



2018

Anchorage Metropolitan Area
Transportation Solutions

Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan

Acknowledgements

AMATS, Agnew::Beck, and GridWorks, and various involved stakeholders collaborated to update the plan.

About Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS)

Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions is the joint planning entity for the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA). The designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for transportation for the Anchorage Bowl and Chugiak-Eagle River areas, AMATS' prime responsibilities include transportation planning and funding for the region when federal funds are being used, while also serving as a forum for the study and resolution of regional issues.

About the Public Transportation Department for the Municipality of Anchorage

The Public Transportation Department for the MOA offers a number of transportation programs to improve mobility and access within the community, including People Mover (fixed route), AnchorRIDES (paratransit services), and RideShare (vanpool). These services provide transportation services for seniors age 60 and over, people with disabilities, the general public, and include free travel training to groups and individuals on how to ride the bus.

About Agnew::Beck

Agnew::Beck is a multi-disciplinary Anchorage-based consulting firm that specializes in analysis, policy development, planning, public engagement, and project implementation. This award-winning consulting firm combines creativity and vision with practical implementation to accomplish short-term objectives and plan for long-term success.

About GridWorks

GridWorks is a Portland, Oregon-based consultancy whose expertise lies where transportation intersects with health, housing, and equity. GridWorks collaborates with clients to design, implement and evaluate transportation solutions in industries where transportation makes a difference including healthcare, housing, land use and education.

Acknowledgements

We wish to thank the many organizations and individuals who helped to bring the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan to its completion.

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Introduction

What is a CHSTP?

Collaboration Structures

Plan Development

Introduction

What is a Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan?

Federal transit law requires a coordinated plan for projects that seek funding under the Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310). This time-sensitive update provides a blueprint to advance local coordination efforts and improve transportation services for ever-changing populations and communities.

The Anchorage Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (CHSTP) serves to improve transportation for transportation-disadvantaged populations in the Anchorage Bowl and Chugiak-Eagle River region by identifying the transportation needs of seniors, individuals with disabilities and people with low incomes. This plan provides recommended strategies and actions for meeting these needs, and prioritizes transportation services for funding and implementation. This Coordinated Plan covers fiscal years 2019-2023 and is an update to the 2009 Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan.

The 2009 CHSTP

The 2009 CHSTP outlined 7 goals and 49 strategies to improve coordination in the Municipality of Anchorage. Lacking a clear support framework and facing funding barriers, many of the numerous strategies had limited success.

Percent of votes as current priority during open houses

1	Enhance Mobility Management activities to improve coordination between the Municipality, non-profit agencies, and for profit companies.	15.4%
2	Improve inter-agency and public communication to increase awareness and ridership of public transportation and coordinated human service transportation.	23.1%
3	Utilize existing resources fully and seek new funding sources to expand and improve transportation services within Anchorage.	20.9%
4	Expand services while eliminating gaps in service.	22.0%
5	Establish transportation service to underserved and outlying areas.	13.2%
6	Improve safety.	4.4%
7	Incorporate new technology and capital to improve existing mobility options and serve more people.	1.1%

Introduction

Collaboration Structures

Given resource constraints and growing demand for services, collaboration between transportation provider agencies, local officials, and other community stakeholders in human services transportation is essential in improving access for those with limited transportation options. Collaboration strategies exist on a continuum of organizational working relationships, institutional and governance structures, and the interests of the people they serve. These strategies can be arrayed on a continuum representing the degree to which programs are consolidated.

Coordination

There is no single approach to coordination. How agencies coordinate can vary widely and depends on the types of governance policies, organization structures, and service models that are already in place, as well as the transportation issue they are trying to solve.

There are common themes that are critical for all coordination efforts to succeed. Clear communication, opportunities to build trust between participating partners, and a strong support framework to sustain coordination activities as conditions change all keep coordination efforts afloat, regardless of context.

Coordination offers many benefits, among the strongest are increased ridership, increased efficiencies, extended service hours, and improved customer service. Coordination can possibly lower the costs of providing services by addressing inefficiencies in the current use of transportation resources. The combination of increased efficiency and increased effectiveness can create lower unit costs, such as costs per trip, per mile, or per hour.



Other benefits commonly observed from coordinated transportation services include:

- ▶ Lowered trip costs for travelers and human-service agencies
- ▶ Service to new areas or new communities
- ▶ Improved service to customers regarding schedules, points of origin, and destinations
- ▶ Improved safety
- ▶ Expanded door-to-door service
- ▶ More flexible payment and service options.

Consolidation

Consolidation involves merging operational authority of two or more agencies into one that provides services based purchase of service agreements or contractual agreements. This creates a single access point for a range of transportation needs. This strategy centralizes operations and staff which eliminates administrative duplications. Consolidated structures can take on a range of services including management, accounting, human resources, call intake and scheduling, education and awareness activities, and dispatch of vehicles. Benefits of consolidation include:

- ▶ Reductions in overall operating costs
- ▶ Integrated and streamlined management practices
- ▶ Improved fleet maintenance
- ▶ Increased ridership and revenue

Introduction

How was this plan developed?

Plan Requirements

The State of Alaska requires four elements to be included in coordinated plans: (1) analysis of community background, demographics, and needs (2) an inventory of transportation services and resources, (3) identification of gaps in service, and (4) prioritized strategies to meet the needs and gaps identified. This section describes the actions taken to update the AMATS CHSTP.

Anchorage Demographic Analysis

An updated demographic profile was completed using data from the US Census Bureau. Focus areas included changes in population composition, disabilities by age and type, household income, and household type.

Plan and Project Review

A review of other planning initiatives and transportation projects was completed to inform community context and potential coordination strategies. Particularly influential to this plan was the redesign of the People Mover bus system in October of 2017. Many routes were converted from winding routes through neighborhoods to straight shots between two destinations, reducing service coverage but increasing frequency to central routes.

Other planning efforts that were occurring in tandem to this plan included:

- ▶ Mat-Su Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan
- ▶ Anchorage Vision Zero
- ▶ Anchorage Bicycle and Pedestrian plan

Transportation Provider Survey

A survey was sent out to 48 different organizations to document existing fixed route, paratransit, and other human services transportation options.

Stakeholder Outreach

Seniors, individuals with disabilities, representatives of public, private and nonprofit transportation and human services transportation providers, and other members of the public were active participants in the creation of this plan.

- ▶ March 2018 Kick off Open Houses and strategic stakeholder meetings
- ▶ Targeted outreach to english language learners and job seekers
- ▶ Advisory Group Meetings
- ▶ Presentations to the AMATS Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Committee
- ▶ December public review

Context and Conditions

Description of Region

Demographics

Economic Conditions

Transportation Options

Coordination Activities

Funding Framework

Context and Conditions

Description of Region

Anchorage is home to forty percent of the state's population, making it Alaska's most populated city. Located in South Central Alaska, Anchorage encompasses the Anchorage, Eagle River, Chugiak, Girdwood, and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. The area boasts countless outdoor adventure possibilities, while also providing metropolitan amenities and almost half of the state's employment opportunities. Since the last Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan in 2009, the city celebrated its 100th anniversary, and continues to grow and change as a diverse community of nearly 300,000 residents.

A majority of residents reside within the Anchorage Bowl, roughly 100 square miles located on the western border of the municipality along the Cook Inlet. A majority of development within the area has occurred since World War II, and is therefore influenced by autocentric lifestyles. Investments to improve highways and reduce commute times further reinforces the use of cars for travel and the spread, desire, and availability of housing along the edges of the urbanized areas within the bowl.

There is a perceived shortage of land within Anchorage, but there is ample underutilized space for growth near existing services and infrastructure. Roads tend to be designed for peak hour traffic but have light traffic for most of the rest of the day. This means that, oftentimes, roads are not designed to encourage drivers to travel at a safe speed.

Anchorage has unique winter-weather challenges that can impact mobility for those who rely on public transportation. The accumulation of ice and snow covers roads, sidewalks, bike paths, and bus stops, preventing many from safely accessing their destinations. Other cities with similar winter-weather challenges have implemented management strategies to minimize winter-weather related transportation barriers/delays that would benefit the Municipality of Anchorage.

Anchorage at a Glance

1,955

Land area in
square miles
(2018)

171.2

Persons per
square mile
(2010)

299,321

Population
(2016)

7.8%

People with a
disability (2016)

8.9%

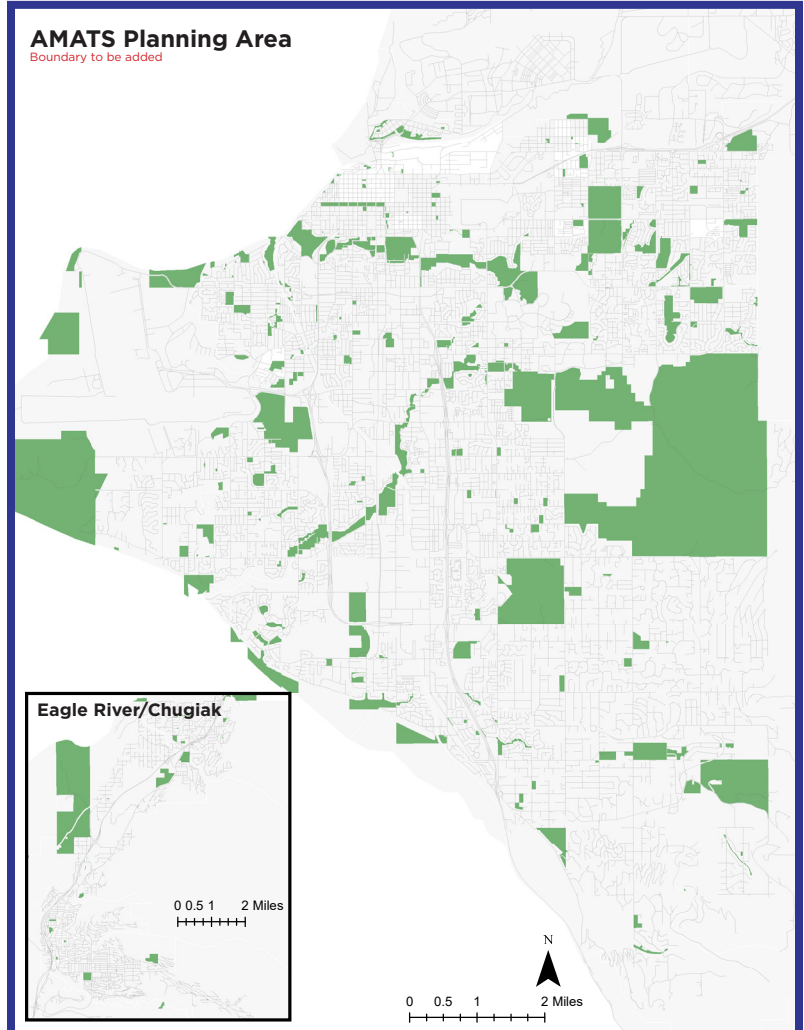
People 65+
(2016)

\$80,862

Median household
income
(2016)

AMATS Planning Area

Boundary to be added

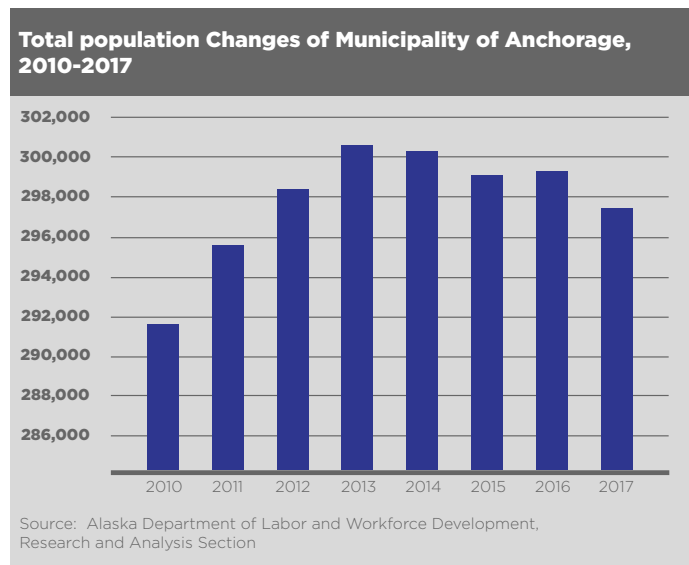


Context and Conditions

Demographics

Anchorage is a city with an ever-changing, diverse, multicultural population. Anchorage has the top three most ethno-racially diverse neighborhoods in the country. As Anchorage turned 100 years old, there were over 100 languages that were actively heard within the Anchorage School District in 2015, according to Philip Farson, the Director of the English Language Learners Program for the District. Much of the growth of minority groups has happened since 2000. When compared to the US, because Anchorage has such a greater representation of other races, it is imperative that transportation communication from all sources considers the local language needs.

