

## **Glossary of terms**

**ADOT&PF or the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities** – The agency within Alaska state government designated by the legislature to manage, plan, design, construct, operate and maintain transportation facilities.

**AC – Advance Construction** – An innovative financing tool permitted under FHWA rules that, with approval of the FHWA, allows the state to begin a federally funded project prior to the availability of federal funds to reimburse the project.

**ADEC – Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation** – The agency within Alaska state government responsible for air quality programs, including transportation air quality.

**AHS – Alaska Highway System** – The AHS is comprised of highways and ferry routes that have statewide significance but are not on the National Highway System. The AHS includes routes that connect communities and routes that link to recreational sites or areas of resource development. AHS routes provide greater utility to Alaska as a whole, than to individual communities.

**AIP – Airport Improvement Program** – A schedule of projects for airports throughout the state, funded with Federal Aviation Administration funds.

**AMATS – Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions** – The designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Anchorage area. It is a joint local-state transportation planning and programming organization charged with developing a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) for the Anchorage urban area in compliance with the current federal surface transportation law.

**AMHS – Alaska Marine Highway System** – The State's system of ferry vessels, terminals and routes that link most of Alaska's coastal communities from the Aleutians to Southeast.

**Apportionments** – Program funding levels authorized from the federal Highway Trust Fund. These amounts are calculated annually and distributed to states. They are available for four years, typically. Expenditure of apportionments is generally subject to, and limited by, annually appropriated obligation authority.

**Area Transportation Plan** – Also known as A "Regional Transportation Plan", it is a detailed long-range multimodal transportation plan prepared by the ADOT&PF for a region or geographical area within Alaska. As defined, the area transportation plans are elements of the Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan (SWLRTP) and comprise the recommended projects for the SWLRTP for a given region. Several area transportation plans are in progress at any given time. As of the summer of 2009, update of the Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan is underway, while the Interior Alaska Transportation Plan is nearing completion. The department is preparing to begin an update to the Southwest Alaska Transportation Plan.

**ARRA – The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act fo 2009** – Also known as the Stimulus Act, signed into law on February 17, 2009. In response to the Great Recession, the act was meant to reinvigorate the economy by saving or creating several million jobs. About five percent of the act funds transportation projects.

**ARRC – Alaska Railroad Corporation** – a State owned agency responsible for management and operation of the Alaska Railroad.

**Asset Management** – is a business process and a decision-making framework that covers an extended time horizon, draws from economics as well as engineering, and considers a broad range of assets. The asset management approach incorporates the economic assessment of trade-offs among alternative investment options and uses this information to help make cost-effective investment decisions.

**Bridge Discretionary Program** – A competitive program administered by the FHWA for major bridge replacement or for new bridges that replace ferry routes.

**BIA – Bureau of Indian Affairs** – Some federal funds are allocated directly to the BIA for ultimate distribution to Alaska Native villages. These funds must be included in the STIP but are not controlled or allocated by the State.

**Categorical Exclusion** - Actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment, for which neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required.

**CMAQ – Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality** – A specific funding program targeted to reducing air pollutants in non-attainment and air quality maintenance areas, specifically Anchorage, Eagle River, Fairbanks and Juneau.

**Coarse Particulates or Particulate Matter (PM-10)** – a criteria air pollutant. Coarse particulate matter includes dust, soot and other tiny bits of solid materials that are released into and move around in the air. Particulates are produced by many sources, including burning of diesel fuels by trucks and buses, incineration of garbage, mixing and application of fertilizers and pesticides, road construction, industrial processes such as steel making, mining operations, agricultural burning (field and slash burning), and operation of fireplaces and woodstoves. Particulate pollution can aggravate existing heart and lung disease ,cause eye, nose and throat irritation and other health problems. (See also: Fine Particulates or particulate matter (PM-2.5))

**Conformity** – A federally required process used to ascertain if proposed transportation plans or projects will reduce emissions of pollutants in areas that are considered to be in non-attainment. Generally speaking, programs such as the TIP and STIP, and individual projects must be reviewed for conformity. Absent a finding of conformity, such decisions, except for specified categories of projects, plans or projects cannot be implemented in the non-attainment areas.

**Corridors and Borders** – The National Corridor Planning and Development Program (NCPD program) and the Coordinated Border Infrastructure Program (CBI program) are discretionary grant programs funded by a single funding source. These programs provide funding for planning, project development, construction and operation of projects that serve border regions near Mexico and Canada and high priority corridors throughout the United States. Border States and MPOs are, under the CBI program, eligible for discretionary grants for: Transportation and safety infrastructure improvements, operation and regulatory improvements, and coordination and safety inspection improvements in a border region.

