

# State of Alaska Governor's Coordinated Transportation Task Force Administrative Order 254

## Report: February 24, 2012

*Photo courtesy of CARTS*



"Cindy is developmentally disabled. She uses CARTS to get back and forth to work at Safeway.

However, she mostly uses it to feel more independent, and that is essential for her. She enjoys the ride and conversing with the friendly drivers.

She is comforted to know that she will get there safely and be treated with dignity and respect."

*Lois Azzara for Cindy Dehart - Nikiski*



# GOVERNOR'S COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION TASK FORCE

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*Department of Health and Social Services*

**Glenn Miller**

*Municipal Transportation Organizations*

**Andra Nations**

*Persons with Disabilities or Special Circumstances*

**Elizabeth Nudelman**

*Department of Education and Early Development*

**Cheryl Walsh**

*Department of Labor and Workforce Development*

*Prepared for the Governor's Coordinated Transportation Task Force*

*by*

*Marsha Bracke, Certified Professional Facilitator*

*Bracke & Associates, Inc.*

*310 K St., Ste. 200*

*Anchorage, AK 99501*

*marsha@marshabracke.com (907) 264-6694 www.brackeandassociates.com*



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# Executive Summary

*Robin Deason of Valdez, Alaska* explains that she is “unable to drive due to medication” she takes for her back and occasional anxiety. “With no public transportation in Valdez,” she says, “I have been struggling to find reliable, reasonably priced transportation to [get to] work.”

Robin has paid \$20 a day to friends to drive her, and that service proves to be unreliable. She has also paid \$50 a day for cab fare. Both options exceed what she can afford. Reliable transportation is essential for her to get to work, access medical services, participate in her community, and maintain her financial independence. These transportation costs, she explains, drive her toward bankruptcy.



*Photo: Courtesy of KATS*

At least **one out of nine Alaskans has special needs and circumstances** affecting their ability to get to where they need to be. There is **not enough transportation available at an affordable cost** in Alaska to meet that need.

Given the existing scope of need in Alaska, fragmented systems, anticipated cuts to human service and public transportation funding, and economic realities that will increase need for human service and public transportation services over time, it is with urgency and commitment that the Governor's Coordinated Transportation Task Force (Task Force) presents this Final Report (Report) to the Governor in response to Administrative Order 254 (AO 254). The Task Force recommends that Alaska proactively work to **effectively collect our resources, secure and use meaningful data, and coordinate and leverage our efforts** in a manner that **maximizes opportunities** for people with special needs and circumstances to **effectively access the work and services they need**.

Within this Report, the Task Force presents its Coordinated Human Service and Public Transportation Action Plan (Action Plan), which outlines objectives and strategies that **generate a quality, measureable, coordinated system with minimum standards and coordinated processes and systems**. The Action Plan is designed for implementation by a Coordinated Transportation Commission with the authority and responsibility to ensure the State's human service and public transportation **resources are most effectively and efficiently used and accounted for**. The result is the application of those funds throughout the State in a manner that meets more need in more meaningful ways, and

## RECOMMENDATION FOR ACTION

- The Task Force presents its **Coordinated Human Service and Public Transportation Action Plan**, which guides the state through a process of maximizing existing resources and making data-informed decisions.
- A **Coordinated Transportation Commission** with the **authority and responsibility to make the required systemic changes** is proposed to implement the Action Plan.

enables persons with special needs and circumstances access to the services they need and the ability to participate in their own communities.

**This Final Report contains recommendations to the Governor consistent with AO 254. It presents the work of the Task Force, which the Administration will review and consider subsequent to its delivery.**

## DUTY 1: DATA GATHERING

*Data inventory underscores need for coordination.*

The Task Force produced an inventory of existing customer bases served, manner and type of service provided, costs for each program, and range of financing available to state, federal and local government agencies.

The Task Force was able to identify **21 state and federally funded programs** managed by **five entities** including four Alaska state agencies and Alaska Tribes, that are **specifically** intended to support people with special needs and circumstances, for an estimated total of more than \$80 million in 2010.

Other funding sources also potentially touch the same people and influence the delivery system. These sources include funding managed by the tribes, Veterans Affairs, Department of Education and Early Development, and the Department of Commerce and Economic Development. In all, there are approximately 60 federal funding sources for transportation services that potentially reach Alaska agencies. **Because roles, responsibilities, budgets, accounting processes, and commitments differ**, the Task Force is **unable to quantify the total amount of transportation funding** coming to Alaska. It was also unable to substantively pursue detailed recommendations about how **cost savings could be realized across transportation service silos** within state government. The proposed Coordinated Transportation Commission, if given adequate authority by the Governor, would be able to explore the significant potential cost savings that could be realized through coordination.

*Coordinated systems are required to make data-informed decisions.*

Grantees who receive and manage funding from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) participate in Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) data gathering processes. For those sources of funding (approximately one quarter of the total \$80 million), consistent data sets can be secured statewide. However, for the remainder of the funds quantified to date across several additional state agencies,

### FINDINGS: DATA GATHERING

- **\$80 million are spent annually through 21 different federal and state programs** on human service and public transportation
- Programs and funding are **siloed**, with minimal coordination
- With multiple programs, differing levels of commitment, and various reporting systems, **the Task Force is unable to effectively quantify rides, riders, and duplicative services** across state agencies.
- **Removing barriers to cost savings** will take time and requires cross-department, Governor-directed leadership and support.

### FINDINGS: AGENCY AND PRIVATE ENTITY COORDINATION

- Effective coordination **across state agencies provides local entities the flexibility and ability to more effectively coordinate** at the local level.

**budgets are created and data are gathered in different ways that preclude analysis and measures across systems.** Given this reality, there are gaps, duplications and inconsistencies. By coordinating systems, definitive information could be **generated to provide informed decision-making, and efficiencies through coordination achieved.**

## **DUTY 2: AGENCY AND PRIVATE ENTITY COORDINATION**

*Effective local coordination requires effective state agency coordination.*

The Task Force understands that **effective coordination occurs at the point of delivery**—on the ground at the local level.

Local coordination is often hamstrung by **state and federal requirements that restrict the use of money and vehicles to singular purposes.** This practice frequently creates duplicative efforts, additional administrative burden, and in some cases frustrates initiatives to build a local system. Other states have demonstrated where increased coordination across programs—Medicaid services and public transit, for example—can significantly stretch Medicaid dollars using existing transit resources.<sup>1</sup>

The Task Force identified numerous **opportunities for agency and private entity coordination.** For example, the Task Force identified opportunities for **public-private partnerships** by proposing the development of a model taxicab ordinance to **foster increased accessible taxicab use for the disabled** in communities throughout Alaska. This strategy and more are included in the Action Plan presented in this Report.



*Photo:  
Courtesy of Fairbanks Resource Agency*

## **DUTY 3: NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

*The Task Force of persons with special needs is considerable, yet conservative.*

The Task Force Needs Assessment estimates **11.4 percent** of Alaska’s population is persons with special needs (for example, the disabled) or special circumstances (for example, low wage earners) who are often reliant on public transportation. The **total number of transportation users could be much larger,** with a more accurate count of riders in the following populations:

- **175,000** individuals on **public assistance** (2010)
- **142,000** individuals that qualify for **Medicaid** (2010)
- **20,223** persons with **disabilities** (American Community Survey 2009)
- **61,000** people whose income falls **at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty level** at less than **\$13,530 in earnings per worker per year** (Health & Human Services Poverty Guidelines 2009)

<sup>1</sup> Nicholas J Farber, Human Service Transportation Coordination State Profile: Florida (Denver: NCSL, 2010).

- **39,606** individuals who are **low wage earners** (100-200% of federal poverty level) many of whom can't afford a personal car

***Many families must use their limited income for housing and food and cannot afford a car.***

The National Low Income Housing Coalition "Out of Reach" reports that the current Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment in Alaska is \$1,045. In order to afford this, **a household must earn an "hourly wage" of \$20.10**, assuming a 40-hour work week, 52 weeks per year. Many low wage earning families below this hourly threshold choose housing and food over private transportation.

***Other trends will significantly impact transportation demand.***

If fully implemented, the new health care reform law **will expand Medicaid eligibility to 133 percent** of the federal poverty level,<sup>2</sup> increasing significantly the number of Alaskans who will qualify for Medicaid in 2014. In addition, Alaska's **senior population is projected to grow at a significant rate**, from just over 90,000 seniors in 2010 to more than 137,500 in 2020 and over 157,800 in 2030.<sup>3</sup> Alaska has the fastest growing senior population in the state. Given that **one in five seniors do not drive**, and that half of those stay home on any given day partially because they lack transportation options,<sup>4</sup> **the need for human service and public transportation options will increase significantly in the very near future.**

***Transportation needs vary greatly and are difficult to estimate.***

To further complicate the issue, not all members of the special needs population have similar transportation-related needs. Needs are specific to circumstances, depending on a various factors, and include:

- Whether the person has a **specific disability**
- A **senior** who is unable to drive or whose age factor is **complicated by disability and/or low income**
- An able bodied person with **limited financial resources.**

***Additional services are needed.***

Given the complex dynamics described, the Task Force Needs Assessment identified the need for additional types of service, subsidies, more services, personal assistance, more equipment, infrastructure and maintenance.

#### **FINDINGS: NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

- **Conservatively, 11.4% of Alaska's population need or use coordinated transportation.**
- This represents just **over 80,000 individuals**, about **1 in 9 Alaskans** .
- **Additional services** are needed by persons with special needs to get to work or service which **a coordinated environment could help make possible.**

<sup>2</sup> John Holahan and Linda Blumberg, How Would States Be Affected By Health Reform? Timely Analysis of Immediate Health Policy Issues (Washington D.C.: Urban Institute, 2010), 9.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Population Projections, Population Pyramids and Demographic Summary Indicators for States, <http://www.census.gov/population/www/projections/statepyramid.html> (last visited December 21, 2010).

<sup>4</sup> Linda Bailey, Aging Americans: Stranded Without Options (Washington, D.C.: Surface Transportation Policy Project, 2004), 4.

Simply stated, Alaskans report there is **just not enough transportation** available that is **sufficiently frequent, at a cost these individuals can afford** to get them to the workplace, the marketplace, to medical and social services, and to educational opportunities.

## **DUTY 4: ACTION PLAN**

*Nine specific goals will help Alaska achieve a meaningfully coordinated system.*

The Task Force recommends nine goals be achieved in support of a statewide vision for human service and public transportation which seeks to:

Stimulate the economy by coordinating human service and public transportation transit systems so that they are safe, clean, reliable, efficient, sustainable, and affordable for anyone who needs or wants transportation service, with a focus on those who do not have other transportation options.

To secure this Vision, the Task Force recommends the State of Alaska:

1. **Ensure the commitment and engagement of state agencies and stakeholders** to leverage their collective resources.
2. **Develop performance measures** as a tool for continuous improvement of the system and evaluation of its effectiveness.
3. **Identify and account for resources** spent on public transportation in a definitive way that measures across state agencies, federally recognized tribes, and other stakeholders so that barriers can be tangibly understood and addressed.
4. **Clearly articulate authorities** for implementation of a coordinated system at a state and local level.
5. **Secure resources to help support unfunded operational supports** for the delivery of community-based transportation services.
6. **Foster a culture of accessibility** to services throughout Alaska, so that decisions about infrastructure and services are made in consideration of persons of special needs and circumstances.
7. **Pursue transit technologies** that promote cost savings, coordination and effective service delivery.
8. **Establish minimum statewide standards** that assure consistent safe and reliable services throughout the system.
9. **Streamline processes** to ensure the most efficient use of public resources.

## **DUTIES 5 AND 6: FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION AID PROGRAMS**

*Task Force Principles inform administrative communication.*

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) federal-aid transit programs are described in the federal transportation authorization bill. The new re-authorization proposal has been delayed and was not available during the course of the Task Force's work. At the time of this printing, however, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) bill is being circulated in the Senate. The transit elements of that bill are not yet developed.

