

Aleknagik Community Coordinated Transportation Plan



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INTRODUCTION

The intent of this plan is to document evaluation of existing transportation providers and the unmet transportation needs/duplications in human service agency and public transportation service. This document is intended to update the 2007 Coordinated Humans Services Transportation Plan and assist transportation stakeholders and providers to fulfill the requirements for the United We Ride initiative and the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).

This Plan documents the comprehensive efforts of community outreach that have been conducted to date in an effort to encourage participation from all of the local stakeholders in the study area that represent the targeted populations. Outreach efforts are based on best practices from coordination efforts across the country as well as strategies suggested by the national United We Ride initiative in human service transportation. The goal is to improve human service and public transportation for older adults, individuals with disabilities of all ages, and people with lower incomes through coordinated transportation.

The following three federal funding grants are allocated as part of SAFETEA-LU. They are: Transportation for Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities (Section 5310); Job Access and Reverse Commute (Section 5316); and the New Freedom Initiative (Section 5317). These three grants require participation in the Community Coordinated Transportation Plan in order to be considered for funding.

Each of these federal funding grants requires a match from local, state, or any non-U.S. DOT source. The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority is an example of a state funding source that could be used as matching funds for any of the SAFETEA-LU programs. Other potential local sources include but are not limited to human service agencies, United Way, colleges or universities, government, or private businesses.

1.0 COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

Location

The City of Aleknagik is located at the head of Wood River on the southeast end of Lake Aleknagik, 16 miles northwest of Dillingham. Wood River and Aleknagik Lake have historically been used as summer fish camps. By 1930 there were 5 families living on the shores of the lake year-round, increasing to 50 families by the 1950s. Aleknagik was incorporated as a second-class city in 1973, and the 25-mile road connecting it to Dillingham started to be maintained year-round in the late 1980s. It is a traditional Yup'ik Eskimo area with strong fishing and subsistence activities. The current population is estimated to be 219 individuals.

Transportation

Aleknagik is the only village in the Bristol Bay region with surface access to Dillingham, the “hub” community, via the 25-mile Aleknagik Lake Road which was paved in 2004. Regular flights from Dillingham arrive at the Aleknagik airport. The city owns and operates a 100-foot dock on the north shore of Aleknagik Lake, which is not road-accessible. A breakwater, barge landing, boat launch ramp and boatlift are also available on the north shore. Moody’s Marina serves as a fueling station for boats and seaplanes. Skiffs are used to travel across Lake Aleknagik, access the State Park lakes, rivers and streams, including the Wood River leading to Dillingham and basin of Bristol Bay. The Lake Aleknagik State Recreation Site on the south shore, the gateway to Wood-Tikchik State Park, has boat launch and float plane accommodations. An ice road connects north and south shores in the winter. However, in November 2015, a bridge will finally connect the two shores making Aleknagik a more cohesive community and provide a safer route to crossing the lake and river. Several barge companies provide lighterage service from Dillingham to Aleknagik via the Wood River. Vehicles, skiffs, ATVs and snow machines are the most frequent means of local transportation.

MAP OF COMMUNITY



Note. From Aleknagik, Alaska Profile, City-Data – Advameg, Inc.

2.0 COORDINATED SERVICE ELEMENT: INVENTORY OF RESOURCES AND SERVICES

Coordination Working Group

Members of Coordination Group:

Currently we are in the planning stages of a coordinated plan, and the following members are involved: City of Aleknagik, Aleknagik Traditional Council, Bristol Bay Native Association, and the City of Dillingham.

Inventory of Available Resources and Services

Description of Current Service:

- People can call the City of Aleknagik to schedule a ride with the Senior Van on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday if space is available after the elders and disabled, or they can call a taxi cab in Dillingham to see if a driver is willing to make the trip; this option, however, is generally considered a last resort due to the high costs and difficulty in getting a taxi to make the approximately 25-mile drive to pick up passengers.
- The City of Aleknagik has a 2006 Ford E450 Aerotech Mini Bus. It is in good aesthetic condition, though it goes to the shop about three to four times per year; this number is projected to increase in the future due to the vehicle's age. There are approximately three driver-owned and operated taxis in Dillingham which are mostly inaccessible to the community of Aleknagik and are rarely utilized due to the high costs.
- Elders and people with disabilities ride the senior bus for free and receive priority over other community members who are required to pay a fee to use the services.
- The senior bus cannot access the North Shore of Aleknagik due to the community division resulting from the Wood River and Lake Aleknagik. This will change at the end of Fall 2015 with the completion of the Aleknagik Wood River Bridge.
- Reservations are not necessary to use the senior bus, though some customers will contact the driver a day or two in advance to let them know they plan on riding the bus. The bus driver has a list of elderly and disabled riders and contacts them the morning before the bus leaves to get an idea of who will be riding. Riders from the north shore will meet the senior bus driver at the south shore parking lot before the scheduled departure time, and the driver will pick up the elders/disabled at their homes on the south shore if they have notified her of their intent to ride the bus that day. Additionally, other riders will wait at the top of the hill on the south shore to signal the driver that they want a ride.
- Assessment of Available Services:

<u>Provider</u>	<u>Schedule</u>	<u>Available seats</u>
City of Aleknagik	Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 10 AM – 3 PM	12
Private Taxi Company	Various, unpredictable	4 (estimated)

- In order for seniors or disabled individuals to take advantage of the transportation services, they must fill out a form at the City Office showing proof of age and/or disability.