While the total population of Anchorage has increased since the 2009 plan, it has been steadily decreasing since 2013.



Change in Race and Hispanic Origin, MOA: 2000 vs 2016			
Race and Hispanic Origin	Anchorage Municipality, Alaska (County) 2000 Census	Anchorage Municipality, Alaska (County) 2016	United States 2016
White alone, percent	72.2%	65.0%	76.9
Black or African American alone, percent	5.8%	6.1%	13.3
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent	7.3%	8.7%	1.3
Asian alone, percent	5.5%	9.6%	5.7
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent	0.9%	2.5%	0.2
Two or More Races, percent	6.0%	8.2%	2.6
Hispanic or Latino, percent	5.7%	9.0%	17.8
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent	N/A	58.6	61.3

Additional Transportation Disadvantaged Populations in Anchorage (ACS 2012-2016)	
Adult population with veteran status, percent	13.5%
Percent of adult population with poverty status (adult population: income in the past 12 months below poverty level)	6.8%
Foreign born persons, percent	10.3%
Limited English-speaking households	2,993
Limited English-speaking households speaking Spanish	871
Limited English-speaking households speaking other Indo-European languages	213
Limited English-speaking households speaking Asian and Pacific Island languages	1,724
Limited English-speaking households speaking languages categorized as "Other"	185

Context and Conditions

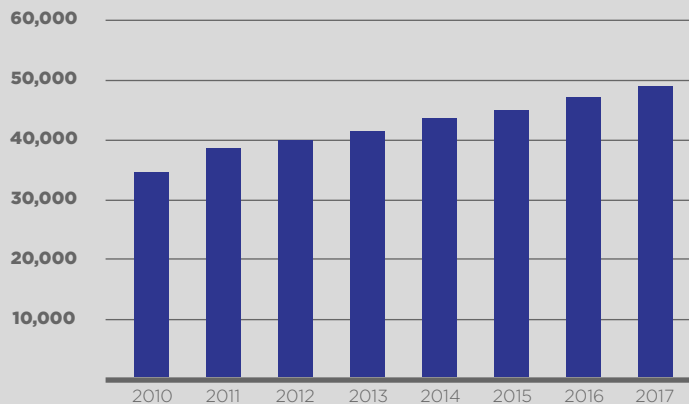
Focus Populations

Anchorage's senior population and population with a disability status are on the rise, and thus the municipality has the daily challenge of providing these residents with transportation that is affordable, safe, accessible and reliable.

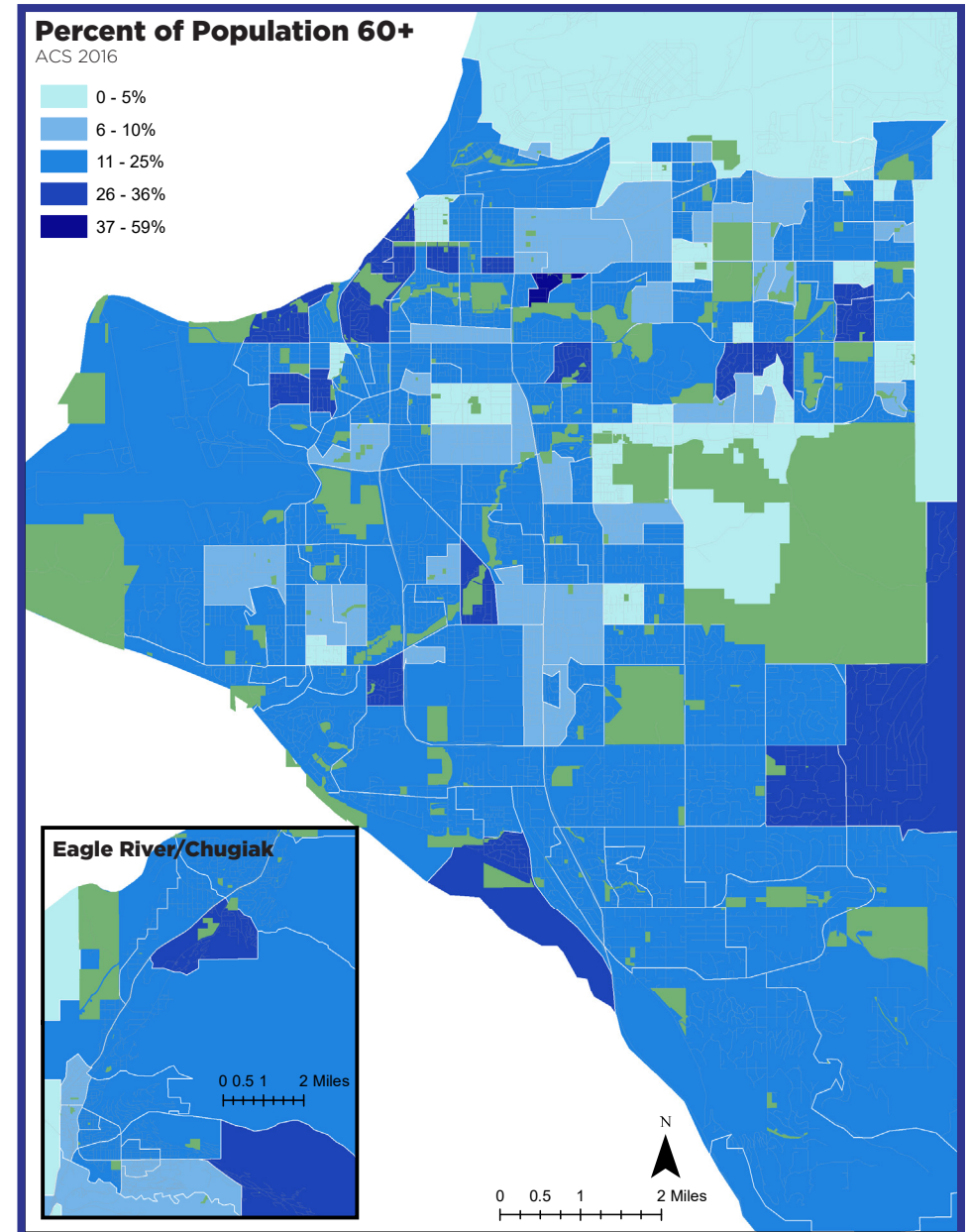
The Growing Senior Population

Alaska has the fastest-growing senior population in the nation. According to the 2016 Alaska Commission on Aging Annual Report, the senior population is growing at an annual rate of 6%. Alaskans age 85 and over in particular are rapidly growing. This group is at higher risk of physical disability and cognitive disability, and they rely heavily on long-term, community-based, and healthcare facilities. Anchorage can also expect significant growth in the 65+ population over the next 10 years based on current population age distributions.

60+ Population of Municipality of Anchorage, 2010-2017



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

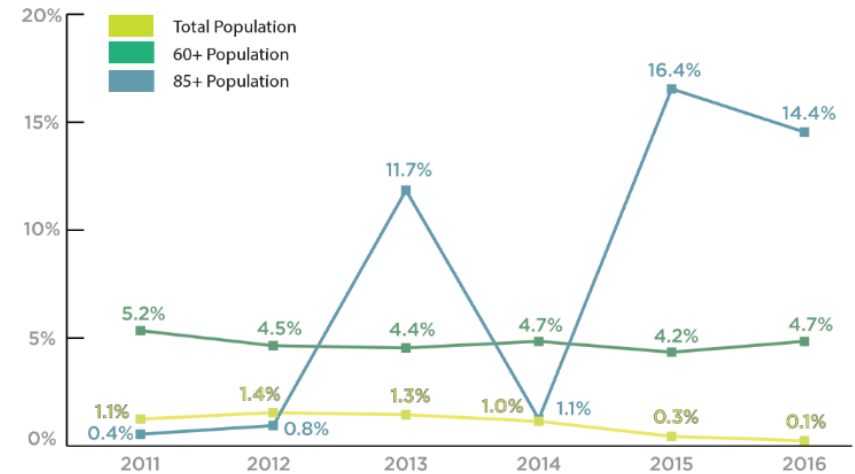


Context and Conditions

The findings from the Commission's 2014-2015 senior survey reveal that 72% of seniors prefer to remain in their current home. In addition to aging in their own homes, there is a national trend for aging workers to stay in the workforce longer than in previous decades. As this segment of Anchorage's population grows and remains employed, it is crucial that these working seniors have the potential to remain independent with access to reliable and affordable transportation.

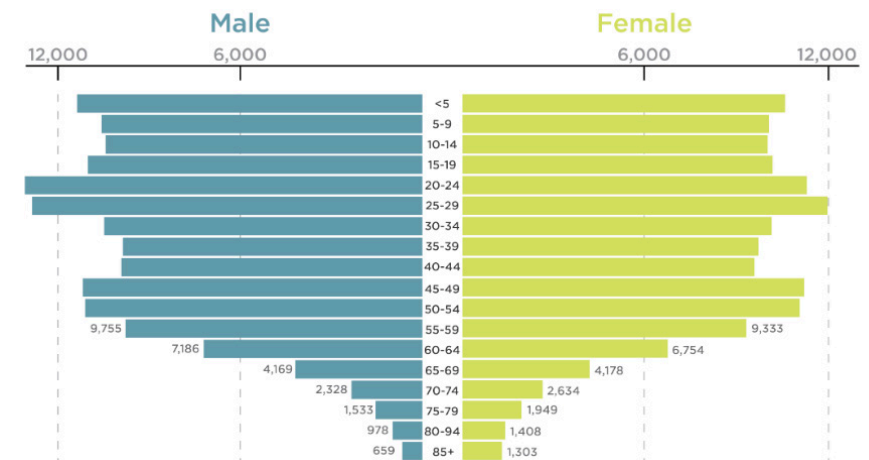
Annual Population Percent Change

Anchorage, AK: Demographic and Housing Estimates, 2006-2016 ACS 5-Year Estimates



Population Distribution by Sex

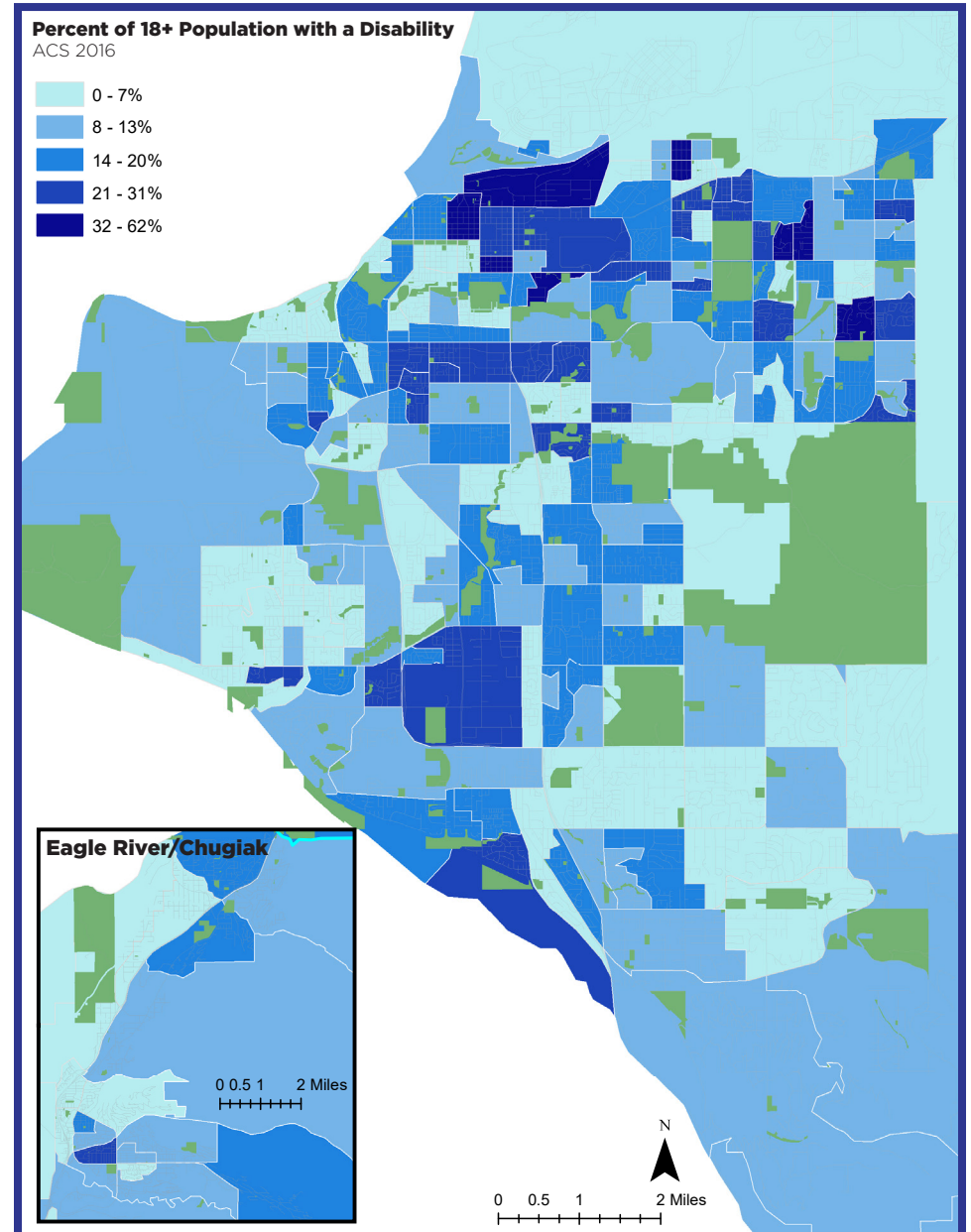
Anchorage, AK: Population Ages by Sex, 2012-2016 ACS 5-Year Estimates