To influence the development of MAP-21, the Task Force presents **five Principles that we recommend the Governor and Alaska’s congressional delegation adopt and provide as input to the development of the re-authorization bill.** The Task Force anticipates that transportation funding, like funding across the 21 funding programs that serve people with special needs and circumstances, will be cut in the federal budget and have a corresponding, significant impact in rural Alaska. **Cuts across program funding, combined with a predictable increase in need, make coordination of the collective remaining resources imperative.**

***Implementation requires coordinated infrastructure.***

Because the transportation bill was not produced and reauthorized during the Task Force’s 2011 tenure, the Task Force did not generate implementation strategies in direct response to those programs. However, the Task Force recommends that **the Federal Principles permeate state implementation practices** as and when reauthorization of the transportation bill becomes a reality, and that **coordination of human service and public transportation services across Alaska state agencies be intentional and required.**

## **DUTY 7: PROPOSE LEGISLATION**

***Establish a Commission with the responsibility and authority to generate a coordinated system.***

In order to:

- **Address system issues that prevent the collection and analysis of data across agencies,**
- **Establish performance measures** to ensure continuous improvement,
- **Establish clear authorities and coordination requirements,**
- **Pursue technologies** that promote effective and efficient service delivery across systems, and
- **Streamline redundant processes,**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS: FEDERAL AID PROGRAMS**

The Administration and Congressional delegation **advocate** that the transportation bill reflect the following principles.

- **Access to services require** many citizens to use human service public transportation, which must be maintained as a priority.
- Human service and public transportation **promote economic vitality.**
- **Establish unified reporting requirements across agencies** so that needed efficiencies essential to maximize the yield of each taxpayer dollar can be secured.
- Federal and state policies and requirements must **support local coordination, flexibility and efficiency.**
- **Clarify and simplify local and state match requirements** across all programs and agencies.



*Photo:  
Courtesy of Denyse Brown*

the Task Force proposes **the Governor establish a Coordinated Transportation Commission**. The Commission will be comprised of *all* state agencies with **responsibilities and/or funding for** client transportation, representatives of the special needs populations, and a representative of municipalities and the tribes. Ultimately, the work will produce an infrastructure that secures **increased access to work, services and community** for people with special needs, **promotes economic growth, and leverages existing state resources**.

A copy of the Legislative Proposal Form presented to the Governor's Office in September accompanies this report, and Department of Law personnel stand ready to draft the legislation with the Governor's approval and direction.

## **DUTY 8: CHANGES TO FEDERAL STATUTES AND REGULATIONS**

*Principles inform all facets of government policy.*

**Federal Principles** presented as Duty 5 are **recommended for consideration throughout all policy-making processes, at the federal, tribe, state and local level**. Policy-makers are encouraged to reflect on these principles in their decision-making processes; planners are encouraged to use them in their coordination processes. Just as the principles have been provided to the Governor for working on reauthorization of the transportation bill, so are they intended for use in the revision and adoption of federal statutes and regulations related to any agency with a role and responsibility for human service and/or public transportation.

## **DUTY 9: FINAL REPORT**

*It is time to act.*

While the Task Force studies needs and gathers data, while staff work and generate reports, while decision-makers study complex issues and work to make and balance important decisions, **peoples' lives go on**.

Providers and communities continue to work as hard as they can to provide services, and find themselves frustrated by their inability to share vehicles, respond to different and various reporting requirements, and/or coordinate a body of eclectic transportation resources in addition to conducting their core business. State agency personnel work diligently to support their clients and recognize the need to leverage their collective efforts, but are limited by agency-specific priorities, historical practices, and existing systems.

With will and authority, coordination can be a reality.

At the beginning of this report, we talked about Robin Deason. Robin seeks a safe, effective and affordable transportation service in Valdez to keep her job and avoid bankruptcy. Fortunately, a local service called Connecting Ties was able to provide the transportation service she needed. This was accomplished through an effort that leveraged Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) grant funding, Mental Health Trust Funding, and local charitable grant match funding in a manner that helped make the Connecting Ties service a viable one. Others like her throughout Alaska seek meaningful ways to get to work, maintain their independence, access services, and participate in their community.

***Task Force urges a Coordinated Transportation Commission be established.***

Studies have been done; public stakeholders have been consulted; recommendations have been made; an Action Plan has been developed. It is time to act.

The Task Force recommends the Governor establish a **Coordinated Transportation Commission, providing it with the authority and responsibility to** implement the Action Plan and **to start to make a real difference** for the state and tribes, communities and providers, and most importantly, for people with special needs and circumstances.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**ESTABLISH COORDINATED  
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

**It is time to act.**

It is time to provide the authority and responsibility to those entities who manage human service and public transportation funding to generate and cost effective, coordinated system.

# 1. The Executive Assignment

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## INTRODUCTION

We live in the most geographically diverse and least densely populated state in the nation. We travel on foot, by air, by boat and ferry, ATVs and snowmobiles, cars, trucks and dog sleds. We travel over the longest distances and through the most severe weather. Getting to the services we need and activities in which we want to participate can be challenging for all of us.

For those of us with special needs or special circumstances, travel is exceptionally challenging.

***One (1) out of every nine (9) Alaskans is a person with a special need or circumstance.***

Within this Report, the Task Force presents its Coordinated Human Service and Public Transportation Action Plan (Action Plan), which outlines objectives and strategies that **generate a quality, measurable, coordinated system with minimum standards and coordinated processes and systems.** The Action Plan is designed for implementation by a Coordinated Transportation Commission with the authority and responsibility for ensuring that the State's human service and public transportation **resources are most effectively and efficiently used and accounted for.** The result is the application of those funds throughout the State in a manner that

- Meets more need in more meaningful ways,
- Offers persons with special needs and circumstances access to the services they need and to be able to participate in their own communities, and
- **Proactively plans** for additional need and demand for human service and public transportation in the future.

### PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS OR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES:

- Seniors
- Persons with disabilities
- Low income individuals
- Persons receiving public assistance or Medicaid



*Photo: Courtesy of Fairbanks Resource Agency*

## EXECUTIVE ASSIGNMENT

Governor Sean Parnell declared In [Administrative Order 254](#) (AO 254) (July 2010):

“...the provision and integration of cost-effective, community-based transportation services to persons with special needs or special circumstances, such as homeless youth, is an important government function.”

AO 254 describes community-based transportation services as human service transportation and public transit. AO 254 excludes the marine highway, air transportation, and transportation services for diffuse population areas within the state that are too remote for cost-effective community-based transportation.

**Numerous state agencies and organizations share responsibility for community-based transportation services for persons with special needs and circumstances.** AO 254 recognizes that collective responsibility, and demands that this responsibility be delivered **efficiently and effectively** on behalf of those consumers and the taxpayer.

AO 254 re-established the Governor’s Coordinated Transportation Task Force (Task Force) to assess coordinated transportation as reflected in the predecessor Task Force’s [Recommendations Report](#) published on February 10, 2011. The Task Force is to make recommendations, develop an action plan, and propose legislation that coordinates the State's collective resources and ensures an efficient delivery system.

The Task Force is comprised of representatives from State agencies with funding and responsibility for human service and public transportation, as well as representatives of user groups, municipalities, and providers that receive federal funding available to Indian Tribes. Attachment A-Governor's Coordinated Transportation Task Force Meeting Process and Schedule, identifies the Task Force members and summarizes the meeting process and schedule.

AO 254 assigns the Task Force nine specific duties.

**DUTY 1: DATA GATHERING**

Gather detailed information on

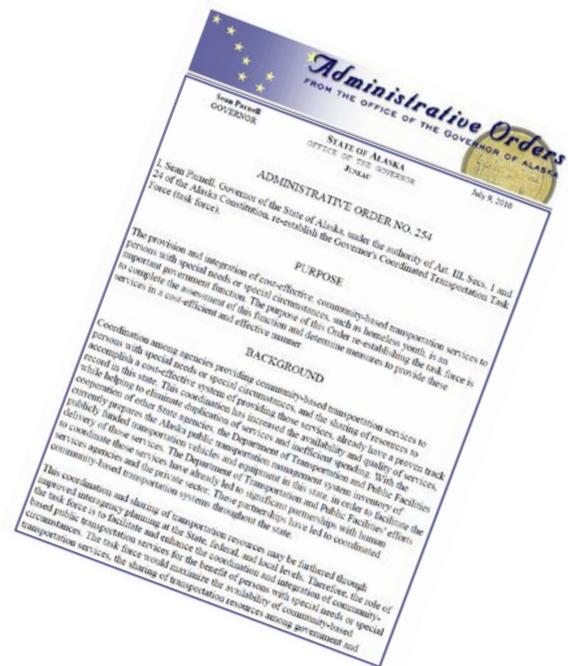
- A. Customer bases served;
- B. The manner and type of service provided;
- C. The costs for each program; and
- D. The range of financing available to State, federal and local government agencies and private entities that administer or support community-based transportation for persons with special needs or special circumstances.

**DUTY 2: AGENCY AND PRIVATE ENTITY COORIDNATION**

Analyze and recommend ways agencies and private entities can improve coordination and combine services to achieve cost savings in the state's largest city, Anchorage, and in other communities as the Task Force's resources permit.

**DUTY 3: NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

Perform a Needs Assessment to quantify transportation demands for persons with special needs or special circumstances, and recommend the removal of barriers that prevent coordination of these services to meet those demands.



**DUTY 4: DRAFT COORDINATED ACTION PLAN**

Generate a draft coordinated transportation action plan that articulates a shared statewide vision for human service public transportation and formulates the recommendations of the first report into outcome-based strategies.

**TASK FORCE DELIVERABLE: FINAL REPORT**

This Final Report contains recommendations to the Governor consistent with the Administrative Order. It presents the work of the Task Force, which the Administration will review and consider subsequent to its delivery.

**DUTY 5: ADMINISTRATIVE STRATEGIES RESPECTIVE TO FEDERAL-AID PROGRAMS**

Review existing federal-aid programs related to urban, rural, and tribal transit services in the state and propose recommended strategies for the Administration to pursue as part of the re-authorization of the new federal surface transportation program.

**DUTY 6: STRATEGIES TO IMPLEMENT FEDERAL AID PROGRAMS**

Recommend specific strategies to implement the urban, rural, and tribal elements of the new federal surface transportation program.

**DUTY 7: DRAFT LEGISLATION TO SUPPORT COORDINATION**

Propose draft legislation or other strategies that support the coordinated infrastructure use of State, federal, and local resources.

**DUTY 8: PROPOSE CHANGES TO FEDERAL STATUTES AND REGULATIONS**

Propose changes to federal statutes and regulations that would allow for federal transportation activities and funding to be coordinated with the efforts of State, local, and private organizations.

**DUTY 9: FINAL REPORT**

Prepare and issue a final report, including recommendations, concerning the duties set out in AO 254.

The Task Force responded to these duties by working through calendar year 2011 in a process described in more detail in Attachment A. This document is the Task Force's Final Report (Duty 9), and it presents the results and conclusions of the duties assigned in AO 254.

Task Force members work with participants at the 2011 Alaska Community Transportation Conference to inform Task Force efforts and recommendations.

*Photo: Courtesy of the Alaska Mobility Coalition and the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities*



## 2. Data Gathering

### Duty 1

#### **Data inventory underscores need for coordination.**

In response to Duty 1, the Task Force produced an inventory of existing customer bases served, manner and type of service provided, costs for each program, and range of financing available to state, federal and local government agencies.

"Data should assist us all in understanding how much service is provided, how well the services are provided, and whether our customers are better off because of these services."

*Comment on Task Force Product Survey,  
October 2011*

The Task Force was able to identify **21 state and federally funded programs** managed by **five entities** including four Alaska state agencies and Alaska Tribes, that are specifically intended to support people with special needs and circumstances, for a collective total of more than \$80 million in 2010.

Each program **comes with its own purpose, management and reporting requirements.**

- Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs managed through the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), are specifically intended to provide transportation services to meet transportation needs of identified populations and demographics.
- Department of Health and Human Services programs managed through Alaska's Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS), are provided to help people access medical care, work services, or educational opportunities.
- Medicaid transportation funding is specifically intended for the transportation of Medicaid clients to approved medical services.
- Department of Labor and Workforce Development (Labor) has a number of programs that fund transportation to facilitate employment and vocational rehabilitation opportunities.
- Indian Health Services provides health-related transportation services to members of Alaska Native Tribes.