Population of Service Area: 227

Estimated Annual Trip Destination Distribution, Current Service:

Home:	145 trips per year
Senior Center:	290 “
Grocery Store:	500 “
Medical Facilities:	400 “
Bank:	145 “
Airport:	10 “
Personal	290 “

Operating Data:

Operating Days/Week: 3

Operating Hours: 15

Fee Charged: No fee for elders and disabled; \$10 one-way for others

Annual Vehicle Miles: 9,000

Annual Vehicle Hours: 814

Annual Passenger Trips: 145

Table 1. Vehicle Inventory:

Year, Make, Model	Vehicle Type	Status	Condition	Seating/Wheelchair	Owner of Vehicle
2004, Ford, E450	Mini Bus	Part-time	Good	12	City of Aleknagik

3.0 NEEDS ASSESSMENT

This section provides an overview of the community of Aleknagik’s demographics.

Table 2: Community Demographics – Aleknagik, 2010

	Aleknagik
2010 Population	219
Population 65 and over	18
Percent Population 65 and older	8.2%
Per Capita Income	\$19,200 ¹
Median Family Income	\$55,313 ¹
Median Household Income	\$51,705 ¹
Persons in Poverty	12 ¹
Percent Below Poverty	5.3% ¹

Source: 2010 US Census Bureau Data, except where noted.

¹ Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development Community Database Website: http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/dca/commdb/CF_BLOCK.htm, accessed 12/19/14..

Detailed Demographics by Group Type

FTA defines a “coordinated public transit-human service transportation plan” as a plan that “identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes, that provides strategies for meeting those local needs, and prioritizes transportation services for funding and implementation.” The following tables depict detailed demographics of these group types for each community.

Table 3: Disabilities by Age and Type, for Aleknagik, 2013

	Aleknagik
Total disabilities tallied:	
<i>Total disabilities tallied for people 5 to 17 years:</i>	
Hearing disability	0
Vision disability	0
Cognitive disability	0
Ambulatory disability	0
Self-care disability	0
<i>Total disabilities tallied for people 18 to 64 years:</i>	
Hearing disability	12
Vision disability	3
Cognitive disability	9
Ambulatory disability	6
Self-care disability	2
Independent living disability	5
<i>Total disabilities tallied for people 65 years and over:</i>	
Hearing disability	10
Vision disability	1
Cognitive disability	2
Ambulatory disability	8
Self-care disability	0
Independent living disability	0

Source: 2009-2013 American Community Survey. U.S. Census Bureau website. Accessed on 12/19/14.

Table 4: Household Income in 2013 for Aleknagik

	Aleknagik
Total:	
Less than \$10,000	4
\$10,000 to \$14,999	2
\$15,000 to \$19,999	2
\$20,000 to \$24,999	2
\$25,000 to \$29,999	0
\$30,000 to \$34,999	3
\$35,000 to \$39,999	4
\$40,000 to \$44,999	2
\$45,000 to \$49,999	2
\$50,000 to \$59,999	15
\$60,000 to \$74,999	8
\$75,000 to \$99,999	4
\$100,000 to \$124,999	1
\$125,000 to \$149,999	0
\$150,000 to \$199,999	4
\$200,000 or more	4

Source: 2009-2013 American Community Survey. U.S. Census Bureau website. Accessed on 12/19/14.

Table 5: Household by Type for Aleknagik, 2013

	Aleknagik
Total Households	57
Households with individuals 65 years and over	14
Percent Households with individuals 65 years and older	25%
Average household size	3.65
Average family size	4.20

Source: 2009-2013 American Community Survey. U.S. Census Bureau website. Accessed on 12/19/14.

Table 6: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Poverty Guidelines, 2014

Size of Family Unit	48 Contiguous States and D.C.	Alaska	Hawaii
1	\$11,670	\$14,580	\$13,420
2	15,730	19,660	18,090
3	19,790	24,740	22,760
4	23,850	29,820	27,430
5	27,910	34,900	32,100
6	31,970	39,980	36,770
7	36,030	45,060	41,440
8	40,090	50,140	46,110
For each additional person, add	4,060	5,080	4,670

Source: 2014 Poverty Guidelines. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Website. Accessed on 12/19/14.