Context and Conditions

Populations with a Disability

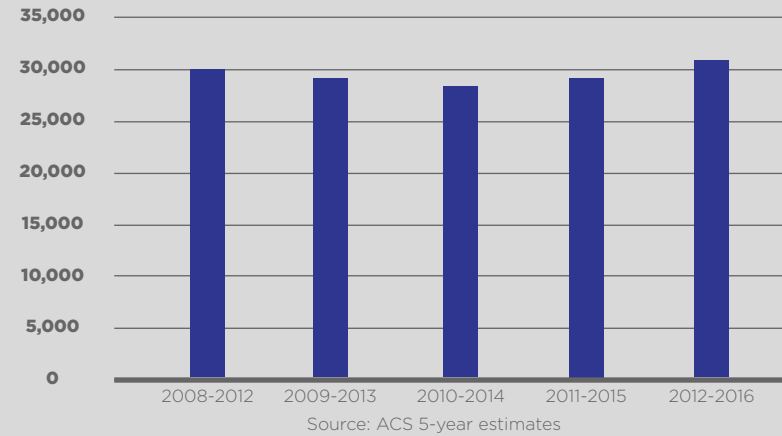
In Anchorage, the population of individuals with a disability has remained stable over the past 10 years. The most common disability type within the region is ambulatory, limiting the ability of the individual to move from place to place. This is particularly important to note now that recent transit changes reduced the number of bus stops, increased the number of transfers, and in many cases increased the distance an individual needs to travel to reach the nearest stop. Additionally, the winter months add additional challenges of icy or unplowed sidewalks, which often force people walking or rolling into the street.



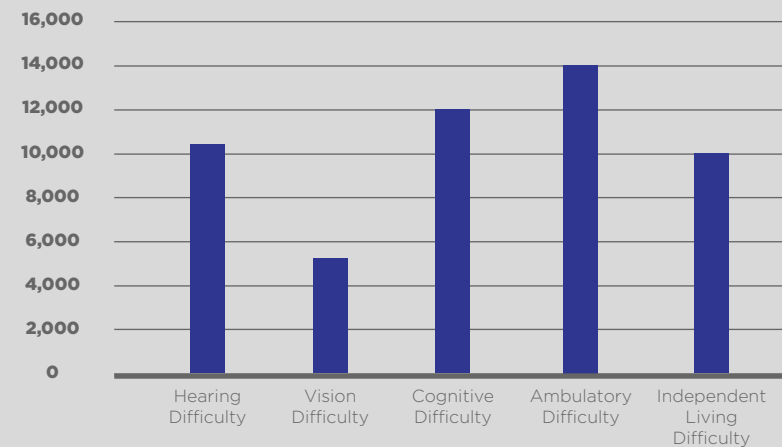
Context and Conditions

According to the latest census data, thousands of individuals with a disability in Anchorage are in their prime working years (ages 18-64). Again, in order for these individuals to lead independent lives with the potential for employment, it is crucial that they have transportation access throughout these productive years.

Total Population with a Disability Status, 2008-2016



60+ Population of Municipality of Anchorage, 2010-2017



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

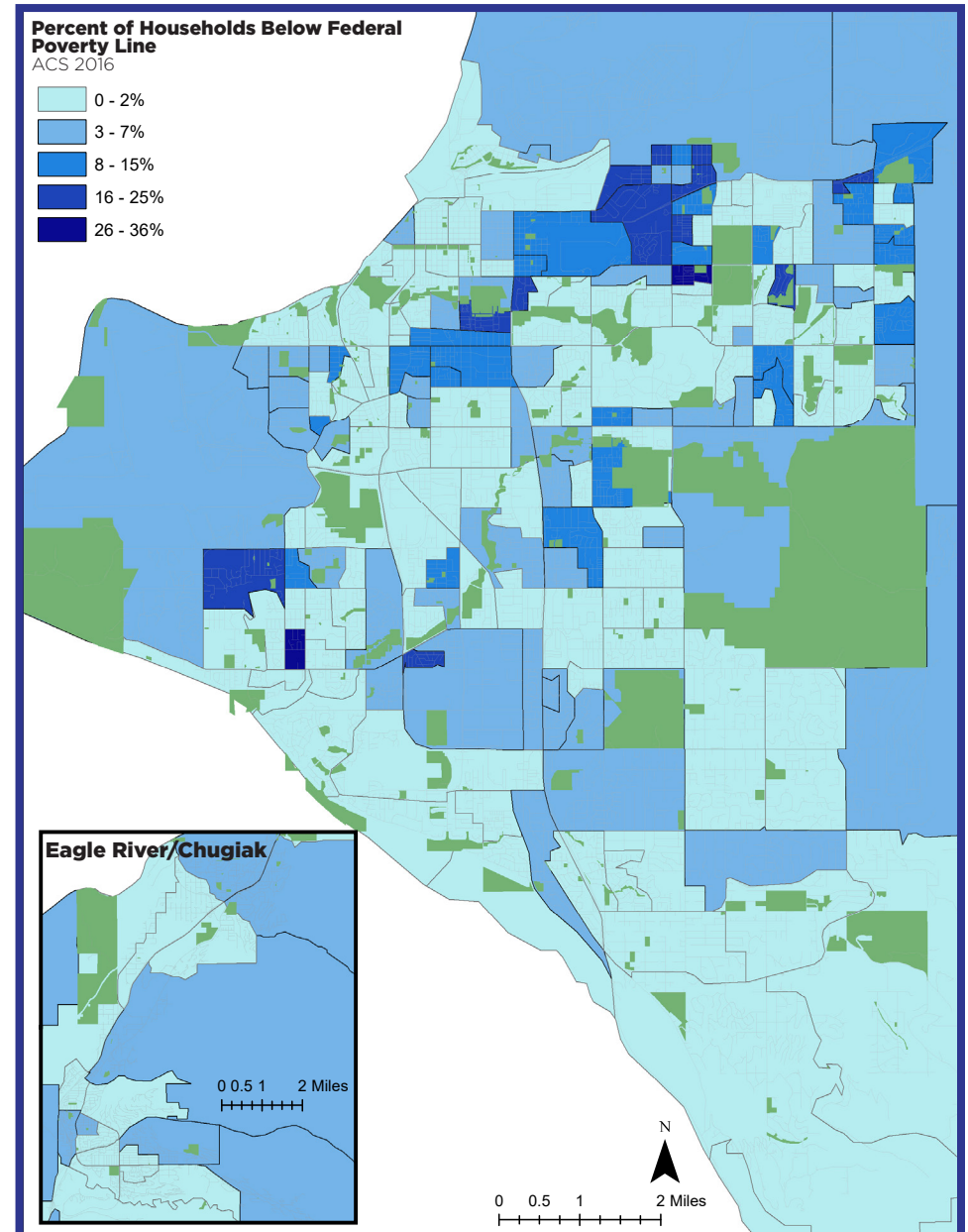
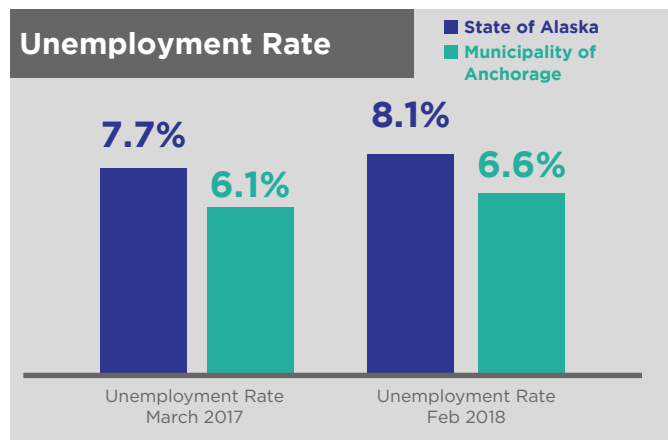
Context and Conditions

Economic Conditions

There are four main drivers of the local economy in Anchorage: oil and gas, military, transportation, and convention/tourism. Global oil prices began falling dramatically in August 2014. Low oil prices, resulting in a budget deficit, put Anchorage (and Alaska) in a recession in 2015. Anchorage now has the most expensive home prices in the state, and Alaska leads the nation in the fastest rising healthcare costs. These various financial stressors are making residents more vulnerable to poverty, leaving less money in personal budgets for transportation.

Rates of unemployment in Anchorage (as well as Alaska) are on the rise, potentially increasing the demand for human transportation services. Alaska ranks 50th in nation for unemployment. Alaska also ranks low (50th) for job growth and private sector job growth in the nation.

Unemployed individuals need a mode of transportation to seek job opportunities, and also to get to and from their potential jobs; in addition, as more people become unemployed, there are more living with less income, and thus rely more on human transportation services when their financial situations change for the worse.



Context and Conditions

Available Transportation Services

The Municipality of Anchorage and other area organizations offer a range of transportation services for seniors, people with disabilities, and low incomes. Transportation providers and human service agencies were invited to participate in a survey to document these services. The organizations in the chart to the right completed the survey.

A majority of survey respondents were non-profit social service agencies that provide transportation or transportation support to select populations within the area.

Organization	Description
AnchorRIDES	Paratransit system serving Anchorage and Eagle River
People Mover	Fixed-route transit system serving Anchorage and Eagle River
Valley Transit	Fixed-route and paratransit system for the Mat-Su region
Glacier Valley Transit	Fixed-route and paratransit system for Girdwood and south Anchorage
Hope Community Resources	Van rides for residents to social services
Turnagain Social Club	Non emergency medical transportation
Mabel T Caverly Senior Center & Services	Bus rides for residents at the Mabel T Caverly Senior Center
Armed Services YMCA of Alaska	Van rides on Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson for military families and public
Department of Veteran Affairs	Van rides for veterans to medical appointments
Enterprise Rideshare	Car sharing and rental services
Checker Dispatch, LLC.	Non emergency medical transportation
Quickride LLC	Non emergency medical transportation
Assets Inc	Van rides to Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson for people with disabilities for employment
Secure Care	Non emergency medical transportation
Salvation Army Serendipity Adult Day Services	Trip planning and arrangement services
Alaska Mental Health Consumer Web	Various social support services for those experiencing mental illness or recovering from addiction
The Arc of Anchorage	Rides for people with developmental or intellectual disabilities to organization activities
University of Alaska Anchorage Parking Services	Parking and transportation services for the University of Alaska
Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education	Advocacy on behalf of people with disabilities who need transportation
Statewide Independent Living Council of Alaska	Advocacy on behalf of older adults, people with disabilities, and their friends and family who need transportation