*Anchorage Downtown Transit Center.  
Photo: Courtesy of People Mover*

Table 1 shows where the \$80 million in human service and public transportation funding is housed, as well as the populations the funding is intended to serve. Table 1 well illustrates the **potential for overlapping services amongst duplicative populations**, and the **opportunity to achieve efficiencies through coordination**. See Attachment B - Data Gathering Matrix for even more detail.

**Other funding** not specifically used for human service and public transportation, but which potentially touches the same people and influences the collective system, includes additional funding managed by the tribes,

Department of Education and Early Development, and the Department of Commerce and Economic Development. In all, there are approximately 60 federal funding sources for transportation services that potentially reach Alaska agencies. **Because roles, responsibilities, budgets, accounting processes and commitments differ**, the Task Force is unable to quantify the total amount of transportation funding coming to Alaska.

***Other states are working to coordinate this funding and address systemic issues.***

Many states across the country seek to leverage transportation funding in a manner that maximizes the use of each dollar. Twenty-six states have established coordination entities for this purpose.<sup>5</sup> The State of Georgia, for example, is generating recommendations to identify and address overlap or duplication present in the \$137.8 million of more than 60 federal and state programs funding rural and human transportation services that they were able to quantify. The Georgia Behavioral Health Coordinating Council points out that funding over that amount is "difficult if not impossible to quantify since many federal programs allow human service transportation as an eligible expense, but transportation budgets are not tracked separately."<sup>6</sup>

The report offers a series of recommendations to address the issue, including:

- The establishment of a state coordinating council together with a regional coordination structure,
- The development of a unified reporting manual (across agencies and funding programs),
- The development of a uniform cost-allocation/cost-sharing model, and
- The development of a one-point telephone numbers.

***Coordination is required to eliminate barriers to effective data sharing and efficiencies.***

Because most of the human service and public transportation funding is federal, **state agencies are obligated to conduct and report according to specific federal requirements**. This fact **complicates the ability to coordinate** at the state level. State agency rules and reporting requirements have the same effect on local providers and coordinating entities. **Differing requirements and restrictions complicate local entities ability to effectively coordinate**. Even where federal programs advocate that coordination and sharing is not restricting, developing a shared understanding and initiative around those programs is a significant educational endeavor.<sup>7</sup>

Because state agencies in Alaska lack a consistent budgeting and reporting structure for human service and public transportation funding across agencies, the Task Force is also not able to attribute a cost per person to the monies expended. **Creating a consistent budgeting and reporting structure across agencies** is an important and significant first step to **effectively measuring and evaluating the system's performance and stimulating meaningful coordination**.

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<sup>5</sup> Nicholas Farber and James Reed. State Human Service Transportation Councils: An Overview and State-By State Profiles (Denver: NCSL, 2010), 2.

<sup>6</sup> House Bill 277 Report: Coordinating Rural and Human Services Transportation in Georgia, Report 2 of 2 for the 2011 Reporting Year. Governor's Development Council and the Georgia Council for Rural and Human Services Transportation. August 2011.

<sup>7,7</sup> Burkhart, Jon. Nelson, Charles. Murray, Gail. Koffman, David. Toolkit for Rural Community Coordinated Transportation Services. Transit Cooperative Research Program Report 101. Transportation Research Board 2004. Page 35.

Grantees who receive and manage funding from the FTA participate in DOT&PF data gathering processes. For those sources of funding (approximately one quarter of the total \$80 million), consistent data sets can be secured statewide. The tool may be a promising option when exploring a resource to measure across systems.

The **fundamental goal** of a coordinated transportation system is to **increase the numbers of people served and the numbers of rides provided with existing resources**. Coordination achieves these goals through better resource management,<sup>8</sup> which includes having meaningful data, understanding and leveraging existing resources, and being able to measure progress.

The Action Plan identifies specific strategies to address issues associated with collecting, reporting and using data.

**Table 1: Data Gathering Matrix, by Program.**

Funding for Transportation Services by available Agency									
Agencies	2010 transportation funding primarily intended for people with special needs	Other 2010 transportation funding that pose coordination opportunities	Populations Served					Mental Health	
			Public	Other inc/ Children	Veterans	Homeless	Low Income		Disabilities
Alaska Mental Health Trust	\$ 1,100,000.00								
DOT&PF - FTA 5310, Elderly and Persons with Disabilities	299,704.00								
DOT&PF - FTA 5316, Job Access and Reverse Commute	114,114.00								
DOT&PF - FTA 5317, New Freedom Program	54,451.00								
DOT&PF - FTA 5311, Rural Transit Assistance Program	16,536,672.00								
Labor-Vocational Technical Center	10,517.00								
Labor-Business Partnerships/Youth	40,690.00								
Labor - Workforce Investment Act, Adult	50,566.00								
Labor - Workforce Investment Act, Dislocated Worker	28,061.00								
Labor - State Training Employment	8,653.00								
Labor - Mature Alaskans Skills Training	16,650.00								
Labor - Vocational Rehabilitation Client Services	501,254.00								
Labor - Disability Determination Services	272,076.00								
DHSS - Behavioral Health	835,400.00								
DHSS - Senior and Disabilities	7,564,126.00								
DHSS - Children's Services	1,750,000.00								
DHSS - Alaska Temporary Assistance Program	1,523,867.00								
DHSS - Pioneer Homes	148,042.00								
DHSS - Juvenile Justice	350,000.00								
DHSS - Medicaid	48,391,985.00								
Department of Education and Early Development		\$ 62,371,068.00							
Indian Health Services	850,000.00								
Indian Reservation Roads		47,698,198.00							
Tribal Transit		307,167.00							
Veterans Affairs	unknown								
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Dev		collecting							
FHWA - 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program		collecting							
FHWA - 5309 Centers for Surface Transportation Excellence		collecting							
<b>Total (potentially duplicated) funding:</b>	<b>\$ 80,446,828</b>	<b>\$ 110,376,433</b>							

<sup>8</sup> Burkhart, Jon. Nelson, Charles. Murray, Gail. Koffman, David. Toolkit for Rural Community Coordinated Transportation Services. Transit Cooperative Research Program Report 101. Transportation Research Board 2004. Page 19.

# 3. Agency and Private Entity Coordination

## Duty 2

**Effective local coordination requires effective state agency coordination.**

To further understand and explore opportunities for local coordination, the Task Force reviewed the Anchorage School District's success in transporting homeless youth, sought suggestions and best practices from public stakeholders, and explored proposed strategies, protocols and processes that might support local efforts.

The Task Force specifically sought suggestions for agency and private entity coordination from participants at the 2011 Alaska Community Transportation Conference. The following suggestions came from conference participants.

- **Require coordination in grant guidance.**
- **Document the economic impact** of coordinated transportation in keeping people employed, getting consumers to the market place, etc.
- Provide incentives for **taxicab companies to offer lift-equipped service** where paratransit service is not available or outside of the service area/hours of paratransit service.
- **Gather data**, receive detailed descriptions of services and utilization and analyze the data and descriptions to **assist coordination and cost savings**.
- **Set flexible guidelines** for more participation from State agencies and the private sector.
- **Use Alaska DOT&PF's existing transit data resources for all transportation efforts.**



*Photo: Courtesy of Southeast Alaska Independent Living*

Objectives to address these suggestions and other recommendations generated by the Task Force are included in the Action Plan. One specific recommendation warrants additional discussion.

### **Opportunities through the use of Smart Card Technology.**

One strategy the Task Force presents in the Action Plan is to identify technological opportunities that will support coordination efforts across agency, streamlining processes and fostering the generation of shared data. **Smart Card technology promises significant gains in efficiency and accessibility.** Already, public transit operators and contractors are pursuing the use of Smart Card technology to track and process payments of transit customers. The Task Force observed that **many**

### **CONCLUSION: AGENCY AND PRIVATE ENTITY COORDINATION**

Coordination at the State level fosters and supports coordination efforts between local agencies and private entities.

**state agencies already use Smart Card technology for some services.** For example, DHSS distributes Food Stamp benefits on Smart Cards for clients to use like a credit card in a grocery store.

Given the current economic climate and initiatives by many state agencies to streamline these processes, **exploring Smart Card technology is timely.** The City of Anchorage has recently released a Request for Proposal to generate Smart Card technology for People Mover. DHSS has formed an internal subcommittee to explore how to make transportation services more easily accessible. The opportunity for state agencies who provide transportation benefits to the populations they support through Smart Card technology is a promising one.

Theoretically, the **Smart Cart service could generate substantial efficiencies for consumers, process efficiencies for the state, and effectively track data, use and cost across systems.**

The Task Force recommends that **the State explore whether state agencies and key stakeholders can collaborate around a Smart Card service that crosses all benefit programs and systems.**

Recognizing what is likely to be a challenging process, Task Force members emphasize the importance of this endeavor. Transit operators intend to continue to pursue Smart Card technology, and they encourage Task Force involvement. Tribal involvement and support is also recommended, and private grant funding to support the effort is identified as a potential opportunity.



*People Mover serving the Alaska Native Health Campus.  
Photo: Courtesy of People Mover*

# 4. Needs Assessment

Duty 3

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Task Force's [Needs Assessment](#) studied six communities across Alaska, including Anchorage, Juneau, Kenai, Bethel, St. Marys and Allakaket, to understand broad categories of need throughout the State, both urban and rural. Existing data were used to estimate of the number of people with special needs and circumstances, which was extrapolated to a statewide figure.

A copy of the Needs Assessment Executive Summary is included as Attachment C. The specific Task Memoranda that inform the summary can be found at the [CTTF Web Site](#).

***Estimate of persons with special needs is considerable, yet conservative.***

The Task Force Needs Assessment estimates **11.4 percent of Alaska's population is a person with special needs** (for example, the disabled) or special circumstances (for example, low wage earners) and they are often reliant on public transportation. The **total number of transportation users could be much larger** given any unduplicated mix of riders in the following populations:

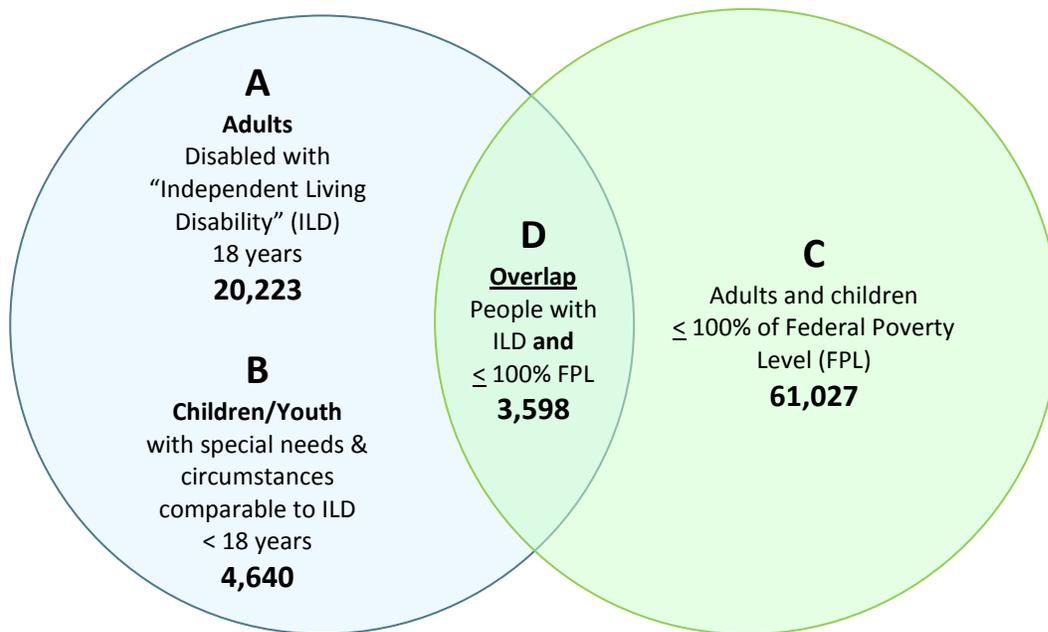
- **175,000** individuals on **public assistance** (2010)
- **142,000** individuals that qualify for **Medicaid** (2010)
- **20,223** persons with **disabilities** (American Community Study 2009)
- **61,000** people whose income falls **at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty level** at less than **\$13,530 in earnings per worker per year**. (Health & Human Services Poverty Guidelines 2009)
- **39,606** individuals who are **low wage earners** (100-200% of federal poverty level) many of whom can't afford a personal car

The Needs Assessment concludes that 11.4 percent of Alaska's population, or approximately **1 in 9 individuals**, is a person with special needs or special circumstances. This is an intentionally conservative estimate of the overlap of the populations studied. The rationale behind the number is depicted in Figure 1, which follows.

