

2015 ANNUAL REPORT, FUNDING REVIEW  
*and Recommendations For Action: 2016*



ALASKA COMMUNITY AND  
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION  
ADVISORY BOARD

February 3, 2016

# Alaska Community and Public Transportation Advisory Board

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The Alaska Community and Public Transportation Advisory Board (C&PTAB) expresses its sincerest thanks to Doug Bridges and James Starzec, whose terms expired in 2015. Your thoughtfulness and wisdom infuses these pages, the work of the C&PTAB, and the pursuit of meaningful coordinated transportation in Alaska.

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# Executive Summary

The Alaska Community and Public Transportation Advisory Board (C&PTAB) was established in AS 44.42 to plan, recommend and pursue “coordinated community and public transportation” in the State of Alaska in order to make the “most effective use” of the state’s human service and public transit resources.

The C&PTAB features a diverse mix of state agency and tribal representatives, user advocates, transportation providers and public-at-large perspectives. The group has the following specific responsibilities under the law:

- Developing and implementing a Strategic Plan
- Providing an Annual Report and Funding Review, and
- Making “recommendations for improved agency coordination and combining of services to achieve cost savings in the funding and delivery of community and public transportation services” (44.42.095).

C&PTAB, and its Interagency Working Group (IWG) subcommittee comprised of state agency representatives, have illuminated barriers associated with data and reporting requirements across state agencies. Existing administrative, finance and reporting structures tend to perpetuate funding and programmatic silos, duplication of effort and increased administrative burden at the state and local level. Only applicants for DOT&PF funding are required to coordinate at the local level. Outside DOT&PF, there is no coordination requirement or impetus. With an austere funding outlook and Medicaid expansion, the leveraging of our collective dollars becomes increasingly important.

To that end, the C&PTAB, with the support of the members of the IWG, is pleased to present recommendations to generate a meaningful and effective coordinated transportation structure in the State of Alaska. This structure will be the basis on which coordinated efforts will grow and flourish in the years to come. Implementation of the following recommendations will:

- Create a coordinated transportation policy framework throughout state programs
- Foster increasingly robust coordination at the local level
- Provide a mechanism to determine how money is spent and how effectively state resources are being used to provide transportation services
- Enable the ability to measure the impact of transportation coordination in Alaska

## C&PTAB Coordination Recommendations: 2016

Outcomes	Recommendations	Content
<b>Recommendation #1</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Establish a consistent framework and expectation for coordination in policy and practice across all state funding entities.</li> </ul>	<p>All state agencies that provide or in some manner pay for human service and public transportation adopt the same, shared definition of coordination.</p>	<p>Definition:</p> <p>Coordination is an ongoing strategy of committed funders, providers and stakeholders working together to improve both local and statewide transportation options through planning, shared resources, and consolidation of programs.</p>
<b>Recommendation #2</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Foster and stimulate meaningful and consistent coordination practices at the state and local level</li> <li>■ Generate shared expectations for coordination across all public funding sources</li> </ul>	<p>All state agencies use the same coordination requirements and template language in Requests for Proposals, transportation service contracts, certification processes, and grants that support transportation services for client populations.</p>	<p>Language/Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Providers must demonstrate and verify their participation in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan.</li> <li>■ Providers must show where local planning processes provided for the meaningful involvement of representatives of public, private, non-profit transportation and human service providers, as well as members of the public including seniors and individuals with disabilities.</li> <li>■ Providers' services will directly correspond with the identified transportation needs of seniors, individuals with disabilities, and people with low income in the local coordination plan, supporting local strategies and prioritized services.</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendation #3</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Provide for increasingly consistent data regarding the use of human service and public transit funding</li> <li>■ Streamline reporting requirements and minimize the reporting burden on providers</li> <li>■ Make increasingly meaningful recommendations about how to optimize funding and quantify funding needs</li> </ul>	<p>Recipients of human service and public transportation funding from any state funding agency will report annually to that agency a consistent set of data in a manner that can be sorted, aggregated and reported across agencies.</p>	<p>Reporting requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Local match amount and partner</li> <li>■ Actual transportation expenditures by service and provider</li> <li>■ Number of people served</li> <li>■ Cost per ride or amount of purchased transportation services</li> <li>■ Level of engagement in Local Coordination Plan implementation per Recommendation #2</li> </ul>

C&PTAB recommends adoption of the recommendations through Administrative Order.

