this graphic. We'll make that clearer in the final report.
UPS	93 million comes from the international airport revenue fund?	Correct, but the unrestricted general fund can be confusing depending on how you separate it. We will be very clear in the final report to be transparent about where these numbers are coming from.
UPS	For rural airports, what do the expense/funding numbers encompass?	For a lot of these airports, there are fees that could be charged but are not necessarily being charged.

Agency	Comment	Answer (if applicable)
		At the local level there is some limitations to what's being provided with these things.
UPS	Why aren't more rural airport projects funded through FAA money?	A lot of rural airports projects may or may not qualify as an FAA funded project and even if a project did because there is so much need that some of these projects aren't prioritized to the level of being funded.
Maritime Advisory Board	AMHS can track commercial freight that buys tickets but there is considerable "freight" that is conveyed non-commercially.	
UPS	The charts suggest that the AIAS receives money from the state rather paying its own way and even being a net contributor to state funds. Can you clarify that there's no general funds going into the AIAS?	The International Airport budget is generated and approved by the legislature but is driven by airport revenues. No unrestricted funds go to the state because the AIAS is entirely self-funded.
Maritime Advisory Board	Not sure that the \$1.3 Billion number is accurate. If every large ferry was replaced at the highest price adjusted for inflation - yes that could be the number. The state is not planning to (or need to) replace the entire mainliner fleet.	
North Slope Borough	Can you provide more general information about how all airports are funded?	Yes, we can create a summary of airport funds.
Carlile	For operating revenues, is there any delineation between cargo revenue or does it fall under unrestricted revenue?	We will look into this and get back to you with an answer.

Agency	Comment	Answer (if applicable)
UPS	For new funding sources, are these additional funds or instead of federal funds?	This would be in addition, and/or for things like federal matches. We are monitoring the Transportation Bill and how that may impact things.
Maritime Advisory Board	Struggles with the terminology of “Operating Gaps” as this number gets used in the wrong context for the wrong reasons, and it’s probably not the best word choice.	We will double check this and make any clarifications.
Alaska Trucking Association	Is the “Public Facilities” part of DOT&PF included in this plan when we look at funding and projects?	We are only including transportation, not public facilities, in the analysis. We are using the full DOT&PF because it's the formal name.
DOT&PF		
	AIP has strict eligibility rules for what is allowed to construct under the funding.	
	Since the AIAS is funded independently through the IARF, this \$1B Need for Aviation is only representative of the rural airports, correct?	Yes, we will be clearer in the final report on the distinction between rural and international airports.
	We need more clarification around DOT vs. PF funding and needs. There are public facilities such as snow removal equipment buildings (SREB), Airport Rescue Fire Fighting (ARFF) buildings, terminals for ferries and airports that are eligible for--and were built with--federal funds, e.g. Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funds; the system cannot operate without them.	

POLL #1 RESULTS

After the Financial Analysis overview and discussion, STAC and FAC members were asked, “How should the state prioritize the following funding options to meet transportation needs? Pick your top 3 choices.” Twenty-three people answered this question, and the results are shown below:



DRIVING FACTOR #1 – CONNECTIVITY

- Continued need for a more resilient, cost effective, efficient, and interconnected system for people and freight
 - System is both inter-connected and single source for communities
 - Transportation related issues vary across geographic, environmental, cultural, and economic conditions

Agency	Comment
STAC & FAC Members	
North Slope Borough	<p>In order to make the connectivity better in the northern regions, there should be some incentives to look at the north slope as an economic opportunity zone.</p> <p>Much of the transportation planning in the last for years in the arctic has been an oil and gas planning exercise. Many communities in the arctic are so disconnected so it's important for planning exercises not just be an oil and gas planning exercise anymore.</p>

DRIVING FACTOR #2 – BROADBAND/INTERNET CONNECTIVITY

- Need to increase connectivity via fiber optics, 5G cell service and satellite internet options
 - Better internet services provide more opportunities for remote work, e-commerce, telemedicine, and educational access
 - More areas are getting connected via more affordable satellite internet options (Starlink)

There were no comments about Driving Factor #2.

