

Public Transit Advisory Board (PTAB)
Municipality of Anchorage
Minutes for Meeting of July 9, 2026
City Hall, Rm 155 and MS Teams – hybrid meeting

PROPOSED [draft 01]

[Note: this version of the minutes is the draft distributed to the Board for approval. Corrections may be reflected in the final draft, in addition to the removal of this Note. If you are reading this after the meeting, and you want to determine whether any corrections were made, and if so, what they were, you can find the final version posted on the municipal website or watch the video recording of the meeting, also posted on the website.]

[Drafting note: this draft was prepared from the automated meeting transcript, which recorded nearly all speech under a single speaker label and was incomplete in places. Speaker attributions were reconstructed from context. Items shown in square brackets could not be verified from the transcript and should be checked against the recording before the final draft is issued. A list of these items appears at the end of the document and should be deleted from the final version.]

1. Call to Order called by: Kyle Mielke, Chair

Time: 5:30 pm

The following members of the public were present for at least part of the meeting:

- John Young (in-person)

The following Public Transportation Department or affiliated staff were present:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| • | Bart Rudolph, Director | x |
| • | Isabella Zamarron, Planning and Marketing Manager | x |
| • | Stephen Stone, Senior Planning | x |
| • | Maria Owens, Community Outreach Coordinator | x |
| • | Michael Coffey, Senior Planning Technician | x |
| • | Cecelia Sanchez, AnchorRides Administrative Officer | x |
| • | Nigel Stewart, AnchorRides (online) | x |

2. Roll Call

The Board roll call:

Present:

- | | | | |
|----|-------------|--------------------------|---|
| 1) | Chair: | Kyle Mielke | x |
| 2) | Vice Chair: | Bridget Jochum | x |
| 3) | Member: | Sarah Preskitt (online) | x |
| 4) | Member: | CB Brady | x |
| 5) | Member: | Michael T. Williams | x |
| 6) | Member: | Issa Spatrisano (online) | x |
| 7) | Member: | Francisco Mercado | x |
| 8) | Member: | Terrence White (online) | x |
| 9) | Member: | Charlie Rogge | x |

Quorum declared? Yes

3. Public Involvement Announcement: read by the Chair

4. Approval of the Agenda: July 9, 2026 – Approved

No modifications to the agenda were offered. The Chair noted that the public comment period has been moved to the beginning of the meeting so that members of the public need not remain through the full business session.

5. Approval of the Minutes: June 11, 2026 – Approved

No corrections or comments were offered.

6. Public Comments

- a. Written comments: NA
- b. In-person [and on-line] comments:

John Young: [paraphrased] Reiterated comments made at the previous meeting complimenting People Mover drivers as courteous and professional. Stressed that driver safety and well-being on the job cannot be overstated, noting that passengers are witnessing concerning conditions both on buses and at bus stops.

7. Action / Information Items

a. Reports, Updates, and Presentations:

Department Report/updates presented by the Director, Bart Rudolph [paraphrased]:

- *Budget guidance has not yet been received from the Mayor's office, but is expected soon. The Director encouraged the Board to have a draft budget resolution ready for discussion at the August meeting.*
- *A budget increase will be needed in 2027 simply to maintain the current level of service. The AnchorRides contract is expected to increase; service contracts across the board are rising.*
- *The study on whether it is feasible and cost-effective to bring AnchorRides in-house is in draft report form. HR employment figures still need to be added. The report is expected to be finalized in roughly one to two months. Regardless of the outcome, the Municipality will remain with the contractor for 2027.*
- *Downtown Transit Center: a consultant has been selected through the RFP process. The department is awaiting clearance from Purchasing to begin negotiations for design and engineering, expected within about a month.*
- *Bus stop amenities: of the 40 additional stops planned to receive benches and trash cans this summer, 16 are complete. Progress has slowed because the site enhancement crew is at three of six positions; two new hires start within two weeks and distribution is still expected to be complete before the end of summer.*
- *A bus rodeo – a skills competition and obstacle course open to bus operators, mechanics, and other CDL holders – is planned for Tuesday, September 1 at the Tudor and Elmore campus. It is the first in over a decade. The winner will be sent to the International Bus Rodeo in Seattle next year to compete on behalf of People Mover. A BBQ will run from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. PTAB members are welcome as volunteer judges or guests; Michael Coffey is coordinating the event and is the contact for volunteers.*
- *Passenger endorsement program: the first candidate hired without a passenger endorsement has been trained, passed the exam, and is now driving. There are currently two bus operator vacancies. The department remains functionally short-staffed, however, because of the number of operators out on vacation, workers' compensation, and discipline.*
- *Security incidents for June totaled 333, compared with 344 the previous month. The report breaks incidents down by category and records the response taken (passenger ban, APD, arrest, AFD/paramedics). The Director offered to distribute the report to the Board or post it online.*