Given the engagement of state agencies and stakeholders in the process of developing the recommendations, internal and external outreach and implementation can begin with the signing of the Administrative Order. Implementation will be transitional in nature, occurring over time as Requests for Proposals, transportation service contracts, certification processes, and grants expire and are reissued.

For 2016, the C&PTAB is poised to support this implementation, finalizing the development and deployment of tools to support the reporting process, supporting providers' in their response to the shared requirements, and with the coordinated structure, pursuing the opportunity to establish statewide performance measures to guide and demonstrate the most effective use of human service and public transit resources in Alaska.

The C&PTAB will also work in 2016 to pursue effective strategies for increasing Accessible Taxicab services across Alaska, and pursue a greater understanding of barriers and opportunities increased coordination of state and tribal transportation resources.

# **Alaska Community and Public Transportation Advisory Board Annual Report and Funding Review *featuring* Transportation Coordination Recommendations - 2016 January 29, 2016**

Within this 2015 Annual Report, the Alaska Community and Public Transportation Advisory Board (C&PTAB) presents its summary of activities over the past year and the required Annual Funding Review. The C&PTAB is also pleased to present a list of specific recommendations to generate a meaningful and effective coordinated transportation structure in the State of Alaska. This structure will be the basis on which coordinated efforts will grow and flourish in the years to come. It will also provide a mechanism for being able to quantify the results of that coordination—the anticipated better use of the collective community and public transportation funding available to Alaska and Alaskans.

The recommendations presented here provide a viable opportunity for meaningful coordinated transportation in Alaska. The opportunity is made possible because of the following:

1. Great commitment of the members of the C&PTAB
2. Stakeholder efforts in identifying, discussing and addressing challenges and opportunities
3. Wisdom of the C&PTAB's Interagency Working Group
4. Leadership and vision of the various state agencies with responsibility for transportation programs and funding.

Thank you to all who did the hard thinking, looked outside the silo, and generated the opportunity for this important coordinated environment for Alaskans.



**Kodiak Area Transit System (KATS) has been providing human service and public transportation since 2000 to Kodiak residents**

*Photo by Senior Citizens of Kodiak, Inc.*

# 1 Introduction

The C&PTAB was established in law in 2012 (AS 44.42) to plan, recommend and pursue “coordinated community and public transportation” in the State of Alaska.

The law culminates years of efforts by stakeholders and leadership throughout the State who recognize the need for and value of an optimized, coordinated human service and public transportation system. This history includes two generations of a Governor’s Coordinated Transportation Task Force (CTTF) between 2009 and 2012. The law provides the authority and the responsibility to help make coordination a reality on behalf of the State and in concert with the Governor and the State Legislature.

By bringing a diverse mix of state agency and tribal representatives, user advocates, transportation providers and public-at-large perspectives to the table, the State is able to collectively study and address issues and opportunities, and also develop and implement strategies to help Alaska generate an effectively coordinated system.

In addition to generating and implementing a strategic plan and producing this annual report, the law

requires the CPTAB to do the following:

- Analyze community and public transportation services and assess public transportation needs
- Generate recommendations for improved agency coordination (including recommending means for the removal of barriers that prevent the coordination of services) and combining of services to achieve cost savings in funding and delivery
- Conduct an annual review of available funding, including state, federal and local governments and private entities that administer or support services, using that information to develop recommendations and potential legislative and other changes to improve the effective use of funding

Other tasks—to analyze the use of alternative fuels (including compressed natural gas, liquefied natural gas, propane and biodiesel in community and public transportation vehicle fleets) and to make recommendations for the use of alternative fuel vehicles where cost effective—were completed in 2014.

Within this Report, the C&PTAB makes specific “recommendations for improved agency coordination and combining of services to achieve

cost savings in funding and delivery” and to “improve the effective use of funding,” which will make

coordination a sustainable reality throughout state agency operations and local practices.

## 2 2015 Activities

Since its last annual report (December 2014), the C&PTAB has conducted the following activities:

### Face-to-Face Meetings:

- March 3-4, 2015–Anchorage
- June 16-17, 2015–Kenai
- September 29-30, 2015–Anchorage

### Meeting with Interagency Working Group

- September 30, 2015–Anchorage

### Public Stakeholder Forums:

- June 16, 2015–Kenai

C&PTAB held seven (7) teleconferences during the course of the year, and multiple teleconferences among C&PTAB subcommittees.