DRIVING FACTOR #3 – ADOPTION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES

- Multiple new technologies will change the way we need to think about transportation
 - Demand for alternative fuel stations and electric vehicle charging stations
 - Unmanned aerial systems will transform how we move freight
 - Big data analytics allows us to see trends far ahead of what previously could
 - Various levels of connected and autonomous vehicles are being deployed nationwide

Agency	Comment
STAC & FAC Members	
Maritime Advisory Board	Electric ferries!
MARAD	<p>Struggling with the adoption of new technologies, for example the duration of batteries and the tremendous amount of energy that goes into the creation and maintenance, etc. Some of this new tech, even if it's available what are you really going to do with it? The connectivity piece is really what's going to drive a lot of this conversation, and this is more of a back seat.</p> <p>3D printing should be included in this section of the driving factors. This could have a bigger impact on Alaska overall.</p>
Roads and Highways Advisory Board	To a large extent much of this technology is going to be market driven, if it costs too much consumers won't use it. Today, for example, it's cheaper to fill a car with a tank of gas in Alaska than it is to charge an electric vehicle. We're a ways away from a fully technological Alaska so we probably shouldn't spend money on these types of projects.
DOT&PF	
	UAVs could also be considered for more than freight, they are (will) change how we inspect our assets (bridges, airports, etc.)

DRIVING FACTOR #4 – WORKFORCE

- Increasingly challenging to find qualified work forces
 - Maintenance and operations personnel are aging out and it's more difficult to replace them
- Types of work and workers are changing
 - Need to plan for people and an organizational structure to attract and retain workers

Agency	Comment
DOT&PF	Under Workforce, address access (or lack of access) to workforce development opportunities, including technical as well as collegiate.

DRIVING FACTOR #5 – ECONOMICS AND NATURAL RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

- Decreasing oil production
 - Alaska is producing 75% less oil than in the late 1980s
- Projected increase in employment in natural resources, construction, and tourism industries
 - Natural resources and mining extraction are expected to grow 15% over the next decade
 - Construction and tourism are also expected to grow leading to further demands on the transportation system

Agency	Comment
STAC & FAC Members	
Alaska Municipal League	Oil production should be included in the funding driving factor, not the economics/natural resources driving factor.
UPS	When we speak about subsistence, that should go with population driving factor.

DRIVING FACTOR #6 – CLIMATE CHANGE

- Threat to transportation infrastructure and reliability
 - Impacts the safety, mobility and reliability of all transportation systems

- Increases costs to construct, operate and maintain transportation systems

Agency	Comment
STAC & FAC Members	
Port of Alaska	We need to start reminding people to consider climate change for designs and designing for resiliency.

DRIVING FACTOR #7 – POPULATION

- Stagnating population growth
 - Population has been in a slow decline since 2016
 - Forecasts show that under high and medium population scenarios, the state will continue to grow, but will decrease under the low population scenario
- Indigenous and native population and disproportionately disconnected
 - Natives still depend on the land for subsistence lifestyle
 - Many of these communities have only a sole source of transportation into and out of their communities

Agency	Comment
STAC & FAC Members	
Association of Village Council Presidents	The Yukon Kuskokwim region is growing, according to recent Census data.

DRIVING FACTOR #8 – MIGRATION

- Seasonal employment will continue to play a role in Alaska
 - Labor force is highly seasonal with wide swings in employment in the commercial fishing, construction, and tourism industries

- Many of these jobs are also in remote areas that are underserved by transportation infrastructure
- Rural to urban population movement
 - More Alaskans are expected to move from rural areas to urban areas due to the higher costs of living
 - Population is expected to move from Anchorage to the Mat-Su Borough
 - Climate change could force home relocations in some areas

Agency	Answer
STAC & FAC Members	
Roads and Highways Advisory Board	There's an economic factor within the population and migration driving factors. Outmigration depends on what's going on in the economy for example the oil patch lost a lot of jobs and so many of those people left. Migration from rural to urban is the same concept, i.e. no more opportunities in urban areas so people from rural communities move to them.