Board questions and discussion on the Director's report:

- Bridget Jochum (PTAB): Asked whether the Assembly understands that contract costs are rising across programs, and what the Board should be preparing for its budget argument.

- *The Director responded that the department is still compiling the full list of increasing contracts; the largest is the CAD/AVL bus tracking system, which supports real-time rider tools and on-board next-stop screens, and which increases by approximately \$150,000 next year. Planning and scheduling software is also increasing. A fuller list with cost estimates will be brought to the August meeting.*
- Francisco Mercado (PTAB): Asked where the bus rodeo will be held.
- *Answer: the department campus at Tudor and Elmore.*
- Michael T. Williams (PTAB): Asked whether the Board will be able to review the AnchorRides in-house analysis.
- *The Director could not commit, as the report bears on contract negotiations and any release would need to be a full public release; he will report back closer to finalization.*
- Sarah Preskitt (PTAB): Asked about the apparent gap in the security report between 33 passenger removals and 95 drug- and alcohol-related entries.
- *The Director explained that incidents in the latter category most often occur at bus stops rather than on board.*
- Kyle Mielke (Chair): Asked whether grant funding is unaffected by an operating fund request, and what operating dollars may be spent on.
- *The Director confirmed operating funds may be used for service and maintenance contracts and similar ongoing costs, but not for capital items such as building a bus stop, which are grant funded with bond match.*
- Kyle Mielke (Chair): Asked how the number of driver positions is determined.
- *The Director explained that the operating budget sets the number of PCNs; nearly the entire operating budget goes to bus operators, so additional operators require an operating budget increase.*
- The Chair indicated he would advocate for an operator budget increase as a Board priority, citing driver burnout, rest, and safety.
- Issa Spatrisano (PTAB): Observed that the department's creative work to fill operator positions – including the new endorsement pathway and its first graduate – strengthens the case to the Assembly, which often asks why existing positions are unfilled. Suggested PTAB elevate that narrative in its advocacy.
- Michael T. Williams (PTAB): Agreed, adding that the department now needs depth in its operator roster to allow vacation and sick leave without service loss.

b. New Business:

i. Seniors Ride Free and Youth Ride Free ridership update

Staff reported June year-over-year ridership figures. Youth ridership increased approximately 55%, from about 27,400 riders in June 2025 to about 42,500 riders in June 2026. Senior ridership increased approximately 26%, from about 56,800 riders to about 72,100 riders over the same period.

Board discussion (paraphrased): Members noted the results are what was hoped for when the programs were adopted, and that the increases in these demographics appear to outpace the overall ridership increase, which is itself trending back toward 2019 levels. Members thanked staff for compiling the data and asked that the reporting continue.

ii. Detour communications

◦ Charlie Rogge (PTAB): Raised difficulties during the recent Juneteenth, Pride, and Fourth of July detours, when he was let off the Route 35 well away from his usual stop at

9th Avenue and F Street without knowing where the nearest served stop was. Asked what communication riders receive about detours and alternate stops.

◦ Isabella Zamarron (staff): Detours are communicated through social media, Facebook, and in-app banners. Planned detours are announced as far in advance as possible; some detours arise with little notice. Staff will brainstorm additional channels.

◦ Kyle Mielke (Chair): Asked whether the automated announcement system used at certain transfer locations could carry planned detour announcements, and whether the department could adopt a practice of drivers making an audible announcement at major stops before a significant deviation. Staff agreed to review feasibility and report back at the next meeting.