C&PTAB tours Alaska Cab Company in Soldotna

June 2015

*Photo provided by Marsha Bracke*

## 3 2015 Annual Funding Review

### A. The Data Barrier to Coordination

Collecting and aggregating consistent sets of data have been a challenge to the C&PTAB since it started in 2012 and to the CTF

since its inception in 2009. Every year the C&PTAB looks to its state agency members to provide information about funding available, expenditures made, rides provided,

number of people served, and costs per ride. Every year the agencies struggle with securing that same set of information. The reasons for this challenge are reflected in a number of data-specific barriers.

- Different agencies budget and track transportation expenditures in different ways. It takes a hand-walked effort by each entity involved (except DOT&PF) to collect the funding information C&PTAB presents in this report.
- The state shares a similar problem tracking the numbers of riders and rides across systems. There is no mechanism in any agency to effectively provide such tracking, and even the DOT&PF's tracking is dependent on grantees' reports only.  
FTA guidelines compound the problem by requiring different duration times for tracking different FTA funded programs.
- Because of the difference in budgeting, reporting and tracking funding and expenditures, the C&PTAB cannot accurately report and measure the true 'cost of a ride' in Alaska or have the data to guide or demonstrate the most effective use of the State's collective funding.

While Tribal Transit Program funding and expenditures pose another opportunity for coordination, reporting on that funding and measuring any gain generated by coordination also pose a significant

barrier.

The majority of Alaska Native Villages are federally recognized tribes that qualify for services from the federal government, and the following two transportation programs specifically.

- Through the **Tribal Transportation Program (23 USC 202)**, tribes receive an annual authorization that is distributed based upon a legislated funding formula. The respective Tribal government identifies its transportation priorities and programs funding for projects in their Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approved Tribal Transportation Program Transportation Improvement Program (TTPTIP). Eligible projects include transit.
- The **Public Transportation on Indian Reservations Program (49 USC 5311(j))**, commonly known as the Tribal Transit Program (TTP), has two components: 1) a \$5 million discretionary program, and 2) a \$25 million formula program that is heavily reliant on information within the National Transit Data Base. Alaska tribes with transit systems do not do well under the TTP. Neither the FHWA or Bureau of Indian Affairs accumulate the number and dollar amount of projects identified on

***Taking on the data challenge is essential to guiding and effecting coordination and the most efficient use of Alaska's human service and public transportation resources.***

TTPTIPS for transit projects, making it very difficult to understand the tribal transit need in Alaska.

The C&PTAB requested information from the FHWA and did an assessment of the 2015 TTPTIPS for Alaska. Of the 204 tribes that had approved TTPTIPS, 31 had programmed funding for transit with a total dollar amount of \$2,065,018. Based upon information provided by FTA, only ten Alaska Tribes qualified for the Tribal Transit Formula Funding with a total award level of \$371,214. Of these ten tribes, seven are programming Tribal Transportation program funds for transit activities.

This means that 24 tribes are planning to expend Tribal Transportation Program funds on

transit but have no funding from the FTA's Tribal Transit Program.

Some tribes and communities receive funding through the State's transit programs.

Greater sharing of information and data could expand our understanding of the transit need and opportunity within the State, and would better inform our efforts and increase our opportunity to leverage resources through coordination with the Tribes.

Clearly, taking on the data challenge is essential to effecting coordination in Alaska.

## ***B. Funding Expended on Human Service and Public Transportation in Alaska***

Table 1 identifies what C&PTAB knows about funding from State, Federal and Local government agencies, Tribes, and private entities that administer or support community and public transportation services. Please note the caveats and challenges associated with this information, including potential duplications and numbers reflected *within* an aggregation of programmatic expenditures listed here.

In 2014, the C&PTAB convened the Interagency Working Group (IWG), where individuals within a number of state agencies studied the data challenge specifically and worked to generate opportunities to address it. In its 2014 report, the C&PTAB noted that any recommendation offered to address this issue would require a statewide response and implementation. The recommendations presented in Section 5 of this report employ that statewide response.

## Annual Funding Review

This information is presented for discussion purposes only, and numbers, while intended to reflect 2014 funding and expenditures, are known to include some duplication. If numbers are other than 2014, they are so indicated.