DRIVING FACTOR #9 – FUNDING

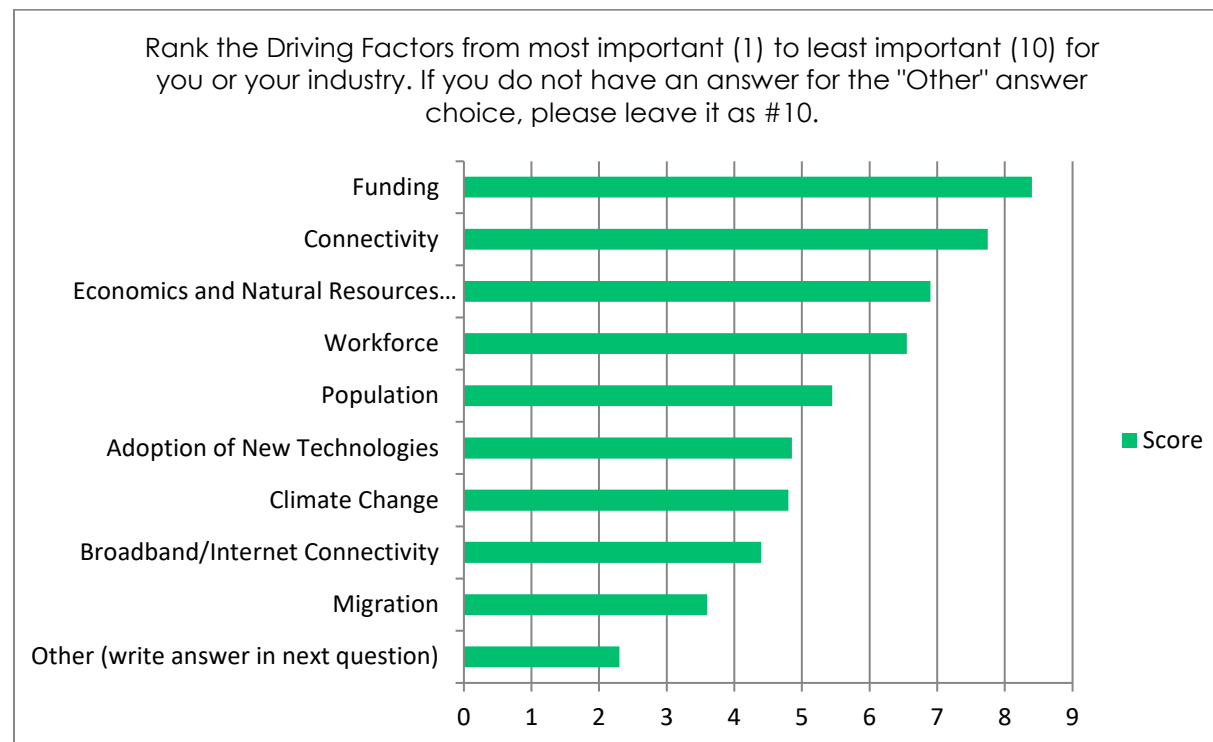
- Federal funding is expected to remain stable
 - \$500-\$600 million per year
 - Federal funding is the dominant source of revenue for DOT&PF
 - Any changes in the funding formula will have outsized effects
- New Transportation Bill
 - Important to invest additional funding strategically so that goals are achieved
- Stable or declining state DOT&PF funding
 - State funding is relatively low overall and needs far exceed available funding

Agency	Answer
STAC & FAC Members	

Agency	Answer
Roads and Highways Advisory Board	One thing federal funding won't pay for is maintenance. As we look at new transportation bills federally, we should lobby that a portion of these new funds go towards maintenance.

POLL #2 RESULTS

Before the meeting, members of the STAC and FAC were asked to complete a short survey to “Rank the Driving Factors from most important (1) to least important (10) for you or your industry. If you do not have an answer for the ‘Other’ answer choice, please leave it as #10.” Members were given the ability to write in an answer choice for “Other”. Twenty people completed the pre-meeting survey and the results are shown below, including the five “Other” written responses:



Written Responses

Prioritize major large projects that fundamentally improve the infrastructure. Knik Arm Bridge, Wasilla By-pass, Rail to Canada are examples.