Context and Conditions

People Mover

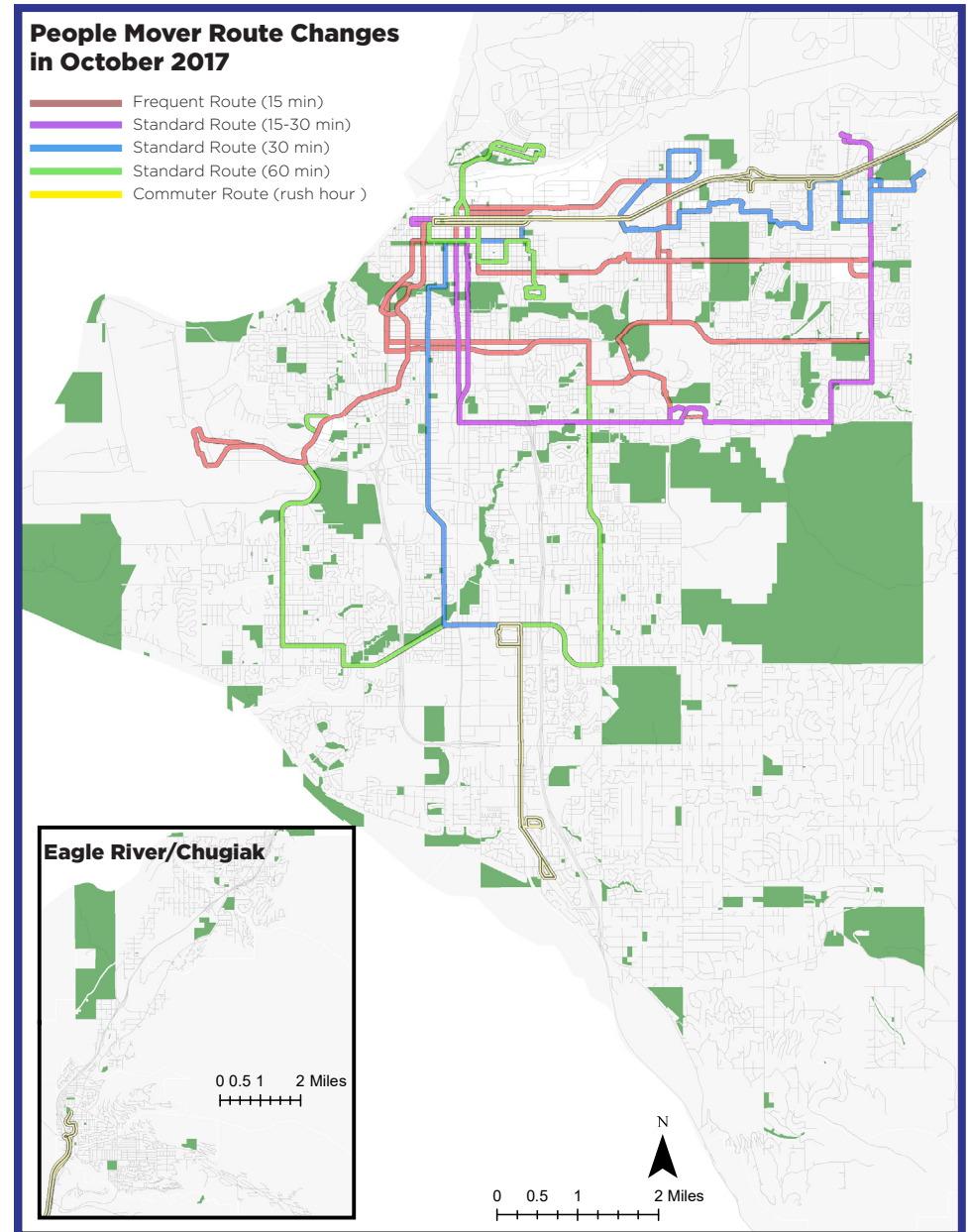
The People Mover transit system is the primary fixed-route system in Anchorage. The system was entirely redesigned and implemented in October 2017, the full outcomes of which have not been thoroughly reviewed. The new system includes 14 routes:

- ▶ Four (4) frequent routes with 15 minute frequency at peak,
- ▶ Four (4) standard routes with 30-60 minute frequency,
- ▶ Four (4) neighborhood routes that operate with 22-foot buses at 30-60 minute frequency,
- ▶ Two (2) commuter routes that operate at rush hour. Route 92, the commuter connecting Eagle River with downtown Anchorage, runs primarily 3:30pm to 7pm Monday through Friday, with no weekend service.

People Mover offers a Half Fare program for people over the age of 60, youth between the ages of 5-8, Medicare card holders, veterans, and people with an ADA disability. In December of 2017, People Mover launched a mobile ticketing app to offer more ticket purchase options.

People Mover implemented a service change on July 2nd, 2018 which altered the routes and schedules of three bus lines as follows:

- ▶ Route 11 was divided into two separate routes. Route 11 will continue to exist, traveling between the Anchorage Senior Center and City Hall. The service change created a new route, Route 41, which created a loop connecting City Hall, the Anchorage Museum, Bluff, and Hollywood.
- ▶ Route 21 no longer travels into downtown, instead ending at Northway Mall.
- ▶ Route 31 no longer travels into downtown, instead aligned to the intersection of Debarr and Muldoon. This allowed transfer to Routes 10 and 30, as well access to Fred Meyer and Walmart.



Context and Conditions

AnchorRIDES

AnchorRIDES is the paratransit service that compliments the People Mover. They provide service for seniors over the age of 60, recipients of the Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver program, and people with ADA defined disabilities. The service operates within a 3/4 mile boundary on either side of the People Mover route, partitioned into three service areas:

- ▶ **Core SA:** Covers the complementary zone within a 3/4 mile of either side of fixed route. Fare is \$3.50.
- ▶ **Premium Zone 1 SA:** extends beyond the complementary zone and affords transportation to Senior and eligible disabled in the south and west areas of Anchorage. Fare is \$5.50.
- ▶ **Premium Zone 2 SA:** provides ADA service only to areas further south beyond Zone 1. Fare is \$5.50.

Neither of the Premium zones are federally mandated. AnchorRIDES also provides service within Eagle River Monday through Friday, 8:30am-4:00pm. Fares range between \$10-12 depending on the destination type. AnchorRIDES also has one (1) FTE travel trainer to offer training services to riders unfamiliar with the transit system.

AnchorRIDES implemented a service change on July 2nd, 2018 which shifted the operation of the AnchorRIDES service in the Chugiak/Eagle River area from the Municipality of Anchorage to the Chugiak Senior Center.

Valley Transit

Valley Transit provides fixed route transit and paratransit flex route services to the Mat-Su Valley, as well as commuter services between the Mat-Su Valley and Downtown Anchorage. Commuter fare to Anchorage is \$7 one way, \$10 for a day pass, and \$120 for a month pass. The commuter service operates from 4:30am to 8:00pm.

Valley Glacier Transit

Glacier Valley Transit provides fixed route and paratransit flex route services to the community of Girdwood in the southern part of the Municipality of Anchorage. Flex route service is limited in adverse weather. The service is funded through 5311 Rural Transportation grant funds.

Military Base Transportation

Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson (J-BER) is located in Northern Anchorage and contains Elmendorf Air Force Base and Fort Richardson. The Department of Veterans affairs operates two 15-passenger vans for individuals with qualifying veteran status. The vans operate Monday through Friday 8am-4pm. The Armed Services YMCA of Alaska operates a demand-response service van exclusively within J-BER per agreement with the Municipality of Anchorage.

Non Emergency Medical Transportation

Non-emergency medical transportation providers are part of the benefit that Medicaid recipients are entitled to. At a minimum, each state Medicaid system must provide transportation to and from covered services using the most appropriate mode for the client. Requests for NEMT services are made to a statewide call center. The state is reimbursed for NEMT services as an administrative expense, which provides greater program flexibility. In Anchorage there are eleven companies that provide NEMT services:

- ▶ United Non-Emergency Medical Transportation LLC
- ▶ Quickride LLC
- ▶ Turnagain Social Club LLC
- ▶ McKinley Services of Alaska LLC
- ▶ Alaska Yellow Dispatch LLC
- ▶ BAC Transportation LLC
- ▶ Arctic Haven ALH Inc
- ▶ Alaska Mobility Transit LLC
- ▶ Checker Dispatch LLC
- ▶ Secure Care Transport
- ▶ Blue Trans LLC

Transportation Network Companies (TNCs)

Since the last coordinated plan, Uber and Lyft have become active transportation providers in Anchorage. For these services, accessed via smartphone or computer application, concern remains that the service is not accessible to persons with disabilities or lower income individuals. Also, these services at present are not required to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Throughout the country, many communities are working with TNCs to form partnerships to maintain service that is underperforming and costly for traditional public transit to provide or to assist with paratransit or demand-response service. These partnerships are pilot projects and it is unclear how successful the relationships will be.

Source: Information Brief "Transportation Technology." Carol Schweiger. National Aging and Disability Transportation Center.

Context and Conditions

Coordination Activities

Mobility management strategies aim to coordinate transportation resources more efficiently to meet the needs of transportation system users. Within human service transportation planning, they focus on fund development, promotion and awareness of services, and the management of day-to-day operations. The matrix belows identifies gaps in mobility management actions and where energy exists to more efficiently coordinate services.

Key areas where transportation stakeholders are interested in coordinating services include:

Pursue joint grant writing or funding opportunities

- AnchorRIDES
- The Arc of Anchorage
- Mabel T Caverly Senior Center
- Turnagain Social Club
- Checker Dispatch LLC
- Quickride LLC
- Enterprise Ride Share

Coordinate vehicle and capital purchases with another organization

- AnchorRIDES
- The Arc of Anchorage
- Mabel T Caverly Senior Center
- Secure Care

Share vehicles with another organization to provide transportation service

- AnchorRIDES
- The Arc of Anchorage
- Mabel T Caverly Senior Center
- People Mover
- Turnagain Social Club

In general, providers are interested in building relationships to find opportunities to share riders, establish data standards, and develop joint applications for funding.

Few stakeholders currently produce materials in multiple languages. Several are in the planning stages, and many do not plan to. As Anchorage becomes increasingly diverse, this is an important area to address to increase awareness of transportation services for non-english speaking groups.

People Mover, UAA Parking Services, and Glacier Valley Transit share maintenance facilities for their vehicles (not with each other). AnchorRIDES and the Arc of Anchorage are interested in finding partners to coordinate with in this area.

Coordination Activity	We do this	We don't do this currently, but are planning to	We would be interested in finding partners to collaborate with on this	We don't do this and do not plan to
Pursue joint grant writing or funding opportunities	6	0	7	5
Pool financial resources with another organization to fund transportation-related services	5	0	3	10
Lead learning sessions for organizations, agencies, or the public to promote awareness of our transportation services	7	2	2	6
Have a website that is regularly maintained	16	1	0	2
Produce print materials in multiple languages	3	6	2	7
Conduct one-on-one needs assessments with customers to identify their transportation needs	8	2	1	7
Provide a repository of transportations services and programs online	4	3	3	8
Provide trip assistance through a live help specialist to match the customer with the best option	6	1	0	12
Share vehicles with another organization to provide transportation service	2	0	4	12
Coordinate vehicle and capital purchases with another organization	0	1	5	12
Coordinate supply or equipment purchases with another organization	2	1	3	12
Share fueling facilities with another organization	2	0	2	14
Share maintenance facilities for vehicles with another organization	3	0	2	13
Coordinate insurance purchases related to transportation with another organization	2	0	2	14
Coordinate driver training programs with another organization	3	0	2	13
Pool financial resources to better coordinate transportation services	3	0	3	12
Distribute customer surveys to solicit feedback about the services we provide	12	1	0	6
Have established common data collection and reporting procedures related to transportation services with other agencies	4	0	3	12

Context and Conditions

Funding Framework & Analysis

Funding for Human Service Transportation plays a key role in setting the stage for coordination. This section identifies existing federal, state and local funding sources and their current uses.

Federal Funding - All Sources

The Federal Transit Administration requirement for a Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan stems largely from the need to coordinate the wide variety of human service transportation programs that exist in local communities. A 2003 Government Accountability Report identified 62 different federal funding streams for human service transportation.

GAO found that coordination in the form of information sharing, resource pooling, and consolidation of transportation services under a single state or local agency can improve the cost-effectiveness and quality of human service transportation programs.

While numerous federal and state programs exist to fund human service transportation, the vast majority of spending is concentrated in handful of major programs. With an estimated \$2.9 Billion spent in 2013, Medicaid Non-emergent medical transportation is by far the largest human service transportation program in the United States. The second largest, when state and local resources are included is ADA Paratransit. The next largest programs include:

- ▶ Veteran Administration's Veteran Transportation Service
- ▶ Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- ▶ Older American Act funded transportation for social supports for seniors
- ▶ Transportation funded under local Medicaid home and community-based waiver programs

The AnchorRIDES paratransit system consolidates three of the largest human service transportation programs in the region: ADA Paratransit, Older-Americans act funded transportation for Seniors and transportation for individuals who receive benefits under the Medicaid Home and Community Based services waiver. Programs that are not directly coordinated include non-emergent medical transportation for Veterans and Medicaid recipients and TANF programs.