Table 1: Annual Funding Review

Local	State	Federal	Agencies	Specialized Transportation Funding	Populations Served						
					Public Other/ Children	Veterans	Homeless	Low Income	Disabilities	Elderly Behavioral Health	
			Alaska Mental Health Trust	\$ 1,050,000							
			DOT&PF - FTA Federal Public Transit Grants*	4,968,769							
			DOT&PF - FTA Human Service Transit Grants*	1,734,438							
			DOT&PF - FTA Transit Planning Grants*	119,750							
			DOT&PF - FTA Rural Transit Assistance Program (providers of transit)*	128,415							
			Alaska State General Fund Match	2,356,018							
			Labor - Vocational Technical Center**	13,542							
			Labor - Workforce Investment Act, Youth	8,663							
			Labor - Workforce Investment Act, Adult	34,821							
			Labor - Workforce Investment Act, Dislocated Worker	24,098							
			Labor - State Training Employment	8,315							
			Labor - Mature Alaskans Skills Training	8,000							
			Labor - Vocational Rehabilitation Client Services (2015)	482,514							
			Labor - Worker's Compensation	Paid by employers workers comp companies							
			Labor - Disability Determination Services	314,958							
			DHSS-HCS - Medical Transportation (non-waiver)	62,105,245							
			DHSS-SDS - Medicaid Waiver Transportation	5,206,041							
			DHSS-SDS - Nutrition, Transportation and Support Grant* and **	6,982,548							
			DHSS-DPA - Work Services Public Transportation Grant*	150,000							
			DHSS-OCS - Family Support, Visitation Services Grants* and **	1,652,000							
			DHSS-DBH - Secure transport/escort PA	TBD							
			Department of Education and Early Development	73,560,256							
			Indian Health Services (working in 2016)								
			Tribal Transportation Program (31 tribes - 2015)	2,065,018							
			Public Transportation on Indian Reservations Program (10 tribes-2015)	371,201							
			Veterans Affairs***	\$250,000							
			Denali Commission	0							
			<b>Private Sources</b>								
			<b>Total funding based on assumptions and caveats listed below</b>	<b>\$99,818,767</b>							

\*The indicated programs also require a local match in order to secure transportation funding. Within the current data gathering structure, the amount of local match cannot be easily secured. Local contributions are not included in these numbers.

\*\*Transportation is only one part of these grants. Food and in-home support or other services comprise a majority of the expenditures. At this time the grants are not reported and tracked in a manner that allows us to pull the transportation-specific figures.

\*\*Veterans funding is a US Department of Veterans Affairs grant split between five boroughs: AAA Alaska Cab (Kenai); Alaska Marine Highway (Kodiak); Interior Alaska Bus (Denali); Inter-Island Ferry (Prince of Wales-Hyder; Valley Mover (Mat-Su). No representative from Veterans Affairs sits on the C&PTAB.

## **C. Federal and State Transportation Funding Outlook**

### **Federal Outlook: Highways, Transit and Coordination**

Federal transportation funding was dramatically stabilized in late 2015 with the enactment of a new five-year authorization entitled the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, which replaced the previous two-year authorization Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21).

FAST continues MAP-21's emphasis on maintaining infrastructure (as opposed to growing it), as well as safety and performance. FAST also continues MAP-21's focus on asset management, prioritizing system preservation of National Highway System (NHS) routes and bridges over lesser traveled and off-system routes.

For Alaska communities, this means less federal funds available for improving the local roads the buses drive on. Since there continues to be a backlog of community projects slated for construction, no new project nominations through the Community Transportation Program (CTP) were sought for the new 2016-2019 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

The DOT&PF expects to seek project nominations for the CTP to

include in the development of the next STIP in 2016/2017.

Highways funding will see a slight gain in FY2016 over FY2015 levels, followed by modest increases in successive years. FAST makes available additional short-term revenues for the Highway Trust Fund, but has not addressed the long-term insufficiency of traditional revenues generated through the Highway Fuel Tax, whose rate has not increased since 1991.

FAST formula transit funding will increase similar to highways, and the addition of discretionary bus and bus replacement funds, absent in MAP-21, greatly improves the ability of Alaska's transit fleets to modernize and maintain a state of good repair, addressing the issue of replacing aging vehicles pointed out in the 2014 annual report.