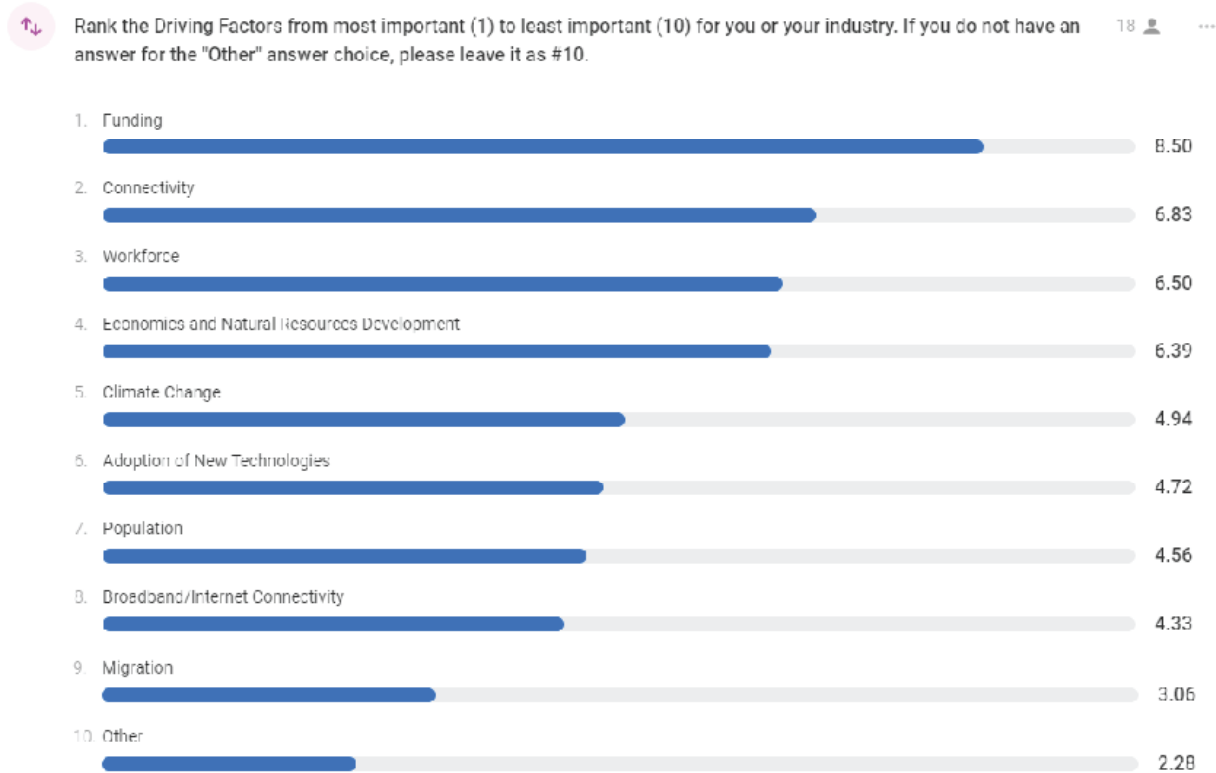
Minimum levels of service and basic infrastructure.

My number 1 is likely to be transactional costs - the transportation system's contributions to the cost of doing business, operating, or traveling within Alaska.

Consumer Behavior/Demand - rapidly changing trends in E-commerce that affect flow of goods via rail, water, airport, truck, etc.

Providing equity for disconnected regions.

After the Driving Factors were presented and discussed during the meeting, STAC and FAC members were asked to rank the Driving Factors once again from most important to least important to understand if the members' priorities had changed after learning more during the meeting. Eighteen people answered this question during the meeting, and the results are shown below:



GENERAL COMMENTS

Agency	Answer
STAC & FAC Members	
Alaska Energy Authority	Some of these driving factors will likely lead to reductions in the DOT budget. For example, if internet connectivity continues to expand and broadband becomes more widely available, any

Agency	Answer
	acceleration in the movement of traditional on-site labor to teleworking arrangements within the state will cause reductions in fuel tax revenue and potentially vehicle registration tax as more people may be less inclined to own private transportation, depending on their needs and geographical location. Additionally, EV adoption, assuming no alternative tax policies are adopted, will also lead to reductions in fuel tax revenue.
Alaska Trucking Association	We can't imagine what the technology is going to be in the next 25 years so it's hard to weigh some of these driving factors. There are a lot of driving factors here that we have no control of so they probably shouldn't be considered as part of this plan.
Alaska Municipal League	Not enough time to discuss these things in a single meeting, would like to have more time to weigh on these items.
UPS	The stakes are too high with this plan to not take the time to discuss these things more thoroughly.
Multiple agencies	Would like more opportunities to give feedback and discuss things more in-depth