Federal Funding - FTA Sources

As an urbanized area, the Municipality of Anchorage is the recipient of Federal Transit Administration Section 5307 funds for general public transportation. Under new rules promulgated after the passage of MAP-21, The MOA also became the designated recipient for FTA Section 5310 funding in 2014.

State Funding

According to the 2017 AASHTO Survey of State funding for Public Transportation total State Transit Funding in Alaska for FY 2016 was \$173,200,000 from general fund allocation. This is only for general public transportation and does not include human service transportation programs that are limited to specific populations such as Medicaid NEMT, Older Americans Act Title III-B, Medicaid Community Based Waivers.

Alaska per capita state spending is the fifth highest in the nation behind Washington DC, Massachusetts, New York, and Illinois. Unlike these states with large urban metropolitan areas, Alaska's state funding of public transportation is driven by a large investment in the Alaska Marine Highway System which serves as an additional public transit system and a lifeline to medical, shopping, cultural and social activities for many Alaskans. In fiscal year 2016 the State of Alaska provided \$33M in capital and \$139.5M in operating assistance for the Alaska Marine Highway System.

Context and Conditions

In addition, the Alaska State Legislature provided \$0.7M in general funds as match for Federal Transit Administration grants. According to the AASHTO survey, these funds provide approximately 15 percent of the required match for services available to the general public.

In addition to these amounts, the Alaska Mental Health Trust program provides additional funding for transportation for beneficiaries identified by the Trust Board of Directors which includes individuals with mental illness, developmental disabilities, Alzheimer's and other dementias, chronic alcoholism, and traumatic brain injury. The Alaska Legislature occasionally supplements the program with an appropriation of funds from the general fund.

Local Funding

Based on conversations with Municipality of Anchorage staff, the local funding picture is largely one of balancing limited local funds to achieve a full local match for the available Federal Transit Administration funds. The MOA reports generally being able to find match for FTA funds, but that it is always a challenge.

Furthermore, MOA staff indicate sub-recipients face similar challenges. In previous years, agencies have struggled to come up with the required match amounts for the small pools of funds available through the former JARC and New Freedom programs.

More recently, purchase of service agreements under the 5310 program have been simpler to implement and administer at the local level. The Alaska Mental HealthTrust funds available from the state were also reported as being an important source of local match funds.

State and Federal Transit Funding Trend - General Public Transportation					
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
State Funding	\$179,978,475	\$181,562,047	\$187,652,905	\$185,858,364	\$173,199,886
Federal	\$62,885,668	\$44,971,923	\$45,007,282	\$44,532,937	\$64,457,160

Identifying Needs

Transit System Improvements
Late Night and Weekend Options
A Resilient, Adaptable System
Education and Awareness
Funding
Stronger Coordinating Structures

Identifying Needs

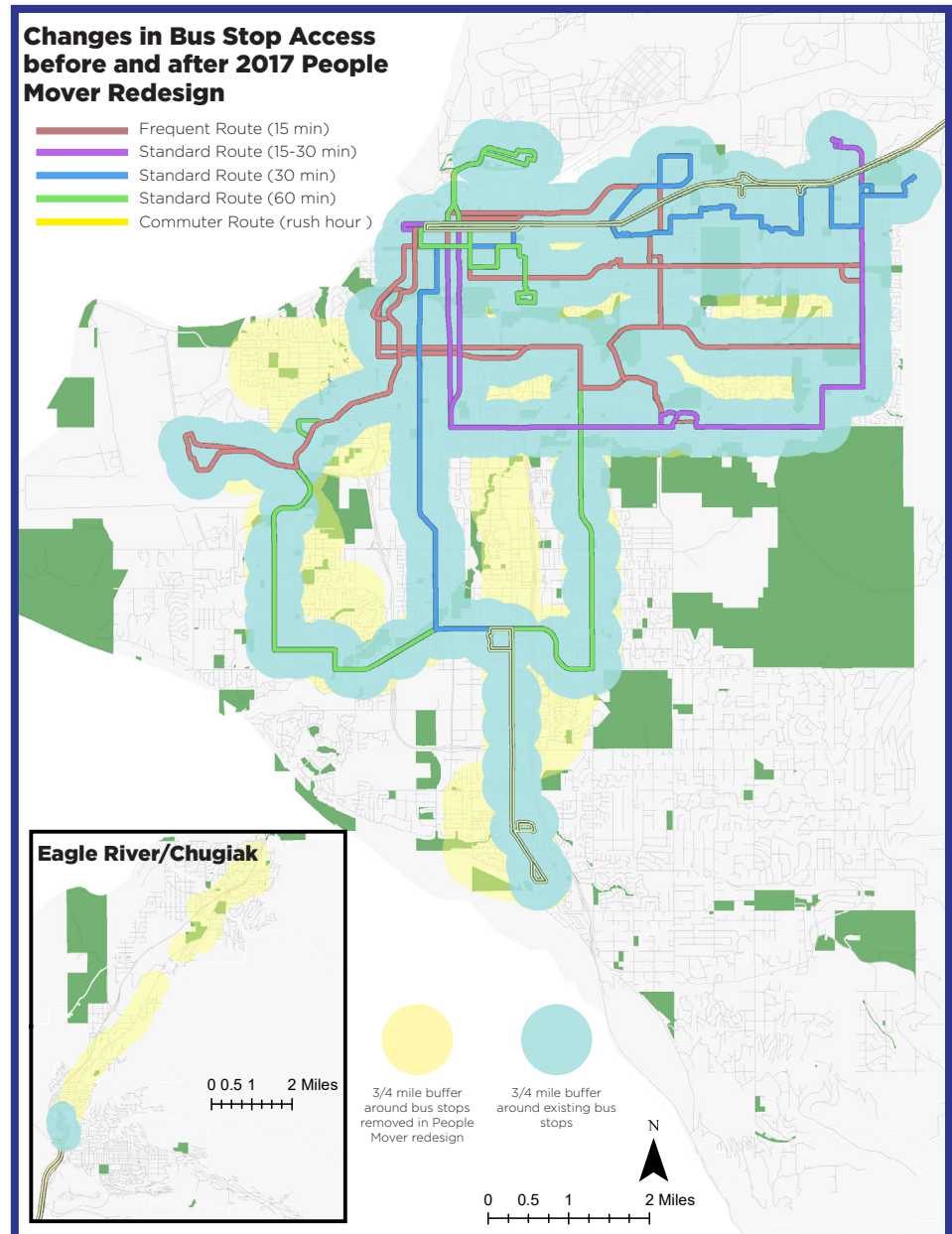
Transit System Improvements

The People Mover redesign in October 2017 shifted the delivery of the transit system to one that focuses on maximizing ridership through fewer routes along major corridors that receive service more frequently. This approach, in comparison to one that promotes greater coverage through more neighborhood routes, has left some groups with less access to destinations and services than before. Additionally, this approach does not consider the consequences of trading greater frequency along central routes for greater distances to walk to a stop within the context of a city with a significant winter season and limited snow clearance systems.

The People Mover redesign reduced geographic service coverage by:

- ▶ Removing bus line 36. This line connected the University/Medical District, Midtown, Turnagain, and Downtown.
- ▶ Removing bus lines 60 and 2. This line connected services along the Old Seward Highway as well as neighborhood connectors in Oceanview and O'Malley.
- ▶ Removing bus lines 102 and Eagle River Connect. These lines provided service along the Old Glenn Highway throughout Eagle River. The replacement line does not travel north of the Eagle River Transit Center.

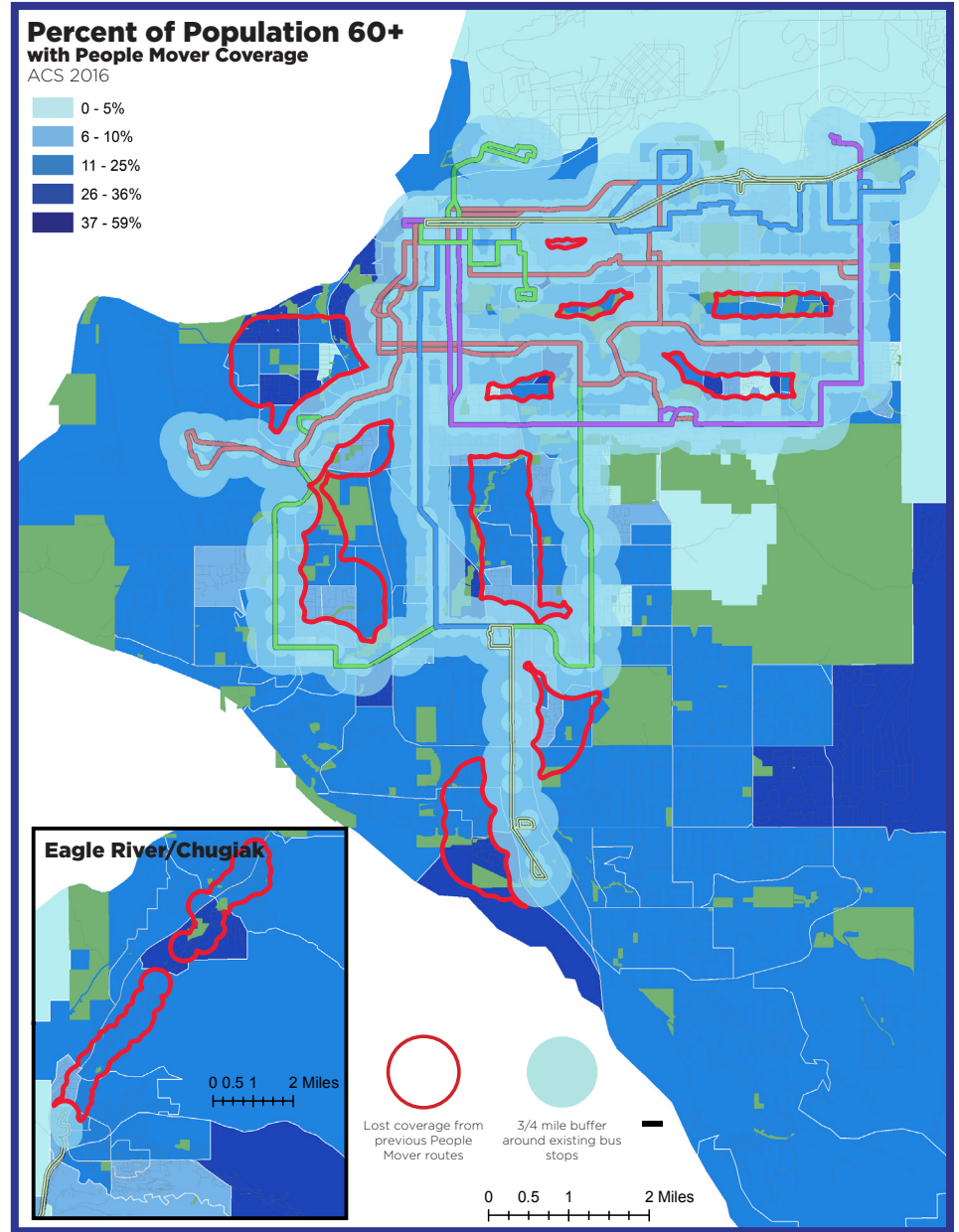
These changes also extended travel times required to travel between areas served by high frequency routes and outlying areas. Attendees at open houses noted how changes forced some workers to leave work earlier to make it to the bus before it was dark. The changes also remove daytime transit options from neighborhoods in Eagle River and South Anchorage to the Anchorage Bowl. The current commuter lines only run during times that meet the needs of those employed in a traditional 9 to 5. This leaves those that live in those areas and work non-traditional shifts, or want to travel to various services in the Bowl during the day, without transit options.