From the State's perspective, the growth in formula funds in future

***Coordination of human service and public transportation funding can certainly play a role in demonstrating effective management of resources in an austere budgetary environment.***

years with FAST may provide an opportunity to support new transit startups or expansion of service that was not possible with the flat funding in MAP-21.

FAST also puts additional emphasis on coordination at the federal agency level, with targets and actions specified for the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility. These hold the potential for further driving coordination of program funding at the state agency level.

Furthermore, Medicaid expansion will enable more Alaskans to be eligible for health services funded through Medicaid and access to transportation needed to receive those services.

### **State Outlook**

State funding of all programs remains at risk due to the continued low price of oil. The State's long-term goals to diversify its economic base and develop new sources of mineral and energy revenues—such as bringing its natural gas resources to market, the near-term impact of lower energy prices and reduced revenues—will likely dampen the state's investment climate, slowing the hoped-for development of alternative sources of revenue.

Without additional sources of state revenue, the Governor and Legislature must look to cut or eliminate state spending in order to

reduce the state budget deficit (projected at \$3.5 billion in FY16). For the DOT&PF, this is most keenly felt on the operating side, resulting in service reductions for the Alaska Marine Highway System and reduced highway and airport maintenance. It could potentially take the form of reduced or capped state funding available in the capital budget for matching federal highway and transit funds. All departments continue to face budget cuts, but there is general recognition that cuts alone cannot achieve a balanced budget, and that severe state spending reductions would be economically stifling and damaging to the private sector.

The persistence of low oil prices and resulting long-term budget gaps have stimulated serious consideration of some new revenue options in Governor Walker's New Sustainable Alaska Plan, such as making Alaska Permanent Fund earnings the revenue centerpiece rather than oil and gas royalties, increasing the motor fuel tax, and bringing back a state income tax, options that were practically unthinkable only a year ago.

Coordination of human service and public transportation funding can certainly play a significant role in demonstrating effective management of resources in an austere budgetary environment.

# 4 Work in Progress: Status Reports

## A. Standard Methodology for Calculating the Actual Cost of Transportation Services

### *In 2014, the C&PTAB reported:*

The development of a methodology for accurately calculating the cost of transportation services across systems—public transit and human service agencies, specifically.

Through the course of working with community and public transportation providers across the state, and in keeping with its own efforts to accurately calculate the cost of transportation services, the C&PTAB learned that different human service agencies calculate costs differently. Some may, and some may not, include administrative expenses as part of their calculation; some may, and some may not, include maintenance services as part of their calculation.

This reality is one of several data barriers to the C&PTAB to effectively communicate a data in a way that quantifies the true cost of such transportation in Alaska.

### *Now, the C&PTAB reports:*

In 2015, the C&PTAB further developed the methodology. On September 30, C&PTAB conducted a face-to-face meeting with its state agency focused subcommittee—the IWG—to review and solicit their input and approval.

IWG members providing or funding transportation services embraced the methodology and the tool.

The C&PTAB plans to test the tool at the April 2016 Alaska Community Transit Conference. The group seeks help and resources to transition the tool from its existing excel format to a web-based tool which steps users through those parts specifically applicable to them.

The tool is an essential component to the effective implementation of the coordination recommendations presented in Section 5 of this report.

## **B. Medical Transportation Recommendations**

### *In 2014, the C&PTAB presented:*

The Medical Transportation in Alaska: Considerations for the Future – Recommendations (December 18, 2014). The report culminated and documented the C&PTAB’s study of needs and trends in Alaska, how it came to focus on non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT), how other states seek to optimize their medical transportation resources, advantages and disadvantages of a brokeraged system, the status of medical transportation in Alaska, and present its resulting recommendations. The work was done in coordination and cooperation with the Health Care Services Transportation Work Group.

The C&PTAB made two fundamental recommendations:

1. That the state explores revising regulation 7 AAC130.205 subsection (b) 2 related to NEMT and transit and community transportation providers. This regulation prevents a provider from billing the lower Medicaid waiver rate for transportation for an individual who also qualifies for Medicaid. In the existing structure, services provided by Medicaid are not allowed to also be provided within the Medicaid Waiver program.
2. That DHSS consider contracting with a broker to manage Alaska’s non-emergency medical transportation. Medical transportation is required as part of Medicaid services and each state has the ability to tailor the service provision based on state-specific needs and priorities.