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Camden Yehle		Guest
Dan Wells		Guest
Jeff Raun		Guest



LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

STAC & FAC Meeting Materials – August 25, 2021

Preliminary Driving Factors

Alaska LRTP/FP Update

The purpose of the LRTP and FP update is to guide planning and programming decisions for DOT&PF-owned and managed multimodal transportation assets for the next 25 years. These assets include highway, aviation, transit, rail, marine, and non-motorized facilities. The LRTP is required by federal regulation (23 CFR 450.216) to provide a clear link between policy, planning, evaluation, and the investments that are made through a cooperative statewide planning process. States are generally required to update their plans every five years to address new trends and any new federal regulations. The LRTP is also required by Alaska State Statute (AS 44.42.050).

Ultimately, this plan will present policy recommendations to achieve a common vision developed with stakeholders, businesses, and other federal and state partners.

This planning effort updates the 2016 LRTP, Let's Keep Moving 2036, and is being developed through a series of technical memoranda, meetings with a Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC) and Freight Advisory Committee (FAC), stakeholder interviews, and public outreach events which will ultimately culminate in final documents that serve as Alaska's LRTP/FP. The plan is being developed using best practices for performance-based planning. Performance based planning is designed to:

- Formalize a strategic direction – Define where do we want to go?
- Help agencies achieve the desired outcomes by identifying performance measures and monitoring them using a data driven process
- Inform investment decision-making
- Increase transparency and accountability to the public and stakeholders

The Alaska LRTP/FP will use scenario planning to the support performance-based planning. Key phases in the process include:

- **Data Collection and Analysis Phase.** A state-of-the-state, high-level assessment was completed to understand statewide and national and statewide trends that will help inform the 2050 vision. The assessment inventoried the planning context, socioeconomic trends, the transportation modes, and the funding climate. It included multiple meetings with the STAC and FAC and stakeholder interviews. It also included a virtual public outreach event and survey to gain insight into public priorities. Findings of this phase were presented in technical memorandums that will be finalized as part of the final LRTP/FP (they can be found at www.Alaskamoves2050).
 - Transportation Assessment Technical Memorandum #1 - Complete
 - Freight Assessment Technical Memorandum #2 - Complete
 - Financial Analysis Technical Memorandum #3 – In review by DOT&PF and final will be posted when available.
- **Strategic Direction Phase.** Driving factors, goals, and strategic focus areas for the transportation system are currently being established, with the focus on moving people and goods safely and efficiently and to align with federal, state and local priorities for transportation. Performance measures that represent the goals will be set to monitor progress over time. These measures will track key performance metrics at a statewide level to assess whether the desired outcomes are being achieved. Finally, during this phase, scenario planning will be conducted to assess the impacts to

the transportation systems under three different plausible futures (such as high, medium, or low economic growth. This phase's findings will be reported in:

- Goals, Scenario Planning and Performance Measures Technical Memorandum #4 (October 2021)
- **The LRTP/FP Plan Development Phase.** Information from the previous phases will be summarized in a final LRTP/FP that outlines policies to guide planning and programming decisions for DOT&PF-owned and managed assets. The LRTP will remain a high-level policy document and will not identify specific projects. The FP will identify priority freight projects.

DRIVING FACTORS

What are the driving factors?

Driving factors are most simply defined as “what are the key elements/trends that are most likely to influence Alaska's infrastructure system today and into the future.” The Transportation Assessment, Freight Assessment, and Financial Assessment memorandums and supporting stakeholder outreach form the basis for the driving factors of change in Alaska. These driving factors, and their respective trends, will inform the LRTP/FP goals, policies and performance metrics we want to use to effectively plan for Alaska's future. These driving factors will undergo refinement by the project team, the STAC and FAC.