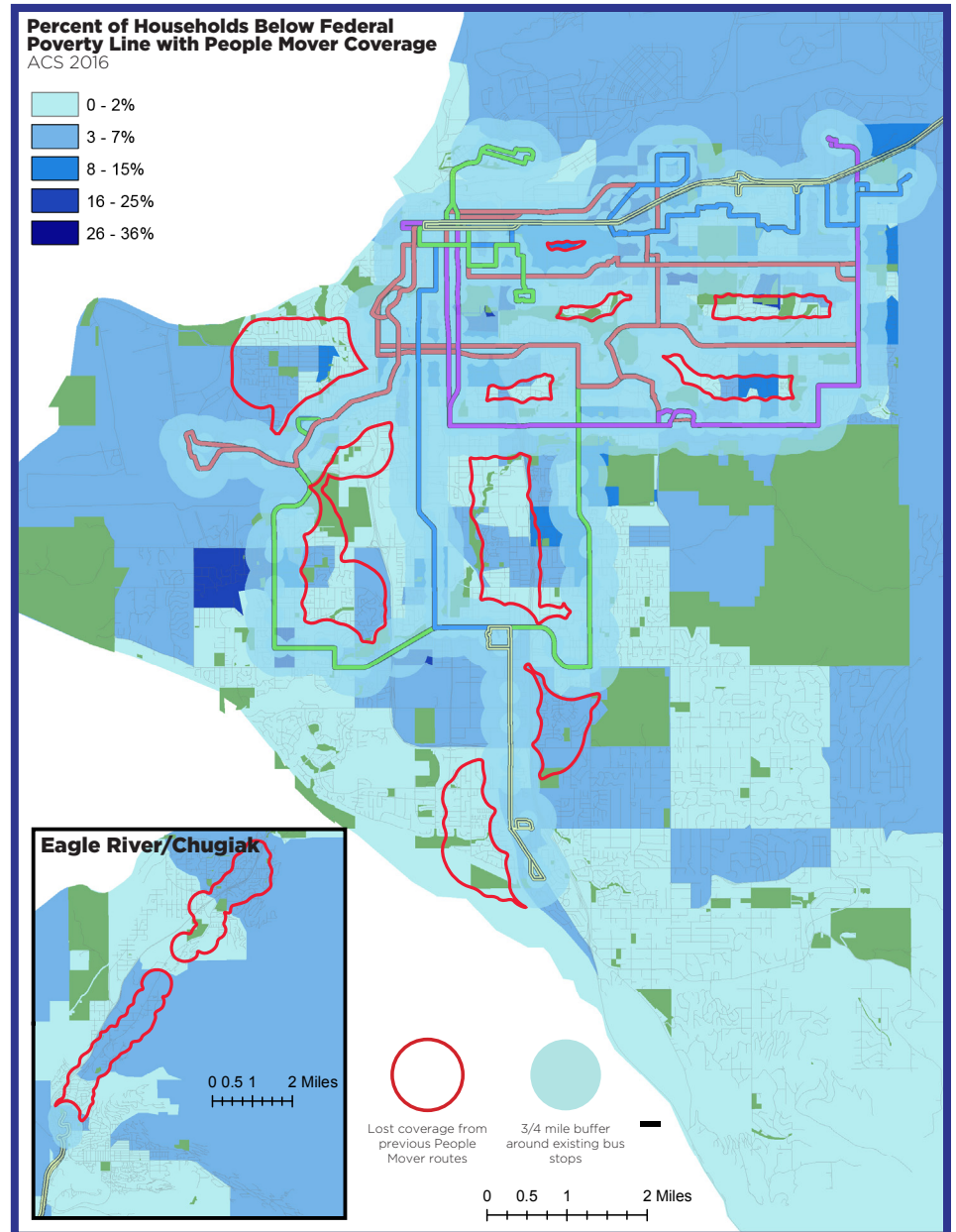
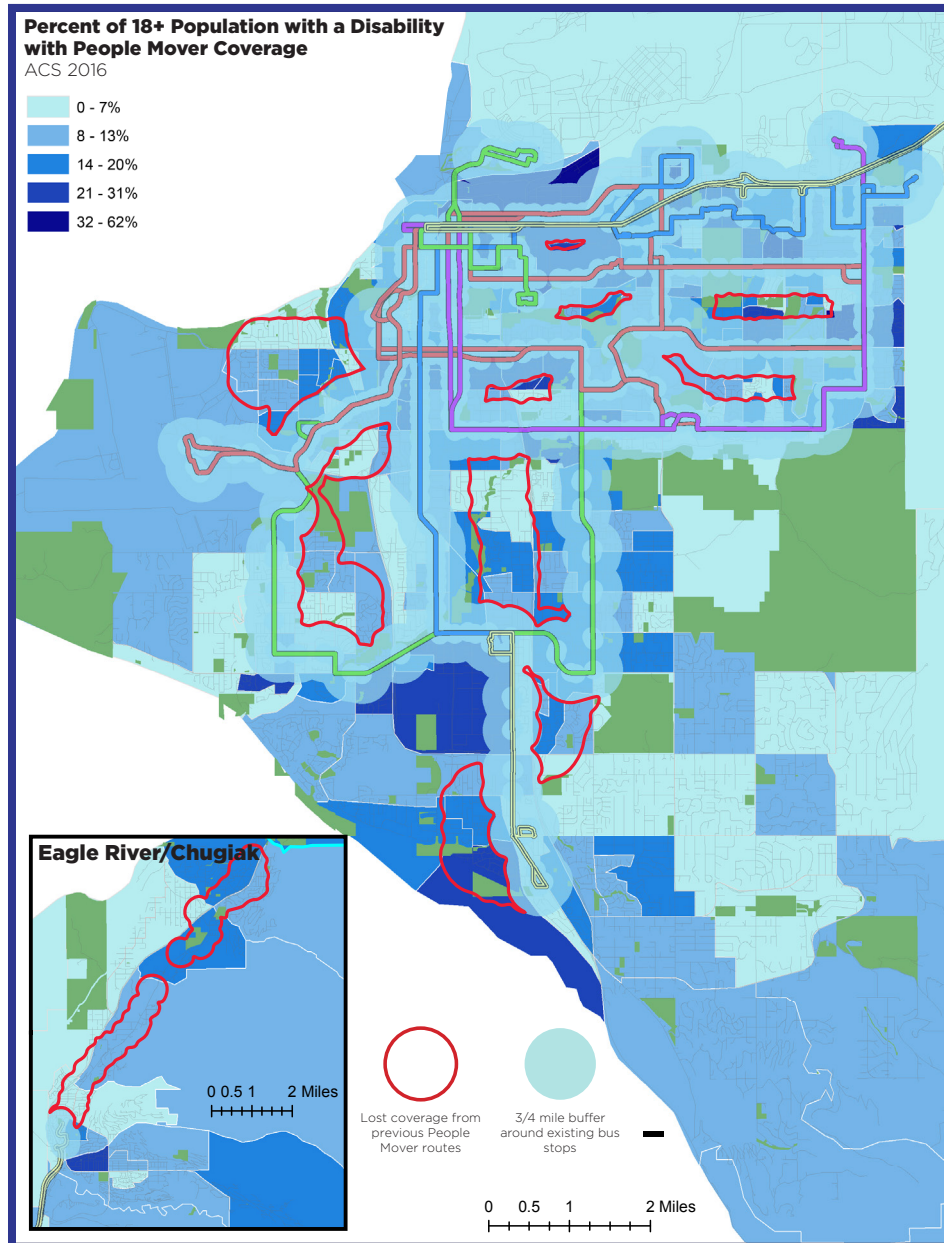
Identifying Needs

Connectivity was cited as a travel barrier to many destinations. Changes to the People Mover system in both October 2017 and July 2018 increased frequency, but require more transfers to travel across the Anchorage Bowl. Members from focus group mentioned it takes a long time to get to certain parts of town.

Changes to the People Mover system also impacted the low-income individuals in the health care sector. Medicaid patients traveling into the city from outlying areas have limited options to reach affordable lodging options during their stay for medical appointments. Low-income health care workers that need to arrive to work in the early morning or late at night do not have transit options that work for them.



Identifying Needs



Identifying Needs

Late Night and Weekend Service Options

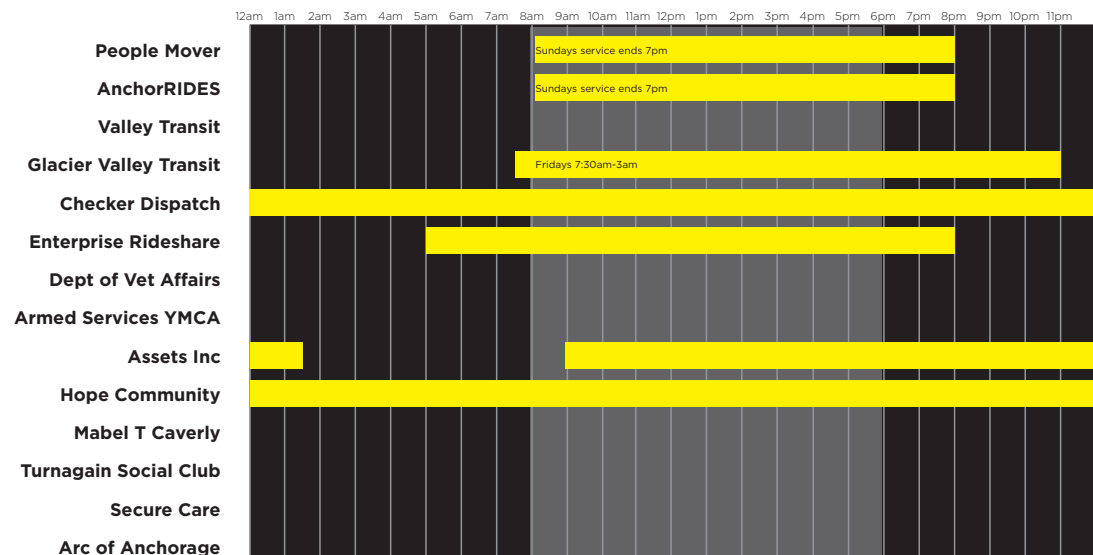
A consistent conversation point during open houses and focus groups was the need for late night, weekend, and holiday transportation services. This trend was reciprocated in the transportation provider survey, with many social service agencies identifying limited weekend and evening options as barrier for their clients. While general transit options run later into the evening and on weekends, services specifically for seniors or people with disabilities are limited before 9am and after 6pm. Many services do not run on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday.

Transit options connecting Eagle River to the Anchorage bowl are limited, providing few options for people with disabilities or seniors to travel during the day time. The limited transit offerings also disproportionately impact low-income workers that need to arrive to work in the early morning or late at night, outside of typical commute hours. One low-income worker shared that the limited service hours on the weekend impacted their ability to stay late at their job, because if they did they would have no way to get home.