**Conservatively, approximately  
11.4 percent  
or  
1 of every 9 Alaskans  
is a person with special needs or special  
circumstances.**



*Photo: Courtesy Fairbanks Resource Agency*



**CALCULATION**

A Disabled Adults with an independent living disability (ILD)	<b>20,223</b>
B Children/youth with disability comparable to ILD	<b>4,640</b>
C Adults living at/below federal poverty level (FPL)	<b>61,027</b>
SUBTOTAL	<b>85,890</b>
 D <u>Overlap</u> : People with ILD and ≤ 100% FPL	 <b>- 3,598</b>
TOTAL	<b>82,292</b>

**Figure 1: Conservative estimate of Alaskans needing public transportation = 82,300**

With over **80,000 Alaskans** having a need that is not fully or adequately met by friends, family or personal resources, the Needs Assessment asserts "**there is simply not enough transportation available at a cost they can afford.**" The shortage of available transportation limits Alaskan's participation in their own communities.

To further complicate the issue, **not all members of the population have similar transportation-related needs.** Needs are specific to circumstances and depend on a multitude of factors, including whether the person has a specific disability, is an able bodied person with limited financial resources, a senior who is unable to drive or whose age factor is complicated by disability and/or low income. Given those realities, the Needs Assessment reports the following additional services needed by people with special needs and circumstances.

"My concern is that with such a large divergence in needs and environment throughout the state that rural, and especially rural remote areas, will not receive equal attention and funding. ... There is not an understanding for the real differentials in costs between rural and urban areas"

*Comment on Task Force Product Survey, October 2011*

- **Additional types of service** – door to door and on demand (no reservations needed)
- **Subsidies** – to help pay for bus fares and taxis for areas not served by public transit

- **More services** – more equipment and drivers, access for riders on weekends, increased frequency and reduced wait times
- **Personal assistance** – for service animals and transport assistance between modes
- **More equipment** – vehicles, wheelchair lifts, accessible taxis
- **Infrastructure** - ramps, shelters, fixed-route bus stops that are closer to home and desired destinations, and
- **Maintenance** – snow removal and maintenance of wheelchair chair lifts, etc.

***Other realities affect need, now and in the future.***

Other realities that affect the level of need for human service and public transportation now and in the future include:

- The National Low Income Housing Coalition "Out of Reach" reports that the current Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment in Alaska is \$1,045. In order to afford this, **a household must earn a "Housing Wage" of \$20.10**, assuming a 40-hour work week, 52 weeks per year. Many low wage earning families would choose housing and food over private transportation.
- The new health care reform law **will expand Medicaid eligibility to 133 percent** of the federal poverty level,<sup>9</sup> increasing significantly the number of Alaskan's who will qualify for Medicaid in 2014.
- The Alaska **senior population is projected to grow at a significant rate**, from just over 90,000 seniors in 2010 to more than 137,500 in 2020 and over 157,800 in 2030.<sup>10</sup> Given that **one in five seniors do not drive**, and that half of those stay home on any given day partially because they lack transportation options,<sup>11</sup> **the need for human service and public transportation options will increase significantly in the very near future.**

**Nearly  
50 percent of Alaska Seniors  
have incomes that do not cover anything beyond  
the necessities.**

*Alaska Commission on Aging FY 2010 Annual Report, p. 24*

**SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS ARTICULATE NEED FOR HUMAN SERVICE AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

A number of organizations and associations in Alaska **have been communicating the need for effective human service and public transportation for years.** Table 2 lists planning documents developed by organizations in Alaska and events held. For each, it describes emphases placed on transportation for the populations served.

<sup>9</sup> John Holahan and Linda Blumberg, How Would States Be Affected By Health Reform? Timely Analysis of Immediate Health Policy Issues (Washington D.C.: Urban Institute, 2010), 9.

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Population Projections, Population Pyramids and Demographic Summary Indicators for States, <http://www.census.gov/population/www/projections/statepyramid.html> (last visited December 21, 2010).

<sup>11</sup> Linda Bailey, Again Americans: Stranded Without Options (Washington, D.C.: Surface Transportation Policy Project, 2004), 4.

**Table 2: Service Organizations Articulate the Need for Transportation**

Document / Event	Need for Transportation
Alaska State Plan for Senior Services 2008-2011	Transportation is needed to promote and enhance seniors' physical, mental, spiritual and emotional health, and enables seniors to age in place.
State Plan for Independent Living FY 2011-2013	Safe, affordable and accessible transportation options throughout Alaska is one of the highest needs for special populations.
Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority Summit	A top priority for 2011 is to take "the steps necessary to ensure a statewide coordinated transportation plan, and adequate funding for community transportation systems across the state."
Healthy Alaska 2010	Improve access to comprehensive and quality health care services by providing for more efficient and effective transportation to services.
Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education 2006-2011 State Plan	Transportation is a "priority for human services" and transportation options are to be improved and expanded.
Alaska Municipal League 2012 Draft Policy Statement	The Alaska Municipal League seeks a cost-effective public and coordinated transit system, an annual appropriation to match federal and local funding, and changes to the requirements to allow blending of public and pupil transit systems to achieve economies of scale.

The issue is of national concern and the recommendation repeated on a national scale. A 2011 study by the National Conference of State Legislatures and the AARP Public Policy Institute, recommends "improving human service transportation coordination to more effectively use limited resources" as one of several key recommendations made that enable older adults to age in place so they can "continue to live in their own homes or communities." <sup>12</sup>

## PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDERS SPEAK OUT ABOUT NEEDS

Input provided during Task Force public forums conducted through 2012 is equally compelling. The Task Force learned **users and stakeholders seek:**

- An environment that fosters **local solutions and collaboration.**
- Streamlined and coordinated requirements that enable **local flexibility and decreased administrative burden.**
- Linkages and integration of transportation efforts with **economic development opportunities.**
- **Safety** in transit facilities and on buses.
- Coordination opportunities between **communities and tribes.**
- Opportunities to secure a **dedicated, local mobility manager.**
- **Operational funding and match.** Without operational funding and match, communities can't capitalize on existing capital funding.

<sup>12</sup> Nicholas Farber, Douglas Shinkle, Jana Lynott, Wendy Fox-Grage and Rodney Harrell. Aging in Place: A State Survey of Livability Policies and Practices. (Denver, CO and Washington, D.C: A Research Report by the National Conference of State Legislatures and the AARP Public Policy Institute, 2011).

- **Awareness and understanding, particularly among those who make decisions** about the system but don't necessarily use or need it.
- **Commitment from the state to reduce barriers to coordination**, so that resources available in local communities, including that funded through the DOT&PF, Medicaid, DHSS, Labor, Veteran Affairs and more can be coordinated in a way that best meets the local need and context.



The Task Force presents its draft products at the October 2011 Alaska Community Transit Conference in Anchorage.

*Photo: Courtesy of Alaska Mobility Coalition and the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.*

At the October 2011 Alaska Community Transit Conference, the Task Force presented draft versions of the products provided in this report. Subsequent to that presentation, the Task Force facilitated breakout sessions of the conference’s approximately 80 participants to secure comments and suggestions relative to those products. A SurveyMonkey™ tool was distributed to solicit the additional input of conference participants. That material has shaped and guided refinements to the Task Force products, and underscores the need for transportation and coordination.

Clearly, the need for human service and public transportation is one recognized across multiple stakeholder groups for reasons that include enabling seniors to age in place, creating access to health, social and recreational venues, and contributing to the Alaska economy.

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# 5. Coordinated Human Service and Public Transportation Action Plan

## Duty 4

The Task Force vision for human service and public transportation in Alaska reflects the following inputs and aspirations collected statewide.

- Using the February 11, 2010 CTFP Recommendations Report
- Responding to the duties assigned in AO 254
- Learning from the experience of providers and consumers around the state through a series of public forums
- Capitalizing on visioning work undertaken by the DOT&PF and the Alaska Mobility Coalition (AMC)
- Securing the review and response input of Alaska Community Transit Conference participants on draft Task Force products

The Task Force also reviewed and discussed the experience of other states working to coordinate human service and public transportation resources.

In response to needs, data, inputs and barriers to coordination, the Task Force developed a **Coordinated Human Service and Public Transportation Action Plan** (Action Plan) to help make coordination a reality and identified an infrastructure to oversee its implementation.

The Action Plan guides the state through a process of generating cross-agency systems to facilitate **effective data gathering, analysis and informed decision-making**. Other objectives include developing **performance measurements and tools** that foster **local capacity for coordination**. The process requires the **participation and commitment of all State agencies and entities with responsibilities and/or funding for client transportation**. The Action Plan positions the state to be able to account for its collective transportation resources, secure the data necessary to inform decision-making, and perpetuate a coordinated system that contributes to the quality of life for people with special needs and circumstances, and also makes every dollar go further and work better.

The Action Plan is presented in the following pages as Table 3 of this Report.

### VISION

- Stimulate the economy by coordinating human service and public transportation transit systems so that they are safe, clean, reliable, efficient, sustainable, and affordable for anyone who needs or wants transportation service, with a focus on those who do not have other transportation options.
- Provide residents, visitors, and employees with convenient local, regional and statewide connections.



*Photo courtesy of Fairbanks Resource Agency*

Table 3: Coordinated Human Service and Public Transportation Action Plan

**COORDINATED HUMAN SERVICE AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ACTION PLAN – DECEMBER 19, 2011**

**VISION**

- Stimulate the economy by coordinating human service and public transportation transit systems so that they are safe, clean, reliable, efficient, sustainable, and affordable for anyone who needs or wants transportation service, with a focus on those who do not have other transportation options.
- Provide residents, visitors and employees with convenient local, regional and statewide connections.