◦ CB Brady (PTAB): Reported receiving detour text alerts reading “the null routes will be affected,” and asked whether this was an error. Staff explained that dispatch sends three versions of each message (text, website, and social media) and that an unchecked box causes the null value; dispatch has received training and is revising the standing operating procedure. Staff also noted the message wording is constrained by character limits but can be reviewed for clarity. Member Brady confirmed the alerts themselves are useful and did not wish them discontinued.

iii. PTAB information page

Staff demonstrated a new single-access page for PTAB materials, including meeting agendas, meeting materials, minutes, and video; the Board goals document; and current board member information, along with an archive of prior letters and resolutions. Board member email addresses have been added by IT as external viewers. Members should contact [Michael Coffey] directly with access problems or requested changes. Whether members can upload working documents themselves is not yet settled; in the interim, documents may be sent to staff for posting.

iv. Arctic Thunder Air Show route

Isabella Zamarron introduced a new route supporting the Arctic Thunder Air Show, operating August 8 and 9 in partnership with JBER. The route will operate as a normal route, running as a loop from Penland Park into the base. Coordination with JBER secured access through the Post Road gate, which staff described as significant given expected traffic control challenges.

c. **Continued Business:**

i. 2026 PTAB goals (standing agenda item)

Included for reference. No member raised a specific goal for discussion. The Chair noted that non-motorized safety, rules and procedures, and security incidents have occupied much of the Board’s recent time, and encouraged members – particularly newer members – to review the goals document and bring proposed additions to the next meeting.

ii. Non-motorized safety discussion

The Chair reported that his draft resolution is not yet complete and offered to post a work-in-progress version to the PTAB information page; members are welcome to submit their own drafts. He noted continuing pedestrian and cyclist collisions and that transit riders are pedestrians or cyclists at some point in every trip.

◦ Charlie Rogge (PTAB): Asked whether data exists on where vehicle–pedestrian collisions occur and whether grade-separated crossings such as pedestrian bridges or underpasses could reduce the risk of fatality or serious injury.

- Kyle Mielke (Chair): Suggested the most effective approach is for the Board to watch for upcoming projects, studies, or safety plans open for public comment, bring them to the Board, and submit transit-informed comment or a resolution. He will watch for such opportunities.

iii. SOA DOT Speed Limit Study (Tudor / Muldoon)

Carried over from June. The Chair asked whether reduced speed limits along a major corridor would principally affect route frequency or other aspects of route design. Staff responded that there was nothing reportable from the study discussion and that the effect would depend on the segment involved. Staff added that most routes do not travel at the posted speed limits on major roads, so reduced general traffic speeds may improve the department's performance measures comparing trip times to average vehicle speeds.

iv. Proposed rules and procedures (delayed item)

No discussion.

8. Member Comments

- 1) Terrence White: Thanked staff, and confirmed his understanding that a new route will serve the air show this year. Noted he had been disconnected from the meeting for a period and had difficulty rejoining.
- 2) Sarah Preskitt: Thanked the Board and staff for the meeting.
- 3) Francisco Mercado: Raised a wayfinding issue at City Hall, where the Route 85 and Route 41 stops cannot both be seen from inside the building depending on where a rider is seated. Asked whether the next departing bus could be positioned in a consistent forward position so riders can identify it.
- 4) Issa Spatrisano: Complimented operators on safely navigating pullouts along Northern Lights and Tudor amid traffic traveling well over the speed limit, and offered it as further support for road speed reductions and for a public messaging campaign on driver patience around buses. [Speaker attribution to confirm.]
- 5) Bridget Jochum: Expressed enthusiasm for the bus rodeo and welcomed the Chair back.
- 6) Kyle Mielke (Chair): Thanked the Board for conducting the June meeting in his absence and noted the recording showed it went well.