Transportation Options Monday through Friday



Transportation Options Saturday and Sunday



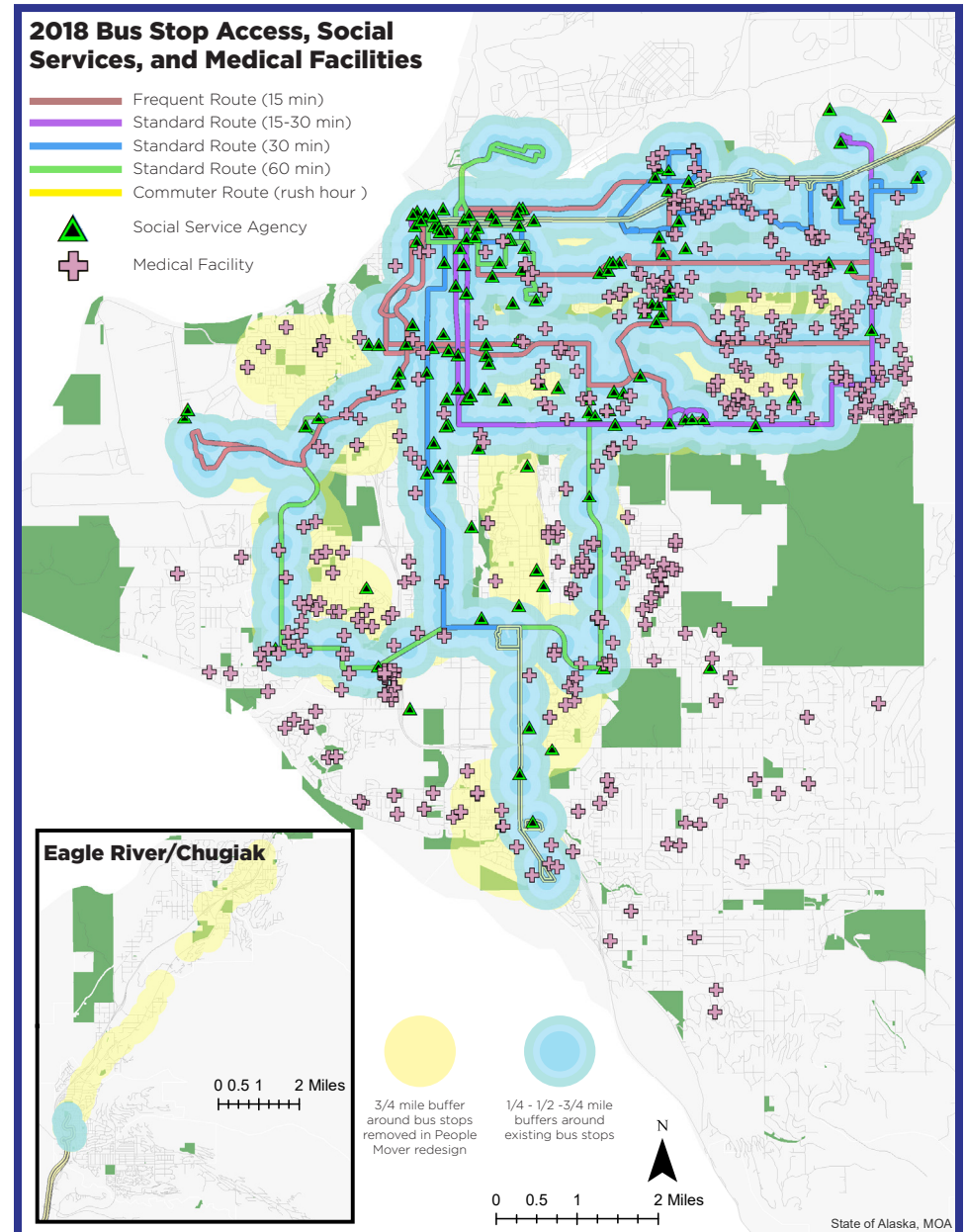
Identifying Needs

A resilient, adaptable transportation system

The road network and land use patterns of Anchorage are reflective of a city that has focused on travel by car. This physical manifestation of city design is mirrored in sections of the city's municipal code, which still view Anchorage as a car-centered city. Anchorage's transportation system needs to be flexible in order to adapt to new modes of travel, desires of the community, and seasonal condition shifts. Since the 2009 CHSTP was developed there is a greater focus of pedestrian planning and advocacy in Anchorage.

The ability to walk or roll safely to a destination or bus stop was identified as a key aspect of a successful coordinated transportation plan, as well as an important strategy for supporting the aging population in Anchorage. While federal requirements to provide paratransit service within a 3/4 mile buffer of transit lines addresses the needs of people that qualify for those services, there need to be services and elements of the built environment that provide first and last mile connections between transit lines and travel destinations for aging seniors and low income groups who do not qualify for paratransit.

Anchorage needs transportation planning that accounts for the conditions and challenges of a winter city. If not addressed, icy sidewalks and unplowed snow banks block pathways to bus stops and impact people's ability, safety, and desire to use public transit. Conversations from open houses and focus groups highlighted stories about bus stops that aren't covered and without benches that leave people waiting for the bus standing in the snow for hours. Poor sidewalk connectivity between bus stops and travel destination was identified as a travel deterrent to use public transit, in both winter and summer months.



Identifying Needs

Limited funding for winter sidewalk maintenance was a barrier identified preventing pathways from being cleared in a timely manner. Furthermore, discussions about sidewalk snow maintenance highlighted it was perceived as a second priority to clearing snow of roads, especially on roads owned by the Department of Transportation.

Education and Awareness

An underlying theme in conversations at open houses about changes to the People Mover routes was the lack of information about how to navigate the new system. While a few maps and a Rider's Guide that contained route information were available online, there were limited non-web resources available for groups with limited access to computers or smartphones.

Additionally, survey groups identified the need for more educational materials in languages other than English. 48,982 Anchorage residents speak a language other than English, predominantly Spanish, Tagalog, or another Pacific Island or Native American language. This number has consistently grown since the 2009 coordinated plan. While about half of the transportation survey respondents indicated they already translate their materials or plan to, half say they do not and do not intend to. The need for improved communication tools with people that speak English as a second language surfaced in conversations with community organizations that are involved with supporting transportation activities as well.

Funding

The funding analysis presented above reveals an emerging opportunity to pursue enhanced collaboration with local healthcare providers. This is a theme that is emerging throughout the transportation industry as the healthcare and health insurance

industries are beginning to see the value of investing in the social determinants of health. Transportation is a major barrier to effective healthcare for many non-drivers. Yet, from the funding analysis presented above, we observe that the major human service transportation programs that are not currently coordinated are those programs that focus on healthcare access: Medicaid NEMT and the Veterans Administration Veterans Transportation Service.

Stronger Coordination Structures

A consistent theme amongst all stakeholders was the energy and identified need for collaboration between organizations that provide transportation. Limited progress on strategies identified in the 2009 CHSTP was in part attributed to the lack of a shared vision and identified champion to lead coordination efforts. Stakeholders noted that in the years after the 2009 CHSTP the perception was that the DOT was responsible for delivery of more strategies than they had bandwidth for. These factors were also pointed to as a major barrier to coordination efforts amongst current transportation providers.

Stakeholders also identified that there was a lack of coordination on priorities and vision between municipality offices and the state. This inhibits the implementation of successful operations. As the two government entities own different segments of roads and sidewalks within the municipality, the siloed management often leaves stretches of sidewalk abruptly unplowed at ownership boundary lines. There is need for greater institutional communication and participation for these issues. Some stakeholders also pointed out there is a need for more political will to implement some recommendations.

Identifying Needs

Need Assessment Summary

- 1** Study/address unintentional access issues created the People Mover redesign
- 2** Provide more transportation options during late, weekend, and holiday hours
- 3** Fortify/strengthen Anchorage's transportation systems throughout the winter
- 4** Connect key players to better collaborate around human services transportation
- 5** Address funding limitations and barriers
- 6** Provide transportation information in more languages and non-web formats
- 7** Incorporate a lens into all transportation projects that considers those that do not have access to a car/vulnerable person who has to walk or bike



Plan Vision

Older adults, people with disabilities, and people with low incomes in Anchorage have transportation options that support and promote individual independence, freedom, and opportunity.

Recommendations

Working Together as a Community

Planning and Building an Inclusive Transportation Network

Growing and Sharing Funding for Human Services Transportation

Recommendations

Strategy Approach

While a number of services exist to meet the needs of transportation-disadvantaged individuals in Anchorage, more can be done to improve coordination of these services in the region. Improved coordination can reduce redundancies, eliminate coverage gaps, and make best use of funds, improving transportation efficiency and accessibility for all. The following three focus areas surfaced as priorities to provide a foundation for improved coordination and human services transportation systems in Anchorage.

This plan outlines one primary action within each focus area to address the most immediate needs identified in the plan. Secondary actions are compiled in a “toolbox” within each focus area. These actions can be selected from to address identified needs as funding and stakeholder bandwidth are available.

Focus Area	Identified Need Addressed
1. Working together as a community	<p>Connect/guide key players to better collaborate</p> <p>Incorporate a lens into all transportation projects that considers those that do not have access to a car/vulnerable person who has to walk or bike</p> <p>Address funding limitations and barriers</p>
2. Planning and building an inclusive transportation network	<p>Identify/study/address unintentional access issues created the People Mover redesign</p> <p>Fortify/strengthen Anchorage's transportation systems throughout the winter</p> <p>Provide more transportation options during late, weekend, and holiday hours</p> <p>Provide transportation information in more languages and non-web formats</p>
3. Growing and sharing funding for human services transportation	<p>Address funding limitations and barriers</p>

Priority 1

Working together as a community.

Successful coordination efforts need both public and private agencies to work together to support an efficient and effective transportation system. Stakeholders acknowledged there are limited resources to support human services transportation and a greater need than those resources can support. There are many agencies providing transportation related services in Anchorage, and approaching scarce resources with a collective abundance mindset can identify new ways to leverage them. Coordination amongst existing transportation related and human service committees to ensure this plan is implemented is critical.

Action: Convene and formalize existing advisory groups as an ongoing human services coordinating committee (Do not start a new committee.)

Clear communication, opportunities to build trust between participating partners, and a strong support framework to sustain coordination activities as conditions change all keep coordination efforts afloat, regardless of context. Tasking an existing committee with oversight and implementation of this plan would harness the identified energy around transportation coordination and provide a forum for communication. Successful coordinating committees tend to have three shared characteristics:

Strong leadership

The success of coordination efforts is tied to the involvement of a local champion. All types of agencies are able to take a lead role in coordination, ranging from transit providers to MPOs to non-profit organizations. Important aspects of the lead organization are the presence of dedicated and persistent staff, the ability to build and manage a broad agenda for coordination, a neutral reputation to address possible mistrust between coordinating

partners, and the capacity to create an environment that promotes openness and inclusion.

Regular meetings

Holding regular meetings to address human services transportation topics creates a framework to develop relationships and trust between partners; these meetings help to maintain an open line of communication. Regular meetings also provide a platform to regularly monitor progress on projects identified in a CHSTP and allow for partners to quickly respond to community needs and changes or new opportunities in funding.

Interagency cooperation

Two or more organizations working together in this context involves a shared perception of the problem across agencies, available resources between agencies to address the problem, and the staff capacity to implement the solution. Initiatives to coordinate, informed by data from all participating organizations, allow those involved to see a more complete picture of the issues at hand, and consequently identify more comprehensive and effective solutions.

Priority 1

Various stakeholders expressed interest in coordination efforts and many have been advising this planning process who could serve as potential continued collaborators in a coordinating committee:

Organization	Coordination interests
Anchorage School District	Transit choices for youth to schools
Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education	Mobility and accessibility options for people with disabilities
Statewide Independent Living Council	Mobility and accessibility options for people with disabilities
Alaska Mental Health Trust	Transportation choices for people with mental illness, developmental disabilities, chronic alcohol or drug addiction, Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, and traumatic brain injuries
Alaska Mobility Coalition	Mobility and accessibility options and improving coordination between government structures.
Aging and Disability Resource Center	Transit and mobility options for seniors and people with disabilities
Anchorage Innovation Team Program	Government systems change for complex challenges including rising health care costs and neighborhood revitalization
Disability Law Center	Mobility and accessibility options for people with disabilities
Hope Community Resources	Transportation choices for individuals and families who experience intellectual and developmental disabilities, traumatic brain injury and mental health challenges
Northwest ADA Center	Mobility and accessibility options for people with disabilities
Non-emergency medical transportation providers, public transit providers, and community organizations with their own vehicles	Reducing costs around vehicle maintenance
Representatives from the Municipality of Anchorage and the state DOTs	Improving coordination between government structures
Senior centers (Anchorage Senior Center, Mabel T Caverly Senior Center, Chugiak Senior Center)	Transit choices for seniors to social services
Tribal Health Organizations (Southcentral Foundation)	Access to health care for vulnerable populations.

Priority 1

With several other planning efforts occurring concurrently with the development of this plan, there are also several other potential partners to include in the formation of a coordination council. This broader level of collaboration would widen the scope of the body to encompass all transportation and mobility-related projects in Anchorage. This would help combat siloing and build a lens for considering seniors, low-income populations, and people with disabilities into every project. Streamlining these partners together into one group also would likely afford the city enough bandwidth to support with staff and additional resources. Potential collaborators to enfold into this group include:

Organization	Primary Focus	Coordination interests
MOA Public Transit Advisory Board (PTAB)	Nine person board to advise Anchorage Assembly and Mayor on balanced public transit system. Requires 2 members from disability community.	A comprehensive, well functioning transit system that serves the needs of all Anchorage residents, in particular those who are unable to drive.
AMATS Bike + Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)	Standing Committee that promotes engagement of bike/pedestrian advocates in transportation planning	Improved non-motorized infrastructure for non-drivers. First and last mile to transit.
Vision Zero Steering Committee	Reduce loss of life and major injuries on roadways to zero.	A culture of safety. Change driver behavior. Share the road with all users - transit, non-motorized. Improve data and transparency
Community Advisory Committee (CAC) + Agency Advisory Group (AAG) Anchorage Non-Motorized Plan	Plan-Specific teams that guide and advise the development of a combined Bike Plan, Pedestrian Plan and Trail Plan (2017 start - ongoing)	Improved non-motorized infrastructure for non-drivers. First and last mile to transit.
Live.Work.Play (LWP) Trails & Transit	A committee of the Anchorage Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) promoting the important link between a thriving economy and trails and transit.	Transportation system that supports all people to fully participate in the economic life of Anchorage.