Goal	Objective	Activity	Calendar Year 2012				Calendar Year 2013				Calendar Year 2014				Calendar Year 2015				Deliverable
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4													
<p><b>Secure the commitment of state agencies and stakeholders to leverage their collective resources in a manner that most effectively and efficiently provides transportation services, and particularly so for those who do not have other transportation options.</b></p>																			
1	1.A.	Establish a Governor appointed Coordinated Transportation Commission in the 2012 Alaska State Legislature, accompanied by a funding commitment that will not negatively impact existing limited public transportation funding. Include representatives from agencies with responsibility for transportation, related human services, advocates for special populations, municipalities and federally recognized tribes.		◆															Coordinated Transportation Commission
	1.B.	Enact a statute in the 2012 session of the Alaska State Legislature to establish, enable and required coordination of all community-based transportation services that utilize state and federal grant funding. The statute is to capture other initiatives as indicated to ensure the implementation of this Action Plan.		◆															Coordination requirements for public funded services
	1.B.1.	Oversee the implementation of the Coordinated Human Service and Public Transportation Action Plan.			-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Action Plan Implementation
	1.B.2.	Prepare an annual report to the Governor and the State Legislature summarizing the state of coordinated transportation, reporting on accessibility improvements, efficiency and performance, and making recommendations as appropriate.				√				√				√				√	Annual Reports
<p><b>Performance measures are used as a tool for constant improvement to the system, and evaluate the effectiveness of coordination and the provision of transportation services for people with special needs and circumstances (these measures could look quantifiably different from standard transit measurements typically used today).</b></p>																			
2	2.A.	By June 2013, identify a performance model for use by public funded entities, using a consistent reporting tool for defining measures (unduplicated rides and riders, costs per ride, quantity of services providers, measures of the positive impact on peoples' lives.)						◆											Performance model and reporting tool
	2.B.	By September 2013, integrate performance measure requirements to guide local coordination planning available to applicants.								◆									Performance measurements requirements
	2.C.	By June 2014, begin to measure coordination efforts through a statewide database.												◆					Statewide database

Goal	Objective		Calendar Year 2012				Calendar Year 2013				Calendar Year 2014				Calendar Year 2015				Deliverable
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4													
3	<b>The State of Alaska and federally recognized tribes are able to identify and account for resources spent on human service and public transportation, identify and address barriers to the coordination of those resources, and leverage those funds as appropriate.</b>																		
	3.A.	By December 2012, identify and document state, federal and tribal regulatory barriers to the coordination of state and federal funds specific to human service and public transportation.				◆												Documented barriers	
	3.B.	By June 2013, generate a proposal for a uniform budgeting and tracking structure that is tied to the performance measures identified in 2.A., and produce an action plan for its implementation.							◆									Uniform budgeting and tracking proposal and Action Plan	
	3.C.	By December 2014, propose specific revisions to state and federal rules that create barriers to coordination.														◆		Proposed revisions: state / federal code	
	3.D.	Conduct a human service and public transportation Needs Assessment every four years.															◆	Updated Needs Assessment	
4	<b>Authorities for the implementation of the coordinated system are clearly articulated.</b>																		
	4.A.	In the 2012 session of the Alaska State Legislature, authorize the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities to manage the matching program for Federal Transit Administration and state transit funds according to criteria established by the Commission.		◆														DOT&PF authority for match program	
	4.B.	By September 2012, ensure that local entities and organizations have statutory authority to prepare and implement local coordination human service and public transportation plans and are funded to do so.			◆													Local coordination authority and funding resource	
	4.C.	By June 2014,. begin to measure coordination efforts through a statewide database.													◆			Use of statewide database	
	4.D.	By January 2013, state transportation planning and funding award processes are updated to reflect the state's coordination requirements and new statutory environment, to include the requirement to use the statewide trip planning tool and employ minimum inspection and maintenance standards.							◆									Updated Planning and Funding Award processes	
5	<b>State funds are available to support human service and public transportation operational activities and capital projects.</b>																		
	5.A.	During the 2012 session of the Alaska State Legislature, the State of Alaska establishes state funding for public transportation that supports operational activities and capital projects.		◆														Operational Funding	
	5.B.	Concurrent with 5.A., the Coordinated Transportation Commission establishes programmatic areas and measurable outcomes for funding recipients in order to demonstrate and ensure the benefits of the investment in human service and public transportation.		◆														Performance Measures for funding recipients	

Goal	Objective																		Deliverable
			Calendar Year 2012				Calendar Year 2013				Calendar Year 2014				Calendar Year 2015				
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4													
6	<b>Communities are cognizant of and actively seeking means to improve accessibility.</b>																		
	6.A.	By September 2013, the Commission, in coordination with the state ADA Coordinator, proposes accessibility standards to the State of Alaska that meet or exceed federal ADA standards in response to local need, based on the results of the Needs Assessment.																	Proposed accessibility standards
	6.B.	By September 2014, the commission proposes accessibility standards or regulations for taxicab businesses that service state-owned facilities, which includes a provision for permitted use of designated pick up and drop off zones.																	Proposed Taxicab accessibility standards and regulations
	6.C.	By September 2014, the Commission will prepare and distribute a model taxicab ordinance for use by municipalities.																	Model Taxicab Ordinance
7	<b>Transit technology provides opportunities that promote coordination and effective service delivery.</b>																		
	7.A.	Within six months of its submittal, the Commission will review the Alaska Transit Technologies Stage 2 Deployment (Concept of Operations and Functional Requirements for Statewide Transit Smart Cards and Transit Options website) currently under development to inform potential technological enhancements to service delivery and make recommendations consistent with the statewide vision.																	Transit Technology Recommendations
	7.B.	By December 2014, the Commission will select a coordinated statewide trip planning and payment system where all transportation systems are available within the one resource and people can plan their trip via modes and accessibility.																	Coordinated Trip Planning and Payment System
8	<b>Minimum statewide standards establish consistent assurances of quality (safe and reliable) throughout transportation systems.</b>																		
	8.A.	By July 2014, propose minimum training standards for those providing transportation services specifically including customer service, cultural sensitivity, assisting people with disabilities, safety, passenger assistance and more to generate an environment conducive to providing effective, appropriate and safe transportation for people with special needs.																	Minimum Training Standards Proposal
	8.B.	By July 2014, propose minimum inspection and maintenance standard for publicly funded passenger vehicles.																	Minimum Inspection and Maintenance Standard Proposal
9	<b>Streamlined processes ensure the most efficient use of public resources.</b>																		
	9.A.	By December 2013, Establish a process to streamline the procurement and disposal of publicly funded transportation assets.																	Streamlined Procurement Process
	9.B.	Identify and address barriers to coordination associated with vehicle insurance, including cost, joint coverage, policy writing, and the sharing of publicly funded transportation vehicles assets.																	Barriers addressed

# 6. Federal Aid Programs: Administrative and Implementation Strategies

Duties 5 and 6

**Task Force Principles inform administrative communication.**

Federal-aid transit programs managed through the FTA are prescribed in the federal transportation bill, the development of which has been underway over the course of the Task Force’s work and has not been reauthorized at time of this Report.

To inform the development of that bill, **the Task Force presents five Principles to be shared with and communicated through the Governor’s office and that of Alaska’s congressional delegation** to inform re-authorization. The principles are intended to help build an environment which fosters a coordinated environment in Alaska (Table 4).

In discussing these principles with stakeholders at the statewide Alaska Community Transit Conference, stakeholders reiterated and emphasized the principles from their perspectives:

- Maintain human service and public transportation as a priority.
- Transportation is inextricably linked to economic vitality

## Alaska Governor's Coordinated Transportation Task Force Principles

*For consideration in the development and authorization of  
Federal Transportation Programs*

The Governor's Coordinated Transportation Task Force (Task Force) was convened through Administrative Order 254 by Governor Sean Parnell on July 9, 2010. The Task Force works to coordinate the most effective delivery of human service public transportation services for people with special needs and special circumstances.

As the federal government works on the reauthorization of the Transportation Bill, there are several principles that the Task Force recommends for consideration on behalf of the State of Alaska.

- **Human Service and Public Transportation are important and relevant in Alaska, and are to be maintained as a priority.** Alaska's geographic characteristics and diverse weather conditions make human service and public transportation both challenging and essential. Residents in rural communities often need to travel by multiple modes of transportation across long distances to access basic services, producing a higher cost of travel. The Task Force recommends that any federal bill continue to address and maintain human service and public transportation as a priority.
- **Human Service and Public Transportation promote economic vitality.** In the City of Juneau, for example, up to 75 percent of employees at some businesses (such as Wal-Mart) are transit dependent. We need to ensure Alaskans have access to work, workers, and goods.
- **Establish unified reporting requirements across agencies - efficiency is essential to maximize the yield of each taxpayer dollar.** Establishing unified reporting requirements across programs and federal agencies will create efficiencies and promote the effective use of data across programs and agencies at the local, state and federal level while maintaining the emphasis on accountability.
- **Federal and state structures and requirements must support local coordination, flexibility and efficiency.** Many federal programs support human service transportation; streamlining those programs and requirements are key to reducing the administrative burden, fostering flexibility in service delivery, and enabling meaningful coordination on the ground.
- **Clarify and simplify match requirements at the federal level across all programs and agencies.** Match rules among the many federal programs should be harmonized to the fullest extent possible, thereby increasing efficiency and opportunity.

**Table 4: Federal Principles**

(worker availability, convenience, cost, savings to families, money remaining in community, money infusing the state's tax receipts).

- Efficiencies are achieved through coordination (e.g., having a central transportation hub, transit clients using Smart Cards, having one call centers for dispatching, and collecting and reporting data that is uniform across systems).
- Local circumstances drive what coordination best looks like.
- Efficiencies will be gained through clear and consistent match rules across federal funding sources.



Stakeholders discuss needs at the Alaska Community Transportation Conference 2011.

*Photo: Courtesy of Alaska Mobility Coalition and the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.*

***Implementation requires coordinated infrastructure.***

Because the transportation bill was not produced and reauthorized during the Task Force's 2011 tenure, the Task Force did not generate implementation strategies.

However, the Task Force recommends that **the Federal Principles permeate state implementation practices**, and that the Coordinated Transportation Commission generate and oversee implementation strategies as and when reauthorization of the transportation bill becomes a reality.

# 7. Propose Legislation to Support Coordination

## Duty 7

### ***Coordination demands a concerted effort.***

Challenges associated with coordination exist at many levels – community, state and federal. The extent of the need, difficulty in quantifying expenditures and articulating performance across agencies, and variety of federal, state, local and tribal investment in the human service and public transportation system underscore the **critical need** for a structure that perpetuates a **continued, concerted effort to coordinate passenger transportation and leverage transportation funding**.

Generating a coordinated system is not a simple process. Many levels of government provide or fund transportation, and each brings its own specific laws and regulations that guide its responsibilities. Furthermore, others, including non-profit agencies, private companies and individuals are involved with providing transportation services to persons with special needs and circumstances. So many structures result in a 'lack of consistency in approaches, an overlap of services in some places, and unconnected services in others.' What's more, funding shortfalls and uncoordinated practices leave individuals un- or underserved.<sup>13</sup>

Representative councils have been formed in 26 states across the country to address complex governing structures, understand and leverage collective resources, and better meet the transportation need. Table 5 indicates which states have established coordinating policy and/or bodies and through which means.<sup>14</sup>

COORDINATION LEADERSHIP	Legislative Intent that Coordination is State Policy	Coordinating Councils Established by Legislation	Coordinating Councils Established by Executive Order
States	AR, FL, IA, IL, KY, MD, MN, MO, NC, NE, NH, VT, WA	AR, FL, GA, IA, ID, IL, KY, MN, MO, NH, VT, WA	AK, CO, KS, MD, MA, NE, NC, NJ, OK, OR, SC, SD, WV, WI
Number	13	12	14

**Table 5: State Coordination Policy**

Such councils often have responsibilities similar to those assigned the Task Force and the more detailed and strategic work of the proposed Commission. They create inventories of services, conduct needs assessments, determine how gaps are filled, and recommend how state policies and systems should be revised to enhance coordination.

The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) reports transit investments and coordination generate benefits respective to mobility, efficiency, economic development and economic productivity.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Nicholas Farber and James Reed. State Human Service Transportation Councils: An Overview and State-By State Profiles (Denver: NCSL, 2010), 2.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. 3

<sup>15</sup> Glen Weisbrod and Arlee Reno. Economic Impact of Public Transportation Investment. (Washington, D.C., American Public Transportation Association, 2009), iii-iv.

Some states, like Oregon, Vermont and Alabama, have conducted specific regional coordinated transportation projects that improve access to jobs and stimulate opportunities to spur economic growth.<sup>16</sup> In 2008, for example, no local or regional public transportation options were available in Central Oregon. Today, Cascades East Transit provides 18,000 rides per month throughout the region, and the region features an intermodal transit center in Bend which anticipates future bicycle and pedestrian connections. It supports the transit dependent population (with the active participation of Oregon's Department of Transportation and the Department of Health Services) as well those who choose public transit over other available transportation options (comprising 50 percent of its ridership) to access school, work and services throughout the region. The coordinated effort features funding provided in shares of thirds by the federal government, local government and private business.

Many reports indicate that the return on coordination comes not in dollars but in being able to do more, more effectively, with existing resources. A 2008 Florida State University study of the Florida's Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, which administers Florida's Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund. The report identifies five common types of mobility program purposes - medical, employment, education, nutrition, and life-sustaining. Overall, Florida invested \$372,264,302 in transportation disadvantaged programs in 2007, and by FSU's calculation, generated benefits of \$3,172,813,245 - a payback of 835 percent or \$8.356 per dollar invested. The report provides detailed examples of how it achieved those figures.<sup>17</sup>

There is much to learn from the successes of these different bodies, but one thing is clear. Each statewide body's success depends on the authority and responsibility it is given to conduct its work in the manner that is most responsive to the state it serves.