**Criteria Air Pollutants** - Six air pollutants commonly found all over the United States. They are particle pollution (often referred to as particulate matter), ground-level ozone, carbon monoxide, sulfur oxides, nitrogen oxides, and lead. The Environmental Protection Agency calls these pollutants "criteria" air pollutants because it regulates them by developing human health-based and/or environmentally-based criteria (science-based guidelines) for setting permissible levels.

**Cruise Ship Tax** – A state tax on cruise ship passengers. The tax provides funds for infrastructure projects that support cruise ship sponsored tourism.

**CTP – Community Transportation Program** – A program of the department that addresses a wide range of community transportation modes, including rural and urban roads, remote, intelligent transportation systems (see definition below) and transit.

**Denali Access System Program** – A program established by SAFETEA-LU to fund planning, design, engineering, and construction of road and other surface transportation infrastructure in rural Alaska. SAFETEA-LU authorized \$15 million per year directly to the Denali Commission to carry out the program in consultation with the Denali Access System Program Advisory Committee appointed by the Governor. In distributing funds for projects, the Commission is to consult the list of transportation priorities developed by the committee.

**Discretionary Funding** – Several dedicated funding sources wherein projects compete nationally for funding. Discretionary programs include Ferry Boat, Bridge, Scenic Byways and Public Lands.

**Earmark** – Earmark or earmarked projects selected during the Congressional approval process that are specific as to funding amount, purpose and geographic location. The State has no authority to change these requirements.

**Environmental Justice** – An emerging federal requirement based on Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and Executive Order #12898, 1994. The essence of this Executive Order, pertaining to transportation issues, is the requirement that the delivery of transportation benefits shall be equitable with regard to populations protected under the Civil Rights Act.

**EDA – Economically Distressed Area** – Areas identified by the US Commerce Department that have unemployment rates at least 1.5 times the national average, or where 20% or more of the population is living in poverty, or the median

family income at or below 80% of federal levels. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act gives priority to projects in EDA's as determined at the time the project funds are put under obligation.

**ER – or Emergency Relief** – Special federal funding allocated to projects that repair damage caused by natural disasters and catastrophic failures.

**Equity Bonus** – A federal funding category created in SAFETEA-LU. The Equity Bonus provides funding to states based on equity considerations. These include a minimum rate of return on contributions to the Highway Account of the Highway Trust Fund and a minimum increase relative to the average dollar amount of apportionments under TEA-21. Selected states receive a guaranteed share of apportionments and High Priority Projects not less than the state's average annual share under TEA-21. This program replaced TEA-21's Minimum Guarantee program.

**Forest Highway Program** – A funding program for public highways on federal lands administered directly by the FHWA. In Alaska, this program uses a three-agency project selection committee including FHWA, the US Forest Service and ADOT&PF. While required to be in the STIP, the State of Alaska does not control or allocate these funds.

**Ferry Boat Discretionary Program** – A national discretionary program for construction of ferries and terminal facilities. SAFETEA-LU designated Alaska to receive \$10 million of \$20 million set aside each year for NHS ferry facilities. Alaska is further eligible for nationwide competition for the undesignated portion of the program.

**FAA – Federal Aviation Administration** – The federal agency of the US Department of Transportation responsible for funding airport and aviation projects.

**FFY – Federal Fiscal Year** – The period from October 1 through September 30. For example, FFY 2010 is the period from October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010.

**FHWA – Federal Highway Administration** – The federal agency of the US Department of Transportation responsible for funding highway, trail and ferry projects.

**Fine Particulates or Particulate Matter (PM-2.5)** – a criteria air pollutant. Fine particulate matter is comprised primarily of soot and other tiny bits of solid materials released into and moving around in the air. Fine particulates are primarily produced by combustion sources, including burning of diesel fuels by trucks and buses, incineration of garbage, industrial processes, agricultural burning (field and slash burning), and operation of fireplaces and woodstoves. Fine particulate pollution has been linked to increased respiratory symptoms (irritation, coughing, difficulty breathing), reduced lung function, aggravated asthma, development of chronic bronchitis, irregular heartbeat, nonfatal heart attacks, and premature death in people with lung or heart disease. (See also: Coarse Particulates or particulate matter (PM-10))

**FMATS - Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System** – A joint local-state planning and programming organization, designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the North Star Borough, and the cities of Fairbanks and North Pole. The MPO develops a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Fairbanks urbanized area in compliance with the current federal surface transportation law.