Action Items

- Determine which existing standing committee from the lists above can champion the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan. Identify/ Recruit necessary stakeholders to ensure broad representation.**
- Schedule an initial kick-off meeting**
- Develop committee materials/operating structures including:**
 - Charter
 - Agenda/note templates
 - Community meeting norms
 - Priority projects drawn from this plan

Toolbox 1

Working together as a community

Develop data sharing practices

Enhancing how organizations track, measure, and share performance metrics has multiple benefits. Coordination on data collection can help increase the overall quality of data, reduce the cost, and increase the breadth of data collected over time. Most importantly, coordinating data collection and sharing helps guide program and policy development to improve human services transportation. Barriers to data sharing practices include institutional data possessiveness and lack of common standards for data and software. During outreach it was identified that the Alaska DOT and Municipality of Anchorage use different metrics for success than agencies working to enhance non motorized transit. It was also identified that there is opportunity for coordination in leveraging GIS capabilities and resources (such as the Anchorage Geographic Data and Information Center) among transportation providers to enhance services.

To begin, an assessment of data management methodologies of the organizations identified in this plan should be conducted. Assessment areas should include data governance, collection strategies, performance measures, data management. From this, collaborative efforts can be identified to work towards shared goals, as well as implement strategies to address gaps and limitations identified.

Explore partnerships between public, non-profit, and for-profit to develop low income shared mobility options

Shared mobility options encompass can car sharing, ride sharing, taxis, and transportation networks companies (TNCs). These options can help extend the reach of transit networks by filling the gap between a starting location and a transit stop, and provide alternative, faster routes. Partnerships between public entities, non-profit and social service organizations, and the companies that provide shared mobility services should be explored with the specific aim of providing and expanding discounts or subsidy programs to reduce financial barriers. Outreach from this plan suggested better communication between these groups could identify potential cost levers to reduce or eliminate membership or usage fees.

The involvement of government can help guide the development of these programs, potentially to the degree of requiring their provision or operation in areas identified as low income zones. Additionally, it would lay the groundwork for enhancing connectivity between this system and other public transit options. Partnership between all entities identified here would allow for the exploration of business models that meet everyone's needs, as well as properly lay down the foundation for the pilot project testing and evaluation that should initially be implemented.

Education and awareness campaigns

Working together as a community also means making sure everyone has access to knowledge about transportation options in the area. Conversations during open houses surfaced the need for more education and outreach about changes that happened to the People Mover. Specifically, more print offerings for seniors and those with limited to no access to web-based tools. While 16 organizations shared in the transportation survey that they regularly update their website, only three reported they produce print materials in multiple languages, and seven reported they do not intend on doing this. Additionally, review for this plan found that often the public transit system was viewed as a "social safety net" and that there was no city-wide narrative around transit usage that would make it appealing to all demographics.

Partners identified in this plan should collaborate to develop shared messaging grounded in education that convey the benefits of public transit to seniors, people with disabilities, and low income groups. Educational materials around available transportation services should be developed in multiple languages and distributed in social service agencies, medical facilities, and senior living facilities.

Priority 2

Planning and building an inclusive transportation network

Older adults, people with disabilities, and people with low incomes experience limited options for moving around and through Anchorage and the Chugiak/Eagle River areas. Improvements should focus on creating a system that accommodates those that face the greatest barriers, in turn making the system better for everyone.

Areas of improvement need to focus on making the system more accessible and safe: Current transit options are not accessible for many key human services destinations, both because transit routes do not serve those destinations and because the hours of operations of the transit system are too limited. Winter weather increases the number of destinations (and transit routes) that are inaccessible, especially for people with disabilities.

Action: Develop People Mover & Anchor Rides Transit Investment Priorities and Service Enhancement Plans that include Seniors and People with Disabilities

Concurrently with the development of the recommendations for this CHSTP, the Anchorage began work on a service enhancement program for People Mover. This action highlights geographic and time-based areas for improvement.

Areas to focus building more geographic coverage include:

- ▶ Turnagain neighborhood: This area has a higher percentage of people over 60 that is no longer serviced by transit
- ▶ Old Seward Highway: This stretch has a higher number of human service destinations with limited transit service
- ▶ Old Seward/Oceanview areas: These areas have higher percentages of people over 60 and people with a disability
- ▶ Eagle River: This area lost a significant amount of geographic transit coverage and has limited day time public transit service.

Time windows to improve options specifically for seniors or people with disabilities include:

- ▶ Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays
- ▶ Before 9am
- ▶ After 6pm

Action Items

- 1 Solicit input from seniors, people with disabilities, youth, and low-income groups on needs and desires for transit projects to address identified gaps.**
- 2 Synthesize priority goals identified here with other planning efforts to develop mission, goals, and objectives for a service enhancement plan**
- 3 Prioritize enhancement strategies to dedicate resources to serve seniors, people with disabilities, youth, and low-income groups**

Toolbox 2

Planning and building an inclusive transportation network

Implement additional winter city policies to address snow removal

Snow was identified as a major barrier to mobility during the winter months. It plays a large role in the functionality of the Anchorage's transportation system and people's ability to access it. While Anchorage already implements a snow removal strategy and online reporting on cleared routes, more is needed. Potential strategies to augment these services include:

- ▶ Implementing a PSA campaign that promotes the responsibility of residents and business owners to clear sidewalks in front of homes and store fronts.
- ▶ Hiring and involving people with disabilities to run snow plows or provide their expertise and lived experience navigating sidewalks that have not been properly cleared to inform snow removal strategies and standards.
- ▶ Developing neighborhood shoveling groups that rely on volunteerism to assist with snow removal. This strategy should be coordinated with existing snow removal strategies to inform routes and the identification of geographically-specific residents and organizations to recruit and organize for sustainability.
- ▶ Enhance and better coordinate snow removal and winter maintenance policies between the State DOT and the Municipality of Anchorage to avoid abrupt stops in snow removal dictated by road ownership.

Bridge the gap between transportation and land use strategies

In addition to improving the quality and availability of transportation options, it is possible to increase access to human services by addressing land use and development approaches within the MOA. Much of Anchorage has been designed with cars in mind, and a shift towards more compact development that allows for a mix of uses and for residents to access goods and services without needing to drive or walk long distances would help address gaps in transportation options.

A zoning review should be conducted to make sure there are no barriers to locate nonresidential use in existing neighborhoods in relation to the new People Mover transit line. It should be completed with guidance from the Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan, as this plan sites the need for more compact development, mobility and access, and walkable communities. Stakeholders during outreach suggested that such a review should also include analysis/study of the best path forward for incentivizing siting of senior and assisted living services near transit. Additionally, an analysis should be included to investigate zoning laws and code to suggest changes that focus more on pedestrian mobility, particularly for those who have ambulatory difficulty, take longer to travel by foot, or use a mobility device.

Develop a volunteer driver program

A volunteer program can expand public transit ridership and close the last mile gap by connecting people who can reach bus stops with People Mover lines. This type of service would also help fill in service gaps during weekend and non-peak hours and provide another affordable transportation option for the area. Data for pick up and drop off locations should be collected to gain new insight into where there is more need for transit and other transportation options.

An initial step in the development of this program should be the identifications of an agency (or agencies) to support a program coordinator manage volunteer recruitment, training, and retention. Next conduct a review of risk management strategies to ensure quality and evaluate feasibility and cost effective options for the acquisition and dispatch of vehicles. Additionally, policies around ride purposes, times, and driver mileage reimbursement should be developed based on need and funding.

Priority 3

Grow and share funding for human services transportation

As a semi-consolidated system, the human services transportation system in Anchorage is already leveraging funds fairly efficiently. Three of the major federally funded human service transportation funding programs are consolidated under AnchorRIDES: Senior Transportation under Title III-B of the Older Americans Act, transportation for beneficiaries of waived services under the Medicaid home and community based services program, and ADA paratransit. Furthermore, purchase of service agreements - which are one of the most efficient ways to coordinate resources while taking advantage of the economies of scale of a centralized system - are already being used in several areas in the community. This foundation can be built upon to further grow and share funding for human service transportation. This priority area identifies several initiatives related to strategic funding partnerships the region can pursue as it seeks to add resources.

Action: Pursue Strategic Funding Partnerships

The toolkit below identifies a handful of potential pathways for increasing the amount of funding available for human services transportation. The tools are designed to augment the semi-consolidated system that already exists by supporting further consolidation in areas where it has not already occurred and by building additional infrastructure to improve the efficiency of purchase of service agreements. Specific actions are identified to mitigate anticipated risks.

One of the primary risks associated with further consolidation is that trust among collaborating partners can deteriorate when the parties do not agree on what the outcomes of coordination should be. For example, if one party's primary objective is to save money to expand the amount

of services available while the other's primary focus is to improve quality even if it means fewer rides can be served, conflict can emerge. The coordinating committee identified in Priority 1 of this plan should be used as a forum for directly discussing desired outcomes. Have these conversations before pursuing additional consolidation to ensure you understand your stakeholders' viewpoints and needs and clearly define the goals of any new funding partnerships.

Tools such as logic models and cost allocation models can be used in this process to build trust among partners. This is accomplished by making assumptions more apparent and by providing a framework for discussing priorities.

The recommended actions build on the findings of the funding assessment by highlighting areas where consolidation has not already occurred but where there is potential opportunity for multiple parties to benefit. Specifically, medical transportation is identified as a strategic pursuit.

Medical transportation is highlighted as a strategic priority because it is a simple entry point for discussions about the value of transportation. The return on investment in improved transportation to medical services is high and is becoming more recognized. At the same time, the two major human service transportation programs that are not part of the local semi-consolidated system are medical transportation systems: Medicaid NEMT and the Veterans Administration Veteran Transportation Service. Taken together, the high return on investment associated with medical transportation and the large number of rides performed by these systems creates an environment of opportunity.

Action Items

- 1 Focus on medical transportation as a starting point by building relationships with key people at the VA's VTS program and the state's Medicaid NEMT program.**
- 2 Begin by understanding unmet needs and discussing desired outcomes**
- 3 Use tools from the toolbox to aid these discussions**

Toolbox 3

Grow and Share Funding

Use a Logic Model to discuss desired outcomes and the various pathways for achieving different outcomes

A logic model is a simple matrix showing the pathways between Inputs, Activities, Outputs and Outcomes. Inputs are resources such as time, money, personnel, equipment, and facilities. Activities are the things one does with these resources and can include a wide range of tactics, many of which are explored in this plan. Outputs are the measurable immediate results of the actions. Outcomes are the impacts associated with changes made. Logic models can be used to explore the connection between each of these elements and is helpful in guiding conversations about how resources could be used. It forces participants to articulate desired outcomes in measurable terms and provides a framework for discussing tradeoffs.

Use a Cost Allocation Model to augment conversations about funds

Talking about money is always difficult. A cost allocation model can make it easier by providing a framework for discussing the various dimensions of cost and budgeting within and across organizations. The concept of full cost allocation is key to exploring funding partnerships because full costs are often not considered. This can lead decision makers to form incorrect perceptions about the true cost of transportation. Full cost allocation highlights the entire cost of transportation within an organization using standard accounting principles to identify and allocate both the direct and indirect costs of an organization to transportation. It creates a framework within which two agencies can compare on an apples-to-apples basis their full costs of transportation. By incorporating concepts of fixed and variable costs, it also becomes a powerful tool for demonstrating the value of consolidation fixed costs are spread over an increasingly larger number of trips. A cost model can be used to explore cost-sharing partnerships in specific areas such as maintenance by identifying agencies that already specialize in areas with high fixed-costs and provides a direct way to price these services to 'sell' to other agencies that wish to buy services from another organization. It is recommended that AnchorRIDES produce its own cost allocation model so that it knows what the marginal cost of adding new services is and can easily price these services on a variable basis.

Explore transit pass partnership with Medicaid

Based on outreach performed as part of this plan, staff at Medicaid expressed interest in finding new ways to reduce costs of NEMT travel by making public transit a more feasible option for patients, in particular Medicaid recipients that are traveling into Anchorage from rural communities that need to get to appointments and accommodations when they arrive. When properly structured, a purchase of service agreements between a transit agency and a medicaid agency can generate revenue that can be counted as match against federal 5307 formula grants. A transit pass program structured as a purchase of service agreement would generate new revenue for the transit system while also providing a very cost-effective and healthy mode of transportation for medicaid beneficiaries who are able to ride the bus.

Explore expanded purchase of service agreements with multiple agencies

Using the other tools in this toolkit, AnchorRIDES and the MOA will be in a position to start having discussions with other agencies that might be interested in consolidating transportation services under purchase of service agreements.