**Effectively coordinating funding requires a genuine and critical look at budget and accounting systems, performance measures, reporting requirements, federal law and state code.**

In order to

- **Address system issues that prevent the collection and analysis** of data across agencies,
- **Establish performance measures** to ensure continuous improvement,
- **Establish clear authorities and coordination requirements,**
- **Pursue technologies** that promote effective and efficient service delivery across systems, and
- **Streamline redundant processes,**

the Task Force proposes **the Governor establish a Coordinated Transportation Commission.** The Commission will be comprised of *all* state agencies with **responsibilities and/or funding for** client transportation, representatives of the special needs populations, and a representative of municipalities and the tribes. Ultimately, the work will produce and infrastructure that secures **increased access to work, services and community** for people with special needs, **promotes economic growth, and leverages existing state resources.**

**Many other states are exploring the benefits of human service and public transportation, and linking it in increasingly quantifiable ways to economic development.**

<sup>16</sup> Exploring the Role of Regional Transportation Projects as Rural Economy Drivers: Vermont, Alabama, Oregon. (Nado Research Foundation, 2011).

<sup>17</sup> Nicholas J. Farber and Jaime Rall. Human Service Transportation Coordination State Profile: Florida. (NCSL: Denver, CO, 2011), 7.

# 8. Propose Changes to Federal Statutes and Regulations

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## Duty 8

***Principles inform all facets of government policy.***

**Federal Principles presented as Duty 5 are recommended for consideration throughout all policy-making processes, at the federal, tribe, state and local level.** Policy-makers are encouraged to reflect on these principles in their decision-making processes; planners are encouraged to use them in their coordination processes. Just as the Principles have been provided to the Governor for use in reauthorization of the transportation bill, so are they intended for use in the revision and adoption of federal statutes and regulations related to any agency with a role and responsibility for human service or public transportation.

*Photo: Courtesy of Alaska Mobility Coalition and the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities*



# 9. Final Report - A Call to Action

Duty 9

## *It is time to act.*

While the Task Force studies needs and gathers data, while staff work and generate reports, while decision-makers study complex issues and work to make and balance important decisions, **peoples' lives go on.**

Janet Peterson of Interior Alaska Bus Line explains in her letter of December 2, 2011 to Governor Parnell:

..."our riders...from the villages of Northway, Tetlin, Tanacross, Dot Lake and Mentasta, depend on rural transit to meet their medical transportation needs. These passengers, including elders and mothers with children, depend on rural transit to transport them to and from vital medical appointments. Appointments for these riders include cancer treatments, surgery, and medical procedures that cannot be done at the local village clinics."

She goes on to explain that rural transit enables people to travel for job training, expand their education and obtain better jobs, spend time with families, go shopping, and connect with airline flights.

"Safe, dependable rural transit is vital to rural Alaska" she says.

## ***Task Force urges establishment of Coordinated Transportation Commission.***

Alaska has the opportunity and initiative to bring its various federal, state and tribal entities and public stakeholders together to **establish a sustainable coordination culture** and infrastructure. Studies have been done, public stakeholders have been consulted, recommendations have been made, an Action Plan has been developed. It is time to act.

The Task Force recommends that **Governor Parnell endorse the proposal** to establish a Governor-appointed Coordinated Transportation Commission with the **responsibility and authority** to implement the Action Plan. By doing so, Alaska will start to **make a real difference** for the state and tribes, communities and providers, and most importantly, **for people with special needs and circumstances.**



Photo: Courtesy of Fairbanks Resource Agency

"Mobility is freedom.  
Public transit is the key to helping  
people live safe, healthy, independent,  
quality lives.

Public transit is essential for economic  
development."

*Comment on Task Force Product Survey,  
October 2011*

# Attachment A

## Governor's Coordinated Transportation Task Force Meeting Process and Schedule

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Given that the “provision and integration of cost-effective, community-based transportation to persons with special needs or special circumstances,” as declared in Administrative Order 254 (AO 254), “is an important government function,” State, federal and local agencies that provide or coordinate community-based transportation services were specifically identified to participate on and coordinate with the Governor's Coordinated Transportation Task Force.

Commissioners of the following agencies, or their designees, were identified to participate as voting Task Force members. These include:

- Department of Transportation and Public Facilities: Jeff Ottesen, Division Director, SWP-STWD Planning, and Task Force Chair
- Department of Health and Social Services: Duane Mayes, Division Director, Senior & Disabilities Services
- Department of Labor and Workforce Development: Cheryl Walsh, Division Director, Labor & Workforce Development
- Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development: Nita Madsen, Executive Director, Serve Alaska
- Department of Education and Early Development: Elizabeth Nudelman, Director, School Finance & Facilities
- Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority: William Herman, Senior Trust Program Officer
- Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs: Vacant

Five other members were identified to bring the perspective of specific populations, to include:

- Senior Citizens: Patricia Branson, Senior Citizens of Kodiak
- Persons with Disabilities or Special Circumstances: Andra Nations, Statewide Independent Living Council
- Low-income Individuals: Jennifer Beckmann, Central Area Rural Transit
- Municipalities: Glenn Miller, Fairbanks North Star Borough
- Transportation Providers that receive federal funding available to Indian Tribes: Camille Ferguson, Sitka Tribe of Alaska

Ex Officios identified in the AO to participate on the Task Force include:

- United States Department of Health and Human Services: Chris Mandregan, Indian Health Services, Alaska Area Director
- Federal Transit Administration: Rick Krochalis, Region X
- US Department of Veterans Affairs, Alaska VA Healthcare System: Marcia Hoffman-DeVoe
- Representative of the Anchorage School District /school district within the state: David Mayo-Kiely, Child in Transition/Homeless Project

While representatives of the following entities are not named to the Task Force, their role in helping to coordinate transportation services were identified as important in AO 254. These entities include:

- Alaska Commission on Aging
- Governor’s Council on Disabilities and special Education
- Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse
- Alaska Mental Health Board
- Alaska Housing Finance Corporation

Region X United We Ride Ambassador Barbara Singleton participated as an ex officio to the process as well.

Staff support assigned to the Task Force include:

- Poke Haffner, Department of Law
- Eric Taylor, Manager, Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan & Transit Program
- Marsha Bracke, Bracke and Associates, Inc., Facilitator

**Process**

The Task Force held a series of meetings, public forums, tours, webinars and teleconferences during November 2010 – October 2011 to inform their Task. Specific activities include:

Meeting	Public Forums	Tour	Webinar	Teleconference	Briefing to Governor’s Office
December 16, 2010 Anchorage	February 2, 2011 Juneau	February 2, 2011 Juneau Downtown Transportation Center	November 2, 2011	June 1, 2011	September 19, 2011
February 3, 2011 Juneau			January 11, 2011	August 18, 2011	
May 3, 2011 Fairbanks	May 2, 2011 Fairbanks	July 27, 2011 KATS	February 24, 2011	September 28, 2011	
July 28, 2011 Kodiak	July 27, 2011 Kodiak		April 30, 2011	November 16, 2011	
October 24, 2011 Anchorage	October 25, 2011 Alaska Community Transit Conference Anchorage				

David Levy, Executive Director, Alaska Mobility Coalition, moderated these sessions on the panelists’ and the Task Force’s behalf, and to the speakers at each of the sessions, who included:

Juneau:

- Kim Champney, Quality Assurance Director, REACH, Inc.
- Meilani Schijvens, Program Officer, Juneau Economic Development Council
- John Kern, Director, Capital Transit
- Marianne Mills, Program Director, Southeast Senior Services
- Joan O’Keefe, Executive Director, Southeast Alaska Independent Living

Fairbanks:

- Judy Dellinger, Executive Director, Love in the Name of Christ of the Tanana Valley
- Art Delaune, Wallbusters
- Emily Ennis, Executive Director, Fairbanks Resource Agency
- Daniel Moreno, Transportation Program Manager, Tanana Chiefs Conference
- Bill Packee, State President, National Federation of the Blind

Kodiak:

- Jerry Clark, First Student
- Dale Hillman, KATS Rider
- Ken Reinke, Threshold Recycling Services
- Jon Spring, RLS & Associates, Inc.
- Sheila Wallace, Work Services Case Manager, Kodiak Job Center
- Nancy Wells, Human Service Coalition

The Alaska Community Transportation Task Force 2011 featured the participation of more than 80 individuals, who reviewed the Task Force products, participated in breakout sessions to discuss and inform the development of those products, and many of whom completed the Task Force survey to provide additional information.

The Task Force expresses its sincerest thanks and appreciation to all who provided input and suggestions to the completion of the duties the Task Force was assigned.

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**ATTACHMENT B: GOVERNOR'S COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION TASK FORCE DATA GATHERING MATRIX**

Program	Customers: Riders/Rides								Support Provided					Actuals	Financing		Notes
	Mental Health	Elderly	Disabilities	Low-Income	Homeless	Veterans	Other	Public	Manner of Support	Capital Improvements	Planning Efforts	Services	Other		Source	Amount	
1. Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority / Alaska DOT&PF	761 riders 87,444 rides								Grant Funding to provider			Purchase of rides		\$387,178	Trust \$300,000 General Funds/MH \$800,000		
									Grant Funding to provider	Capital Projects(2) (vehicles, equipment, technology)				\$512,006			
									Grant Funding to lead agency			Planning Projects (4)				\$ 90,819	
2. Alaska DOT&PF FTA 5310 (Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities)		1146	1317	888					Grant funding to provider			Purchase of Rides		\$262,819	Federal Transit Administration 5310	\$299,704	
									Grant Funding to provider	Capital Projects (3) (vehicles equipment, technology)				\$70,595	Federal Transit Administration 5310		
									Short term assistance / Grant funding to provider			Mobility Management /Start up (1)		\$21,816	Federal Transit Administration 5310		
3. Alaska DOT&PF FTA 5316 (Job Access and Reverse Commute)									Short term assistance / Grant funding to provider			Mobility Management /Start up (1)		\$51,667	Federal Transit Administration 5316	\$114,114	
4. Alaska DOT&PF FTA 5317 (New Freedom)									Short term assistance / Grant funding to provider			Mobility Management /Start up (1)		\$30,000	Federal Transit Administration 5317	\$54,451	
5. Alaska DOT&PF FTA 5311 (Rural Transportation)							1,910,817		General public, combination of fares, contributions and contracts			Fixed route / deviated fixed route / dial-a-ride / complimentary Para-transit		\$16,536,672*	Federal Transit Administration 5311(non Human Service) Fares Local Contracts **State Funds (AS 37.05.316 Inter-Island Ferry through DCCDC) Other Federal Other	\$5,602,611 \$4,248,993 \$4,956,325 \$ 267,697 \$1,056,035 \$ 178,058 \$ 226,903	*NTD information only includes operating and capital expenses  **Legislative grant to DCCED strictly limited to Inter-Island Ferry
6. 5307																	
7. 5309																	
8. Department of Labor Alaska Vocational Technical Center								150	Intra-Campus Bus			ACTEC owned and operated 28 pax minibus		\$ 10,517	General Fund General Fund Program Receipts TVEP	\$ 10,517	
9. Department of Labor - Business Partnerships WIA Youth Program		39							Travel to work/school/training			Bus pass, Gas card Taxi voucher		\$ 4,714 \$ 4,532 \$ 540	Federal Funds - WIA	\$ 4,714 \$ 4,532 \$ 540	
							11 (runaways)										
10. Department of Labor WIA Adult									Travel to work/school/training			Bus pass, Gas card, Taxi voucher		\$ 30,904 \$ 23,394 \$ 21,177	Federal Funds- WIA	\$ 30,904 \$ 23,394 \$ 21,177	Includes WIA Standard and ARRA funding
							2 (runaways)										
11. Department of Labor WIA Dislocated Worker									Travel to work/school/training			Bus pass, Gas card Taxi voucher		\$ 5,995 \$ 20,248 \$ 7,813	Federal Funds -WIA	\$ 5,995 \$ 20,248 \$ 7,813	
12. State Training Employment Program			226						Travel to work/school/training			Bus pass, Gas Card Taxi Voucher		\$ 8,653	State Funds	\$ 8,653	
13. Department of Labor Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training		187						unknown	Monthly Pass			Bus		\$ 7,200		\$ 7,200	Federally known as Senior Community Service Employment Program
		109							Gas Card			Fuel		\$ 6,650		\$ 6,650	
									Van Drivers			(Vet Van)		\$ 2,800	Federal	\$ 2,800	
14. Department of Labor Vocational Rehabilitation - Client Services			47						Purchase from vendor / direct payment to client / reimbursement			Airfare and fees		\$63,515	70% federal / 30% state funds Source of federal funds – Rehabilitation Services Administration	\$6,351	*167 of these from Mat-Su alone at \$107K
			69					Auto expenses					\$38,789	\$38,789			
			532					Bus Pass					\$80,672	\$80,672			
			82					Cab fare					\$12,813	\$12,813			
			12					Ferry Fare					\$ 7,767	\$ 7,767			
			601*					Fuel and automotive fluids					\$288,241	\$288,241			
			70					Parking					\$9,457	\$9,457			