**FRA – Federal Railroad Administration** – The federal agency of the US Department of Transportation responsible for railroad issues.

**FTA – Federal Transit Administration** – The federal agency of the US Department of Transportation responsible for funding public transportation or transit projects.

**Functional Classification** – the process by which streets and highways are grouped into classes, or systems, according to the character of service they are intended to provide. In basic terms, functional classifications for roads include:

- **Arterials:** These roads provide mobility so traffic can move from one place to another quickly and safely.
- **Collectors:** These roads link arterials and local roads and perform some duties of each.
- **Local:** These roads provide access to homes, businesses, and other property.

**Functional Obsolescence** – Typically used in reference to bridges, it describes bridges that do not meet contemporary design standards, typically due to inadequate lane widths, shoulder widths, vertical clearances or load capacity.

**Greenhouse Gases** – are gases that trap heat in the atmosphere, commonly known as the greenhouse effect. Some greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide occur naturally and are emitted to the atmosphere through natural processes and human activities. Other greenhouse gases (e.g., fluorinated gases) are created and emitted solely through human activities. The principal greenhouse gases that enter the atmosphere because of human activities are carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and fluorinated gases. The next transportation bill is expected to put limits on transportation activities that contribute to excessive greenhouse gas emissions.

**High Priority Projects Program** – provides designated funding for specific projects identified in SAFETEA-LU and other federal acts. These may also be known as demonstration (demo) or earmarked projects.

**Interstate Highway System** – The system of highways that connects the principal metropolitan areas, cities, and industrial centers of the United States. Also connects the US to internationally significant routes in Canada and Mexico. The Interstate System is a defined set of roads designated by Congress.

**ISTEA** – Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 – An act of Congress that authorized funding for highways, safety, and mass transportation for a six-year period for federal fiscal years 1992 through 1997. This law was responsible for some programs still in force today, such as CMAQ and Transportation Enhancements, and implementing the STIP planning requirements.

**ITS** – Intelligent Transportation System – a generic term for rapidly evolving transportation products, services and systems based on advanced technologies such as computers, communications and electronics, intended to improve the safety, efficiency and effectiveness of the transportation system.

**MPO – Metropolitan Planning Organization.** – An MPO is federally-designated transportation planning body for an urbanized area with a resident population over 50,000. In Alaska, Anchorage and Fairbanks are the only MPOs, known as AMATS (Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions) and FMATS (Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System) respectively.

**Maintenance Area** – when referring to air quality this means an area that had been designated as non-attainment in the past, but now meets federal air quality standards. Portions of Anchorage and Fairbanks are currently designated as maintenance areas for carbon monoxide, and are eligible to use CMAQ funds on transportation projects that will help prevent the area from slipping back into non-attainment status. Juneau has requested maintenance status for coarse particulate matter and is awaiting approval from the Environmental Protection Agency.

**NAAQS – National Ambient Air Quality Standard** – Standards established in the Clean Air Act for various pollutants. Those most concerning Alaska transportation issues are CO (carbon monoxide) and PM (particulate matter – dust and smoke).

**Needs List** – The common name for Transportation Needs and Priorities in Alaska; a document formerly produced by ADOT&PF that listed all desired transportation projects in the state, including highways, ferries, trails, transit, airports, harbors, and buildings. The Needs List has been replaced by the Needs Database, available online.

**NHS – National Highway System** – A network of highways and ferry routes in the United States designated by Congress as the most important to interstate travel, national defense, and interstate commerce. Designations are based on recommendations by the FHWA.

**Non-Attainment Area** – a geographic area in which the level of a criteria air pollutant is higher than the level allowed by the federal standards. In Alaska, there are two areas classified as moderate non-attainment: Juneau-Mendenhall Valley and Eagle River. Portions of the Fairbanks North Star Borough and the Juneau-Mendenhall Valley are expected to be classified as non-attainment areas for fine particulate matter in 2009. Since the previous STIP was published both Anchorage and Fairbanks have improved air quality and are now classified as maintenance areas for carbon monoxide. (See also: Maintenance Area)

**Non-Metropolitan Consultation Rule** – A process to ensure consultation with local government officials in non-metropolitan areas for transportation planning programs administered by ADOT&PF including the Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan (SWLRTP) and the State Transportation Improvement Program as required by federal regulations (23 CFR 450). The process is described in more detail on the department's website: [www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/cip\\_stip/pubinfo.shtml](http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/cip_stip/pubinfo.shtml)

**Obligation Authority** – The total amount of federal highway funds that can be authorized for projects in a given federal fiscal year. This amount results from annual Congressional appropriations and has historically been less than the annual total program apportionments authorized by the surface transportation reauthorization acts (ISTEA, TEA-21, SAFETEA-LU).