4.0 GAPS IN SERVICE

- Escort Services are not available for those who require it unless they bring their own family member or friend to assist them which would result in a fare charge if they aren't eligible for free services.
- People in need of transportation assistance generally head to the same places as other riders: the grocery store, bank, electrical company, senior center, and the hospital. The only other places needed to go would be to the homes on North Shore which is currently inaccessible with the van due to the division caused by the body of water.
- Currently people cannot get transportation on Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday and in the evenings. This need is not met.
- There are times when people can't use the service because the bus already departed to Dillingham in the morning and they are unable to return to Aleknagik to pick them up. Only one departure from Aleknagik is currently offered three days a week.
- There are groups of people who need transportation assistance but are not eligible for existing program, for example, people who are too young to use the service or aren't disabled, in the event the bus is already filled with the priority riders (i.e., elders and disabled).
- The majority of the people can afford the service.
- The village elders' transportation needs are met by providing one round trip with the senior bus service three times a week from Aleknagik to Dillingham.
- The senior bus driver makes multiple stops depending on the needs of the riders.
- Currently the senior bus driver provides unassisted rides. If an elder needs assistance they generally can get it from other riders or the senior bus driver, though she is not obligated. However, she has expressed the need for elder assistance.
- People who only need help a few times a year use the transportation system. For example, an elder who failed his vision test to renew his driver's license rode the senior bus while he waited to get his cataracts surgery and pass his vision test.

5.0 STRATEGIES: ADDRESS THE IDENTIFIED NEEDS AND GAPS IN SERVICE

Currently the only public transportation we provide is for elders and disabled individuals in our community to-and-from Dillingham where they have access to basic necessities, such as health care, airport, grocery stores, bank, senior center, and the electric/telephone company. Our five year plan is to expand the service we provide to include additional rides for those employed in Dillingham, students who attend high school in Dillingham,

and the rest of the community members. Expanding our services would boost our social and economic well-being because those who work or would like to work in Dillingham due to scarcity of jobs in Aleknagik have the opportunity to rely on transportation to get there. In addition, high school students who live in Aleknagik could have the opportunity to participate in after school activities in Dillingham because the current school bus doesn't accommodate that.

We are working with the Aleknagik Traditional Council (Aleknagik's federally-recognized tribe), the City of Dillingham, and the Bristol Bay Native Association (a Tribal Consortium made up of 31 tribes and located in Dillingham), to create a local transportation plan for Dillingham and Aleknagik. The goal is to expand services by combining resources from various funding sources to support the needs of the residents.

Additional entities that would likely be sought out for support include the Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation, Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation, Bristol Bay Housing Authority, and the Southwest Region School District. In addition, the Bristol Bay Native Corporation (Alaska Native Regional Corporation) Aleknagik Natives Limited (Alaska Native Village Corporation) may be asked to support the cause if it assists with their missions.

6.0 PRIORITY OF PROJECTS

The priority project is to expand public transit services to support the general population other than the seniors and disabled who currently receive the transit service provided by the city.

Making Project List

The most important gaps in services are transportation services to the rest of the public other than the seniors and disabled.

- Currently, we believe we can operate with the bus we have for the next three years.
- We would need to operate for approximately 15 additional hours a week.
- We would need additional money to support the operation.
- We would need support from the tribe, BBNA, the City of Dillingham, and other entities mentioned above to reach our goal.
- Services would need increased coordination.

Overview of Project:

To expand transit services to and from Dillingham to accommodate the needs of the non-elderly and non-disabled residents in Aleknagik.

Applicant:

City of Aleknagik

Clients served by Project:

All residents of Aleknagik.

Communities Served:
Aleknagik and Dillingham.

Priorities for Implementation

Please explain how you will complete the project listed above

- We will start our project by coordinating with the entities involved in the regional coordinated plan. We will seek funding through the state, tribe, BBNA, potentially Southwest Region Schools. Additionally, we will increase our fares.
- We will mainly need to complete a feasibility study with the coordination of the other entities.

What resources does the community have to complete this project?

- General Fund monies, tribal funds, funds through BBEDC, rider fares, and state funds.
- What organizations are helping with the project? City of Aleknagik, Aleknagik Traditional Council, Bristol Bay Native Association, and City of Dillingham.
- Are additional vehicles needed? If so, how will a vehicle be obtained? For the time being, we will count on the one vehicle we have.
- How will the vehicle(s) be maintained? The vehicle will be maintained by the city's maintenance workers and mechanics in Dillingham.

7.0 SIGNATURE PAGE OF PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

See attached documentation.

8.0 REFERENCES

“2014 Poverty Guidelines.” U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Website. Accessed on 12/19/14.

Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development Community Database Website: http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/dca/commdb/CF_BLOCK.htm, accessed 12/19/14..

“Aleknagik, Alaska Profile.” *City-Data – Advameg, Inc.* Retrieved December 18, 2014, from <http://www.city-data.com/city/Aleknagik-Alaska.html>

“Disability Characteristics, 2009 – 2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.” *US Census Bureau.* Retrieved December 18, 2014, from <http://factfinder.census.gov>