Program	Customers: Riders/Rides								Support Provided					Actuals	Financing		Notes	
	Mental Health	Elderly	Disabilities	Low-Income	Homeless	Veterans	Other	Public	Manner of Support	Capital Improvements	Planning Efforts	Services	Other		Source	Amount		
15. Department of Labor Workers Compensation																		
16. Department of Labor Disability Determination Services			X								Travel to medical examinations	Airfare and fees		Private Insurance Companies	\$238,461		Information is not available.	
												Ferry Fare		100% federal funds	\$50			
												Cab fare		Social Security Administration	\$26,512			
												Mileage Reimbursement			\$7,053			
17. Department of Health and Human Services Division of Behavioral Health	Mental Health - 499 transports (240 unduplicated)													\$533,730 (FY10)	State General Funds General Fund Mental Health	\$798,300 (FY11)		
	Residential substance abuse													\$34,085	Mental Health Trust Authorization Receipts	\$37,100		
	Individualized Services to adults/SMI													\$120,000				
18. Department of Health and Human Services Senior and Disabilities		X	X					Disabilities: transportation in (98) and outside (22) community - potential duplicated						\$75,254	State general fund grants	\$75,254		
								Seniors: Medicaid escort (686) and transportation (1345) unduplicated						\$28,511	Mental Health Trust Authorization Receipts	\$28,511		
								Seniors: AOA assisted (86,808 rides) and unassisted (119,314 rides)						\$841,397	Interagency receipts	\$841,397		
														\$2,577,194	Federal Administration on Aging grants	\$2,577,194		
														\$1,689,196	Home and Community Based Medicaid Waiver	\$1,689,196		
														\$2,352,574	Local Match	\$2,352,574		
19. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Children's Services							Children subjected or at risk of subsection to abuse or neglect and to their families							\$1,750,000	State general fund and applicable federal Title IV-E/IV-B or Medicaid match	\$1,750,000		
20. Department of Health and Human Services Pioneer Homes		X						Paid State Equipment Fleet for state owned vehicles used for resident and nonresident transportation				State-owned vehicles and equipment		\$143,500	State general fund	\$143,500		
								Veteran resident transportation				Transportation		\$4,542	Medicaid through Older Alaskans waiver, Resident room and board payments	\$4,542		
21. Department of Health and Human Services Juvenile Justice							Juvenile Offenders age 12-19	Reimbursement? Direct pay?				Client transportation services / predominately airfare, air travel related costs including lodging and meals			State general fund	\$350,000	Additional source is Medicaid reimbursable but that is not included in budget	
22. Department of Health and Human Services Division of Medicaid	23,236 Medicaid eligible in 2010													\$48,391,985		\$48,391,985	Eligibility Requirements	
23. Veterans Affairs																		
24. Department of Education and Early Development					Yes, Federal law and other needs		Public School Students K-12	Provide annual funding to school districts operating the student transportation system for students to and from school under AS 14.09		Annual planning by the Department of Education & Early Development		Bi-Annual inspections of all public school buses. Annual bus driver instructor workshops			State general fund subject to appropriate	\$62,371,068	School districts operate 1,059 school buses across our state.	

Program	Customers: Riders/Rides								Support Provided					Actuals	Financing		Notes
	Mental Health	Elderly	Disabilities	Low-Income	Homeless	Veterans	Other	Public	Manner of Support	Capital Improvements	Planning Efforts	Services	Other		Source	Amount	
25. Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development			X												Federal Grant through Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	Up to \$850,000	Must be infrastructure related to serve Low or Moderate Income.
26. Indian Health Services	X	X	X	X		X	X				Client Transportation Airfare, AMHS Taxi Bus Pass						
27. Indian Reservation Roads							X		Available for Federal Match & Maintenance	IRR allows 2% Planning for Roads and or Transit			\$47,698,198.62			\$47,698,198.62	
28. Tribal Transit Title IV			X				X	Pays Operating for fixed routes and Para-transit			Enhances existing Transit Programs for public and elderly		\$307,167.00	FTA Tribal Transit Funds	\$307,167		

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# Transportation Needs Assessment

## Executive Summary

### Introduction

Most Alaskans recognize that there are members of our communities who do not have easy access to transportation. The lack of transportation makes it difficult to fully participate in and contribute to the social and economic life of their communities and our state.

In July 2010, the Governor of Alaska signed A.O. 254, which re-established the Governor's Coordinated Transportation Task Force (CTTF). The Governor summarized the purpose of the CTTF:

*"The provision and integration of cost-effective, community-based transportation services to persons with special needs or special circumstances, such as homeless youth, is an important government function. The purpose of this Order re-establishing the task force is to complete the assessment of this function and determine measures to provide these services in a cost-efficient and effective manner."*

A task of the renewed CTTF is "implementing a needs assessment to accurately quantify the transportation demand for people with special needs and inform coordination efforts." This transportation needs assessment is intended to assist the CTTF in accomplishing this task by researching, documenting, and reporting available data that quantifies the need for special needs transportation on a statewide basis.

### Definitions

The **special needs population** consists of seniors, persons with disabilities, and/or low-income individuals, including those receiving public assistance or Medicaid, **who require community-based transportation services**. Addressing this group's need for community-based transportation is critical for their productive engagement in the life of their community, **as they have no other means of travel**.

There are others who need assistance with travel who can afford taxis, or who have friends who can regularly transport them to their destinations. These individuals have **transportation needs** but are not members of the special needs population as defined by the Governor's Administrative Order. The special needs population consists of those Alaskans with the most serious transportation needs.

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**Elsie lives two miles past the end of the bus route in Ketchikan. She can no longer drive, but is able to catch occasional rides with her friend. Her friend is 90 and is still driving even though she can barely see over the steering wheel.**

## The Study Communities

Six study communities were selected to provide the project a range of Alaskan communities with various levels of transit and paratransit services. Other specialized transportation may be available. The special needs populations of these communities were estimated and studied in as much detail as available data allow. The communities are:

- **Anchorage** – Urban with transit system owned and operated by local government
- **Juneau** – Rural with transit system owned and operated by local government
- **Kenai** – Rural with transit system owned and operated by non-profit agency
- **Bethel** – Remote hub community with publicly owned and operated transit system
- **St. Mary's** – Medium-sized remote community with no transit system
- **Allakaket** – Remote village with no transit system

## Key Populations and Relationships among Groups

Not all of the members of the Special Needs population have similar transportation-related needs. Each element of the Special Needs population has needs that are specific to their circumstances. For example:

**Persons with disabilities** – A person may have a specific disability that interferes with his or her ability to drive or to go outside the home without assistance. A member of the Special Needs population has no one to regularly assist and transport them and must rely on local paratransit or transit service.

**Individuals and families with low incomes** – Able bodied persons with limited financial resources may not be able to afford a car and its upkeep, or in some cases, bus fare. Other low-cost means of transportation, such as by bicycle, work well in Alaska in the summer, but are more challenging in the winter.

**Seniors** – a senior with Special Needs will often also be a member of one or both of the preceding groups, with the accompanying constraints on travel. Age itself does not place one in the Special Needs population, but it does make either condition more likely.

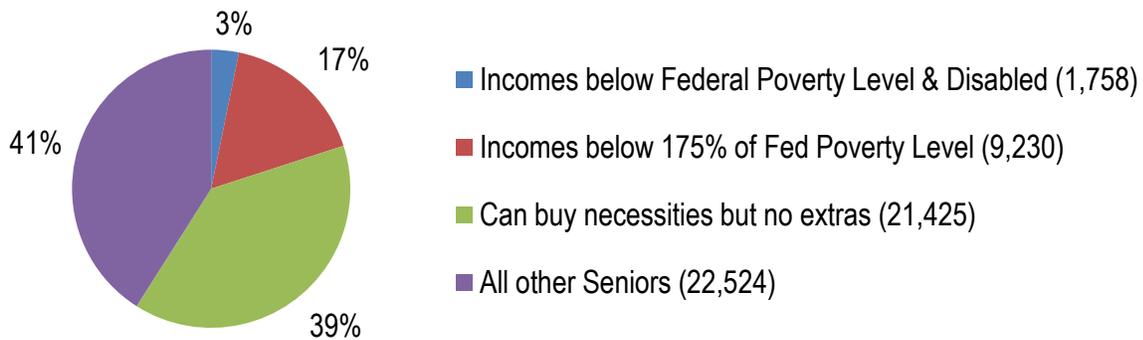
Important to development of an estimate of the magnitude of the special needs population are not only the size of the elements of the population, but the degree of overlap among senior, disabled and low-income groups. Figures E-1 through E-4 illustrate the populations and the interrelationships among the groups.

Note that a significant percentage – 59% – of Alaska Seniors do not have incomes that cover anything beyond the necessities. This coincides with the large fraction of Alaska Seniors who report that they are “one (unanticipated financial need) away” from the not having enough money to make ends meet.

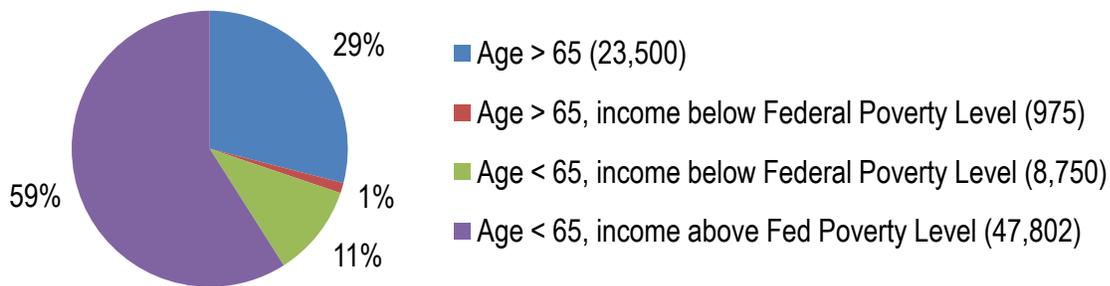


**Disabled individuals may require assistance to drive or to leave the home**

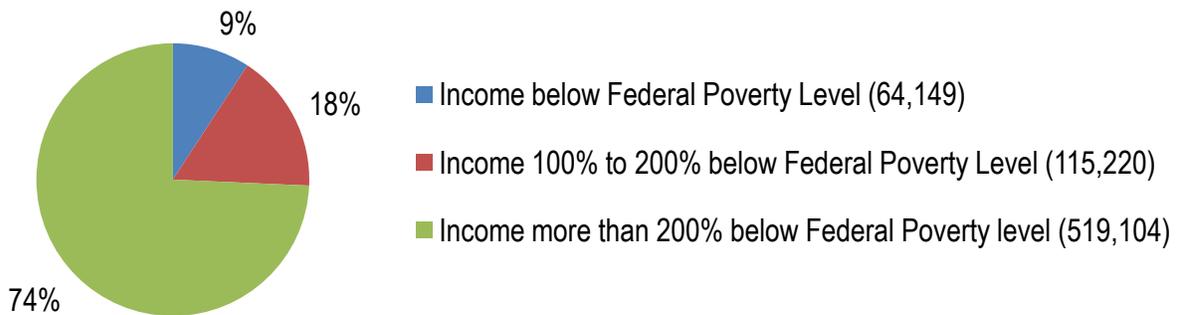
**Figure E-1: Alaska Seniors, Income Statistics**