**PEB – Project Evaluation Board** – The board empowered to evaluate and score projects; it is a team of managers from the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. There is a board for surface transportation and another for aviation.

**Performance Measures** – is the process whereby an organization establishes the parameters within which programs, investments, and acquisitions are reaching the desired results. This process of measuring performance often requires the use of statistical evidence to determine progress toward specific defined organizational objectives.

**Public Lands Discretionary** – A program administered by the FHWA under Federal Lands Highways for highways on public lands. Alaska can apply for nationwide competitive funds annually.

**SAFETEA-LU – The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users** - The current law describing the surface transportation policy of the United States, and making program allocations for funding in various categories to the states. The act became law on August 10, 2005 and is valid until the end of September 2009, but has been extended via continuing resolutions of the Congress.

**Shadow Tolls** - Shadow tolls are payments made by a government to the private sector operator of a road based, at least in part, on the number of vehicles using the road and the distance they travel. Originated in England, shadow tolls are not currently used in the U.S.

**SIB – State Infrastructure Bank** – A SIB is a revolving fund mechanism for financing a wide variety of highway and transit projects through loans and credit enhancement. SIBs are designed to complement traditional Federal-aid highway and transit grants by providing States increased flexibility for financing infrastructure investments.

**State Implementation Plan (SIP)** – a detailed description of the programs a state will use to carry out its responsibilities under the Clean Air Act. Alaska's SIP is prepared by the ADEC. State implementation plans are collections of the regulations used by a state to reduce air pollution. The Clean Air Act requires that EPA approve each state implementation plan. Members of the public are given opportunities to participate in review and approval of state implementation plans. Transportation elements called for in the SIP are eligible for CMAQ funds and must be implemented in the year defined in the SIP.

**STIP – State Transportation Improvement Program** – A staged, multi-year, statewide, intermodal program of surface transportation projects which is governed by surface transportation regulations and funded primarily with surface transportation program funds. The STIP is prepared by ADOT&PF and is approved by FTA and FHWA.

**Structural Deficiency** – Bridges that have deteriorated decks (the driving surface), superstructures (the supports right below the deck), and/or sub-structures (the foundation and supporting posts and piers) can be classified as structurally deficient. The classification does not necessarily mean that a bridge is unsafe, but it does mean that the bridge requires maintenance and repair, and/or eventual rehabilitation or replacement to address deficiencies.

**SWLRTP – Statewide Long-Rang Transportation Plan** – A federally-mandated plan that provides the basis for the development of STIP projects. In Alaska, the SWLRTP consists of the Statewide Long Range Transportation Policy Plan (SWLRTPP), area transportation plans, and modal or system plans. The SWLRTPP develops transportation policy, goals, and objectives for the state as a whole. Area transportation plans are prepared for specific geographic areas of the state, and recommend projects for inclusion in the STIP. Modal or system plans such as the State Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan,

Alaska Aviation System Plan, and Strategic Highway Safety Plan provide programmatic direction specific to a particular transportation mode or system.

**TCSP – Transportation and Community and System Preservation Program** – A discretionary grant program that provides funds to states, MPOs, local and tribal governments for projects that address the relationships among transportation, community, and system preservation plans and practices and identify private sector-based initiatives to improve those relationships.

**TEA-21 – Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century** – The surface transportation authorization act that was in force between 1998 and August 2005. It followed ISTEA and preceded SAFETEA-LU.

**TIFIA – Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act.** – Federal credit assistance in the form of direct loans, loan guarantees, and standby lines of credit to finance surface transportation projects of national and regional significance. TIFIA credit assistance provides improved access to capital markets, flexible repayment terms, and potentially more favorable interest rates than can be found in private capital markets for similar instruments. TIFIA can help advance qualified, large-scale projects that otherwise might be delayed or deferred because of size, complexity, or uncertainty over the timing of revenues.

**TIP – Transportation Improvement Program** – A subset of the STIP developed by AMATS or FMATS for transportation programs and projects within the MPO boundary. TIPs are approved by the MPO and the Governor and then incorporated into the STIP by reference.

**Time Trap** – By federal highway regulations, a project must proceed to the earlier of construction or right of way acquisition within 10 years. If those requirements are not met, the state may have to repay any expenditures that have been reimbursed.

**TRAAK** – Trails and Recreational Access for Alaska – A funding category of the STIP that addresses trails, scenic highways, recreational access points and interpretive facilities.