PRELIMINARY DRAFT

Preliminary Driving Factors For Discussion

What current and future drivers of change will influence Alaska’s transportation system today and in the next 25 years? **What are the most influential, are any missing?**

A **driving factor** is environmental, social, economic, political, and/or technological factors (human-induced or natural) that directly or indirectly causes a change in a system, across different temporal and spatial levels.

Driving Factor	Trend	Details
Connectivity	Continued need for a more resilient, cost effective, efficient, and interconnected system for people and freight.	The complexity of Alaska’s transportation system cannot be overstated. The transportation system is both inter-connected and single-source for communities. Transportation-related issues vary across geographic, environmental, cultural, and economic conditions found across Alaska.
Broadband/Internet Connectivity	Need to increase connectivity via fiber optics, 5G cellular service, and satellite internet options	Better internet services provide more opportunities for remote work, e-commerce, telemedicine, education access, etc. With the addition of better and more affordable satellite internet services (such as Starlink) even more will be possible from remote or historically disconnected regions of Alaska.
Adoption of New Technologies	Multiple new technologies will change the way we need to think about transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand for alternative fuel stations and Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure is increasing (for all modes). • Unmanned aerial systems (UASs) promise to transform how we move freight around the state. • Big data analytics is also allowing us to see trends on transportation far ahead of what we could even a few years ago. • Various levels of connected and automated vehicles (CAVs) are being deployed nationwide for transit, fleets and freight. <p>Reliability and costs associated with key infrastructure needs, specifically electricity and internet, varies significantly between urban, rural, and remote areas, and will be a barrier to widespread implementation to new technologies.</p>

Driving Factor	Trend	Details
Workforce	Increasingly challenging to find qualified work forces	Many maintenance and operations personnel are aging out, and it is more and more difficult to find qualified replacements and keep up with competitive wages.
	The types of work and workers are changing.	Need to plan for people and an organizational structure to attract and retain employees and respond to new technologies and data.
Economics and Natural Resources Development	Decreasing oil production	Due to the changing global market for oil, Alaska is producing 75% less oil than in the late 1980s. Because oil production funded so many of the plans, programs, and construction in the past, this decline in production (and estimated further decline in the future) means that less money overall will be available for transportation-related projects.
	Projected increase in employment in natural resources, construction, tourism industries	Natural resources and mining extraction are expected to grow by 15% over the next decade. These kinds of natural resource development efforts require supporting transportation infrastructure. Construction and tourism are also expected to grow leading to further demands on the transportation system today.
Climate Change	Threat to transportation infrastructure and reliability	Changes in the climate and environment are impacting the safety, mobility, and reliability of all transportation systems and increasing costs to construct, operate and maintain systems.
Population	Stagnating population growth	Population was growing steadily until 2013, when it plateaued and has actually been in a slow decline since 2016. Despite this, Alaska forecasts show that under high and medium population scenarios, the state will continue to grow while under the low scenario population could continue to decrease. Regardless, population will grow and decrease depending on the area or region.
	Indigenous & native populations are disproportionately disconnected	Alaskan natives have been inhabiting their communities for thousands of years and still depend on the land for their subsistence lifestyle. Many of these communities have only a sole source of transportation into and out of their communities.

Driving Factor	Trend	Details
Migration	Seasonal employment will continue to play a role in Alaska	Alaska's labor force is highly seasonal, with wide swings in employment, particularly in the commercial fishing, construction, and tourism industries. Many of these seasonal employment jobs are in remote areas that are currently underserved by transportation infrastructure.
	Rural to urban population movement	More Alaskans are expected to move from rural areas to urban areas due to the higher costs of living and from Anchorage to the Mat-Su Borough. Continuing climate change could also force home relocations in some area further enabling the rural to urban migration patterns.
Funding	Federal funding is expected to remain stable at \$500 - \$600 million/year.	Federal funding is the dominant source of revenue for DOT&PF and any changes in the funding formula will have outsized effects on Alaska.
	A new Transportation Bill – Increased funding...?	It will be important to invest additional funding strategically so that goals are achieved and subsequent maintenance and operations of any new transportation infrastructure can be adequately funded given other statewide driving factors.
	Stable or declining State DOT&PF funding	State funding of DOT&PF is relatively low overall and needs far exceed available funding. Without additional funding sources, deferred maintenance backlogs will continue to grow.