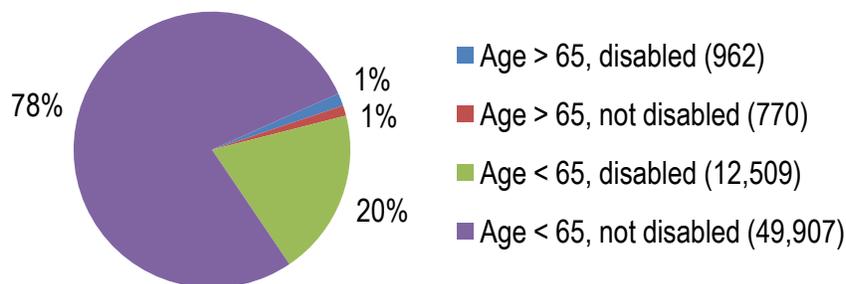
**Figure E-2: Alaskans with Disabilities, Income Statistics**



**Figure E-3: Low-Income Alaskans**



**Figure E-4: Low-Income Alaskans and Disability**



## Specific Transportation Needs of the Special Needs Population

In the absence of a comprehensive survey of the special needs population and transportation providers, information was obtained from existing transportation plans and interviews with key providers in each study community. Based on interviews with providers and current transportation plans, the transportation needs of the special needs population can be summarized as:

- **Additional types of service** – door to door and on-demand (no reservation needed);
- **Subsidies** – help paying for bus fares, and for taxis during times and for areas not served by public transit;
- **More service** – simply more trips, which in most cases means more funding to buy and operate appropriate equipment, pay drivers and assistants, etc. From the user’s perspective this means the ability to travel more frequently, including more weekend/evening/holiday service and reduced wait times for service.
- **Personal assistance** – animal or human companions for hearing/sight/developmentally impaired and for other disabilities; small aircraft boarding assistance for disabled/frail in remote communities;
- **More equipment** – more vehicles, more vehicles with wheelchair lifts, including accessible taxis;
- **Infrastructure** – more extensive ramps, sheltered stops with seating, more and closer fixed-route bus stops to home and desired destinations; and
- **Maintenance** – better snow removal at, and on way to transit stops, and maintenance of wheelchair lifts on buses and vans.

**“We depend on public transportation to help make our business run. It’s an important economic driver that makes possible our employment base and brings our customers to our business. We couldn’t operate without it.”**

*—Hugh Ashlock Jr.,  
Dimond Center Mall,  
Anchorage*

### Example: Needed Transportation Service Elements – Juneau 2009

High-priority needs for equipment and services were identified by seniors, disabled, and low-income populations in Juneau in 2009. Table E-1, below, shows needs for equipment and services as rated by 72 respondents in Juneau, primarily special needs providers and their clients. Scores are displayed in a scale 1 to 4: (Highly Needed = 4; Not Needed = 1). Needs ranking 3.7 or higher are shown in the table in gray.

**Table E-1: Ranking of Needed Transportation Service Elements - Juneau, 2009**

Nature of Need	Special Needs Group		
	Disabled	Seniors	Low Income
Snow plowing	3.9	3.8	3.5
Lift-equipped taxis	3.7	3.5	--
Ground Transportation to/from Ferry	3.7	3.7	3.8
Expanded Bus Service Area	3.7	3.7	3.7
Door to Door Services	3.6	3.6	--
Medically related	3.6	3.6	3.3

Nature of Need	Special Needs Group		
	Disabled	Seniors	Low Income
One Call Transit Number	3.5	3.6	3.4
Taxi Vouchers	3.4	3.4	3.2
Extended after hours service	3.3	3.1	3.4
Mobility Manager	3.2	3.2	3.0

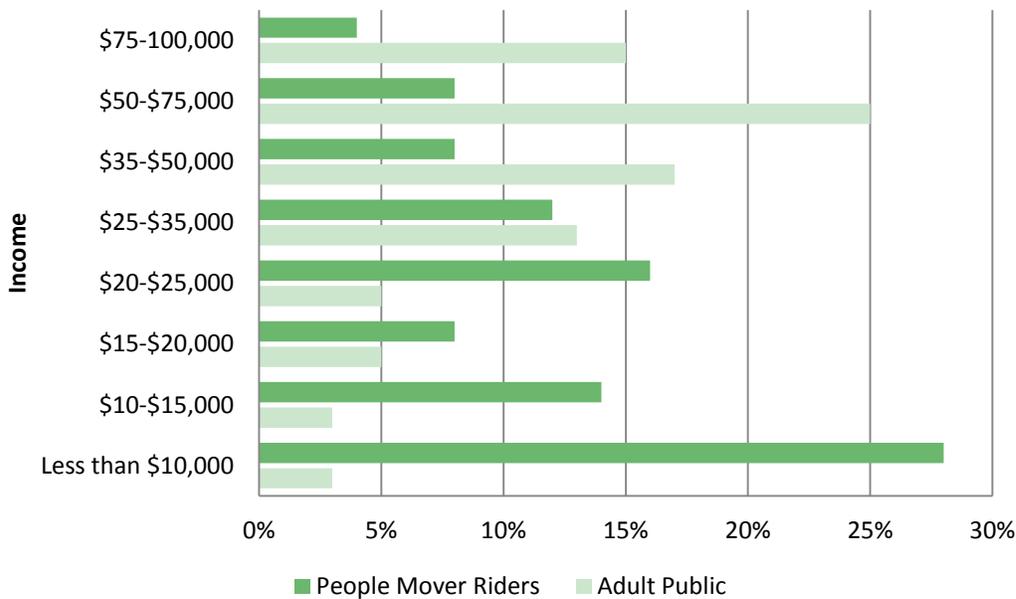
Source: 2009 Addendum to the CBJ 2008 Transit Development Plan: Coordinated Human Services Element

In communities that have special needs transportation providers, the populations of seniors, disabled, and low-income clearly exceed the numbers of individuals served by the providers. Some of the transportation disabled may be meeting all of their needs through private sources. However, all the transportation providers and assisting agencies queried in this study and many community transportation plans indicated that the need for special needs transportation exceeds what is currently being provided.

**Example: Income and Ridership – Anchorage 2001**

In 2001, the Anchorage Transit System, the People Mover, surveyed its riders and at the same time conducted a telephone household survey. Results of the survey clearly compare the income levels of riders and the general public.

**Figure E-5. People Mover Riders and Adult Public, Comparison of Income**



Source: People Mover onboard survey, August 2001, and telephone household survey, July 2001

Although the survey was conducted 10 years ago, it is still notable that **42% of the riders responding had incomes of \$14,000 or less**, and that the income distribution of riders was significantly different than the adult public reported in the phone survey results. With the passage of time, the income scale has increased to some extent, but the relationship of the riders’ incomes to the general public’s incomes has likely not changed significantly.

In addition, although Alaska was less affected by the “Great Recession” than many other states, the economic downturn combined with increased costs of car ownership and operation have made it more, rather than less difficult to be mobile on an income below the Federal Poverty Level. Consequently transit ridership levels have increased, even though service levels have not improved.

## Estimate of the Size of the Special Needs Population

Data that accurately quantify the special needs population in Alaska is not available. The size of the population has been estimated through comparison with similar populations and has intended to ensure that the estimates are conservative.<sup>1</sup> The estimate is based on adding the populations with disabilities that limit their mobility (those with independent living disabilities) to the population living in households with incomes below the Federal Poverty Level. The overlap between these two groups is subtracted from the total. Seniors who are members of the special needs population are included in those with independent living disability. Figure E-6 provides an overview of development of the statewide total. Approximately two-thirds of the totals for the communities and the state are comprised of persons with low-incomes, with the remaining third people with disabilities. Seniors are part of both groups.

Estimated special needs populations for the state and the study communities are:

• <b>Statewide</b>	<b>82,300</b>
• Anchorage	29,800
• Juneau	3,100
• Kenai	900
• Bethel	580
• St Mary’s	135
• Allakaket	28



People Mover vehicle and station

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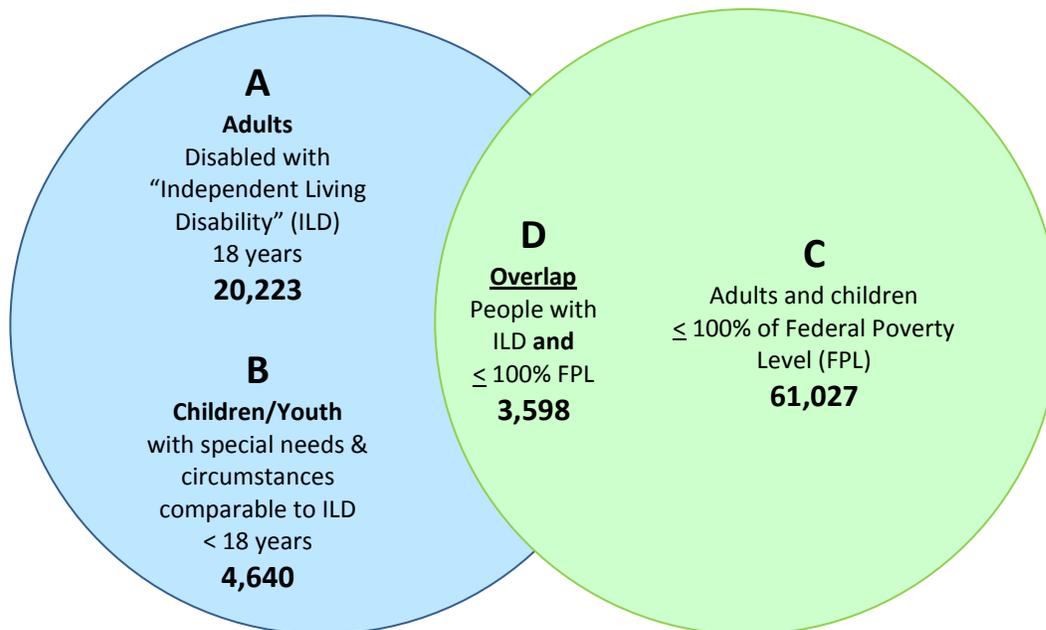
**““If there wasn’t a senior van in Barrow, how would the elders get around? They would be walkin’ when it’s real cold – 40 below or more.”**

**— Lucy Aiken, van driver, Barrow**

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<sup>1</sup> Please refer to the project memoranda, particularly Task 2 Memo 2, for details and description of the estimation procedure.

**Figure E-6. Development of Statewide Special Needs Population Estimate**



**CALCULATION**

A Disabled Adults with an independent living disability (ILD)	<b>20,223</b>
B Children/youth with disability comparable to ILD	<b>4,640</b>
C Adults living at/below federal poverty level (FPL)	<b><u>61,027</u></b>
SUBTOTAL	<b>85,890</b>
D <u>Overlap</u> : People with ILD and $\leq$ 100% FPL	<b>- <u>3,598</u></b>
TOTAL	<b>82,292</b>

**Conservative estimate of Alaskans needing public transportation =  
82,300**

**Conclusion**

This Needs Assessment demonstrates that, conservatively, at least ten percent of the 700,000 Alaskans are people with special needs as defined by the Governor’s Administrative Order 254. Over 80,000 residents have a transportation need that is not adequately - or simply not - addressed by personal resources, friends or family. The ability of these individuals to contribute to Alaskan society, as well as to improve their quality of life can be significantly enhanced through the provision of adequate transit service and coordinated public and community transportation.

The experience of transportation providers in the state, whether public transit systems or private-non-profit social service agencies, is that for the special needs population,

who do not have relatives or others who can provide transportation on a regular basis, ***there is not enough transportation available at a cost they can afford.*** Whether it is the demand-responsive system like Anchor Rides where trips are rationed and must be reserved in advance, or a public transit system like Capitol Transit in Juneau which limits the frequency of service and the hours of operation – especially on weekends and holidays – the shortage or lack of available transportation constrains the ability of these residents to live full, productive lives.