9. Adjournment

Time: [6:40 pm]

Date:	Number Incident Reports	Suspicious Activity	Disturbance (loud music, yelling, Sleeping/intoxicated on board)	Fighting	Persons in need	Noise complaint	Maintenance issues	Drug & Alcohol activity	Property Crimes (graffiti, broken property)	Property crimes (theft)	Passenger assault (non-physical)	Passenger assault (physical)	Solicitation/Aggressive Panhandling	Unattended Bag/Item	Suspicious Activity - Vehicle	Other - (Hijack and surreptitious check, non-surreptitious, harassment, loitering)	Employee assault - non-physical	Employee assault - physical	Actionable Items	Banned Passengers	Passenger Removals	APD Response	Arrest Made	AFD/CFR Response
7/1/2026	17		3	1			2	6					2		3				2	1				1
7/2/2026	9		1					2				1		5										3
7/3/2026	19		3	1	2			3						10					3					6
7/4/2026 - July 4th																								
7/5/2026	7		1											6						1	1			
7/6/2026	11		2					3						6										1
7/7/2026	10		2					2				1		5										2
7/8/2026	17		3			1	5					2		6					2					4
7/9/2026	19	1			1		4							12		1						1	3	
7/10/2026	17		1					6				1	1	8										2
7/11/2026	9		2			1	2					1		3					1			1		
7/12/2026	6		2					3						1					1					2
7/13/2026	14		2					2				2		8					3	1				
7/14/2026	12		3					5				1	1	2					3					1
7/15/2026	15		2		1			6				1		5					1			1	4	
7/16/2026	15		1		1			3				2		8					1	1				
7/17/2026	15		5					4				1		5					3	1				2
7/18/2026	4		1					1						2					2					
7/19/2026	3		3																2					
7/20/2026	7		1					2				1		3					1					1
7/21/2026	13		3		1		1	2				1		5					2					1
7/22/2026	15		2		2			5		1		1		4					1	1	1	2	4	
7/23/2026	10		4					2				2		2			2		1					2
7/24/2026	19		7		1			4	1			1		5					1	1	1	1	2	
7/25/2026	5		1					3						1						1	1			1
7/26/2026	4				2									2								2		
7/27/2026	7		1		1			2				1		2					1					2
7/28/2026	13		3		1			3		1		1		3	1			2	1	1	1			1
7/29/2026	16		2		1		1	1				2		9					2			1	3	
7/30/2026	6				1			1					1	3										2
7/31/2026	17		4		2			3				1		6	1				4			1	4	
Total:	351	1	65	2	17	0	6	84	2	0	1	1	0	26	3	140	2	1	4	38	9	5	10	54

Week Without Driving – October 1–8, 2026

WHEREAS, access to mobility is fundamental to health, safety, economic opportunity, and community connection, enabling residents of the Municipality of Anchorage to reach education, employment, medical care, food, recreation, faith communities, and social networks; and

WHEREAS, transportation is the second-largest household expense for most families, and the American Automobile Association estimates that the average cost of owning and operating a vehicle exceeds \$12,000 per year, placing significant financial strain on households, particularly low- and moderate-income families; and

WHEREAS, transportation costs are directly tied to housing and land use decisions, and communities that lack affordable housing near jobs, schools, healthcare, and essential services often require residents to travel farther and rely more heavily on costly car ownership; and

WHEREAS, nearly one-third of people in the United States do not have a driver's license due to age, disability, income, health conditions, or other barriers, and many others face temporary or permanent circumstances that prevent them from driving; and

WHEREAS, not all neighborhoods in the Municipality of Anchorage have safe sidewalks, accessible curb ramps, protected bike infrastructure, reliable public transit, or land use patterns that allow daily needs to be met within a reasonable distance; and

WHEREAS, transportation is a leading source of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States, and expanding safe, accessible options for walking, rolling, biking, and public transit supports climate action, cleaner air, and environmental stewardship; and

WHEREAS, communities designed with multiple transportation options support local businesses, reduce traffic injuries and fatalities, improve public health, and create vibrant, connected neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, experiencing a week without driving offers residents and leaders an opportunity to better understand the barriers faced by nondrivers and to identify practical solutions that promote safety, affordability, accessibility, climate resilience, and equitable land use;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, [Name], [Role], do hereby proclaim October 1–8, 2026 as Week Without Driving in the Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska, and encourage residents, community organizations, businesses, and public officials to participate, reflect, and work toward a future where everyone—regardless of age, ability, or income—has safe, affordable, and sustainable transportation options.

