

MEMORANDUM

FROM: Abe Moland, GridWorks LLC

DATE: Monday, April 9th, 2018

PROJECT: AMATS Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan 2018 Update

SUBJECT: External Outreach Kick-Off Key Themes

KICK-OFF WEEK: WHAT HAPPENED

Event Summaries

The project team held five kick-off events during the external kick-off week that convened a diverse group of stakeholders including users, city decision-makers, transportation providers, to discuss the coordinated human services transportation plan. The events were:

Event	Summary	Attendee Count
City Leader Meeting <i>Monday, March 5th, 1-2p</i> <i>Permit Center, 4700 Elmore Rd, Main Conference Room</i>	Stakeholders from various Municipality departments and planning entities discussed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and barriers regarding transportation coordination within Anchorage.	15
Transportation Provider Meeting <i>Tuesday, March 6th, 1:30-3p</i> <i>Permit Center, 4700 Elmore Rd, Main Conference Room</i>	Stakeholders from People Mover, AnchorRIDES, the school district, Enterprise Vanpool, and a non-emergency medical transportation provider envisioned what a top performing coordinated transportation system looked like to them and how Anchorage can get there.	6
Open House #1 <i>Tuesday, March 6th, 5:30-7:30p</i> <i>Mountain View Public Library</i>	Members of the public were invited to review and provide feedback on progress made on the goals and objectives of the 2009 plan and transportation trends to consider in the development of the 2018 update.	13
Open House #2 <i>Wednesday, March 7th, 11a-1p</i> <i>Loussac Public Library</i>	<i>See above.</i>	10
Community Organization Meeting <i>Thursday March 8th, 8:30-10:30a</i> <i>ACCESS Alaska</i>	Stakeholders from various organizations that work with people with limited mobility options discussed current issues facing those with limited mobility options, potential solutions, and how they will be involved in the	11

	development of the 2018 update moving forward.	
	Total:	53

Kick-Off Week Outcomes

- The group convened for the community organization meeting accepted the role and duties of the advisory working group required for the development of the coordinated plan.
- Transportation providers who participated in any events were introduced to the transportation provider assessment survey. Contacts were established to identify and reach out to providers who did not participate.

WHAT WE LEARNED

Key Themes

1. Changes to the People Mover routes and stops have impacted daily life for people with limited travel options.

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.

Conversations at the open houses centered around the loss of access to destinations as a result of the People Mover redesign. The loss of the 36 bus line that connected the University/Medical District, Midtown, Turnagain, and Downtown was a major complaint. Attendees also noted changes in the routes meant some were forced to leave work earlier to make it to the bus before it was dark.

Users trying to access healthcare destinations via the People Mover, either for care or employment, meet barriers as well. 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 don't have transit options that work for them.

Due to how new the redesign is, there is still low awareness, both among users and bus drivers, about destinations along new routes. There are also few options to learn about the changes to the system if someone does not have access to the internet.

2. People walking or rolling to destinations need to be considered in coordinated planning efforts.

Throughout stakeholder meetings and open house conversations there was consistent note about the lack of consideration of travel needs of those walking or rolling in the 2009 CHSTP. Since then, 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 successful coordinated transportation plan, as well as an important strategy for supporting the aging population in Anchorage.

Poor sidewalk snow maintenance was identified as a major barrier for people with limited mobility attempting to access bus stops. Several conversations recounted tales of wheelchairs or motorized scooters being forced out into traffic lanes for travel or tipping over due sidewalk snow.

3. There is new energy and identified need for collaboration between organizations that provide transportation.

Several organizations have hired new positions who attended various outreach events. These new staff see the value and necessity in coordinating efforts around transportation and serving those with limited mobility options. Limited funding pools are encouraging creative thought to identify ways to leverage resources between both private and public entities. Staff at Medicaid are interested 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. Providers are interested in building relationships to find opportunities to share riders, establish data standards, and develop joint applications for funding.

Several transportation-oriented planning efforts that are now concurrently underway in Anchorage have staff that see the need and opportunity to collaborate on outreach and development efforts. This is motivated by both the possibility of improving plan outcomes, as well as avoiding participation fatigue among the public.

4. Anchorage needs transportation planning that accounts for the conditions and challenges of a Winter City.

Conversations across all events affirmed the need to consider winter conditions in the development of the 2018 CHSTP update. Cold weather, icy sidewalks, and snow banks that

block pathways impact people's ability, safety, and desire to use public transit and other modes of travel. Planning efforts in Anchorage should look to cities like Montreal, Missoula, Minneapolis, Bozeman, Whitehorse, and Madison to identify Winter City best practices.

Desired Plan Outcomes

1. Transportation systems that support and promote individual independence, freedom, and opportunity
 - Physically accessible (both geospatially and seasonally) transportation options for all consumers
 - Affordable options for all consumers
 - Reliable
 - Safe
2. Creative and efficient use of funding for transportation systems
 - There are limited resources and a greater need than those resources can support
 - There are a lot of people providing transportation, and approaching scarce resources with an abundance mindset can identify new ways to leverage
3. More collaboration between public and private agencies