CHAPTER 9: EMERGENCY RESPONSE/PUBLIC SAFETY

I. ITS RELATED ACTIVITIES

Needs identified during stakeholder interviews for development of the Anchorage ITS Architecture indicate strong support/need for several activities which will directly enhance MOA's ability to respond to security threats, terrorism, and emergencies.

One enabling ITS technology identified as a need is the development of an *integrated* Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Transportation Network. ADOT&PF and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have granted federal ITS funding to the Municipality of Anchorage for a project that will create a municipal-wide integrated GIS Transportation Network, and will serve as the foundation for implementing ITS projects under development statewide.

The integrated GIS Transportation Network will support functions critical to emergency services and homeland security including:

- GPS dispatch for fire, police and street maintenance;
- Signal priority for emergency and public transit vehicles;
- Hazardous materials (HAZMAT) tracking;
- Near real-time reporting of road condition and closure information critical for evacuation routing in the event of a disaster; and
- Coordinated incident management.

The integrated GIS Network would also serve as an enabling technology for the Municipality of Anchorage to participate in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF's) Advanced Traveler Information System, essentially a clearinghouse for information collection, multi-agency coordination via a secure intra-net, and public dissemination of transportation related information via a public website. The end product will be a superior traveler information website providing as near real-time information as possible about road conditions and road closures (see Chapter 8.)

II. NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIVITY

The guiding policies for development of the Chugiak-Eagle River LRTP do not specifically address emergency response / public safety. The policy most directly relevant is the Connectivity Policy, which is strengthened in this LRTP Update from the perspective of emergency response, principally fire and medical, and for purposes of evacuation routes in the event of a disaster.

Connectivity between neighborhoods ensures a continuous network of streets. This disperses traffic, reduces the volume of cars on any one street in the network, and eliminates circuitous vehicular trips. Of prime consideration is the need to provide adequate circulation for emergency and public service vehicles. Concerns expressed

during the development of the 2003 LRTP Update point to the need to identify problem locations for emergency responders, including gaps and missing links in existing routes, prioritize the needs, and develop a list of recommendations specifically targeted for improving emergency response. Where these connections affect streets designated collector and above, the Chugiak-Eagle River LRTP and Official Streets and Highways Plan Map should be amended. For future needs, it is critical and in the best interest of the community as a whole, to ensure during the review of private development proposals, particularly subdivision and master plans for Planned Communities, that neighborhood connectivity be required.