Info Sheet:

In Anchorage, Alaska, the annual average cost to own and operate a standard vehicle for a mix of work and leisure (assuming standard personal use around 15,000 miles per year) is roughly \$11,500 to \$12,500 for ownership and general operation, though other local running expenses like higher fuel averages (\$4.50–\$5.25/gallon) and winter maintenance push localized totals higher.

Major Cost Factors in Anchorage

- **Fuel Costs:** Higher-than-average local fuel prices = \$2,200 - \$2,500/yr just on gas for 15K mi.
- **Insurance:** Full coverage in Alaska averages \$1,650-\$1,800/yr, depending on driver profile.
- **Maintenance & Repairs:** Winter wear and tear, block heaters, and seasonal tire changes typically add an extra 10% to 15% to standard baseline maintenance estimates.
- **Taxes and Fees:** AK has no state sales tax and no personal property tax on vehicles. Vehicle registration through the State of Alaska DMV is approximately \$100 per year (\$200 biennial).
- **Depreciation & Financing:** This remains the largest overall component of vehicle ownership, averaging over \$4,300 annually on a modern vehicle.

The top three most popular vehicles driven in Anchorage, Alaska are full-size pickup trucks and rugged all-wheel-drive utility vehicles, led by the Ford F-150, Ram Pickup, and Chevrolet Silverado 1500, closely rivaled by high-clearance all-wheel-drive models like the Subaru Outback and Toyota RAV4.

Why These Vehicles Are Popular in Anchorage

Full-Size Trucks

- **Ford F-150, Ram Pickup, & Chevy Silverado:** Users in multiple forums agree that heavy-duty and light-duty pickup trucks dominate Alaskan roadways
- **Utility:** High ground clearance, heavy towing capabilities, and 4WD make them essential for winter snow accumulation, hauling gear, and outdoor excursions.

All-Wheel-Drive Crossovers & SUVs

- **Subaru Outback & Forester:** Highly favored for local commuting due to standard symmetrical all-wheel drive and reliable handling on icy, unplowed side streets.
- **Toyota RAV4 & 4Runner:** Popular for their longevity, dependable winter performance, and capability in rugged conditions.

The Toyota RAV4 AWD is the most cost-effective vehicle to own and operate among these popular choices, at approx. \$10,615 annually, whereas the full-size half-ton trucks (Ford, Ram, Chevy/GMC) push yearly expenses over \$15,300 - \$15,600 due to higher fuel consumption and steeper depreciation.

The calculations below assume standard personal/commute usage of 15,000 miles per year under localized Anchorage conditions, using current [AAA Alaska average gas prices](#) of \$4.78 per gallon.

Annual Cost Comparison Summary

The following table provides a breakdown of localized fuel costs alongside standard baseline industry depreciation, full-coverage insurance, fees, and seasonal maintenance overhead. [1, 2]

Vehicle Model	Est. Combined MPG	Annual Fuel Cost	Annual Depreciation	Insurance & Maintenance	Total Annual Cost
<u>Toyota RAV4 (AWD)</u>	28 MPG	\$2,561	\$3,554	\$4,500	\$10,615
<u>Subaru Outback</u>	26 MPG	\$2,758	\$4,760	\$4,700	\$12,218
<u>Ford F-150 (4x4)</u>	19 MPG	\$3,774	\$6,041	\$5,500	\$15,315
<u>Ram 1500 (4x4)</u>	19 MPG	\$3,774	\$6,200	\$5,600	\$15,574
<u>Chevy/GMC 1500 (4x4)</u>	18 MPG	\$3,983	\$6,100	\$5,500	\$15,583



PEOPLE MOVER

2026 FREE RIDE DAYS **SCHEDULE**

The Public Transportation Department will provide **FREE** rides to **ALL** passengers on the following dates:

PRIMARY ELECTION

TUESDAY, AUGUST 18TH

STAND DOWN

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18TH

Free rides for veterans.

WEEK W/O DRIVING

OCTOBER 1ST - 8TH

AFN CONVENTION

OCTOBER 22ND - 24TH

Free rides for AFN delegates.

SERVICE CHANGE

MONDAY, OCTOBER 26TH

GENERAL ELECTION

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3RD