### *Now, the C&PTAB reports:*

In January 2015, the C&PTAB medical transportation subcommittee met with Jon Sherwood, Deputy Director of the Department of Health and Social Services, and other Health Care Services personnel to discuss the recommendation.

At that time, DHSS expressed concern about Recommendation #1, as doing so would require a change to the federal Medicaid Waiver. DHSS was receptive to the Recommendation #2 regarding a brokerage, and encouraged more discussion to that end.

Over the course of the year, the perspective on the recommendations changed.

Medicaid Expansion became a reality in Alaska. Medicaid Reform efforts are underway which will change future waiver services.

To that end, DHSS invited C&PTAB to make recommendations to the Medicaid and Medicaid Waiver transportation programs in a manner consistent with C&PTAB findings and coordination objectives. This process is underway and will continue through 2016.

The Health Care Services Transportation Work Group, however, found the brokerage to not be a viable option for Alaska, and opted against the approach.

## C. Accessible Taxicab Resources and Opportunities

### *In 2014, the C&PTAB presented:*

A draft White Paper, entitled Moving our People, Stimulating our Economy: Accessible Taxis in Alaska (December 8, 2014). The report summarizes what the C&PTAB and its predecessor group, the Governor's Coordinated Transportation Task Force, continues to learn about Accessible Taxicab need and opportunities.

The White Paper presents a number of options by which Accessible Taxicab resources might grow in a community, ultimately pointing out that at some point local government involvement is likely to be essential to effectively developing and using such a resource.

### *Now, the C&PTAB reports:*

The C&TPAB had the opportunity to visit Alaska Cab in Kenai during its June 2015 meeting, and to pursue further discussion about opportunities accessible taxicabs offered Alaskans.

To better understand Alaskans needs and experiences related to accessible taxicabs, the C&PTAB issued a survey directed at users but open to any interested person. The survey, conducted September-October 2015, generated 242 responses from all across Alaska. Primary findings are included in the C&PTAB Accessible Taxicab Report, included as Attachment A.

Given those results, C&PTAB will continue its work on Accessible Taxicabs in 2016. C&PTAB will

leverage a study underway by the Fairbanks North Star Borough to better understand needs and opportunities to providing Accessible Taxicab service from the business owners' perspective. C&PTAB will pursue ways to reduce or eliminate, those barriers.



**Accessible Taxi service in Nome**  
*Photo provided by Arctic Access, Inc.*

## **D. Interagency Coordination**

### *In 2014, the C&PTAB reported:*

The convening of an Interagency Working Group (IWG) to address state system specific barriers and opportunities associated with securing more effective coordination of transportation resources. The IWG is comprised of representatives from the following entities:

Department of Health and Social Services:

- Division of Senior and Disabilities Services
- Division of Health Care Services
- Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education

Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development

- Division of Community and Regional Affairs
- Division of Economic Development

Department of Labor and Workforce Development

- Division of Employment and Training Services

Department of Revenue

- Alaska Housing Finance Corporation
- Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority

Department of Education and Early Development

- Office of the Commissioner/Education Support Services

Department of Administration

- Division of Finance

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

- Division of Program Development

### *Now, the C&PTAB reports:*

The IWG met five times during 2015, four via teleconference and once face-to-face meeting with the C&PTAB. The IWG generated and pursued a work plan to achieve the following objectives:

1. Generate a cross-agency shared definition of coordinated transportation
2. Produce template language for use in updating all its RFPs, transportation service contracts and certification processes to foster consistency and coordination
3. Provide transportation expenditures to C&PTAB for use in its annual report
4. Generate a strategy for more effective data gathering and reporting processes, while minimizing the reporting burden on providers
5. Establish a methodology for performance measures across all systems indicating the effectiveness of coordination and agency leveraging of transportation dollars

The IWG drafted and in coordination with the C&PTAB produced and supports recommendations specific to objectives 1, 2 and 4 above. The recommendations (Section 5) indicate how the IWG is actively involved in addressing barriers related to data and practice respective to coordinating transportation funding and services.

IWG will take on Objective #5 in 2016. Articulating performance measures relies directly on the type and quality of data available to the group, which can only be secured after the C&PTAB coordination recommendations are adopted and implemented.

# 5 Recommendations for Coordination: 2016

C&PTAB is specifically assigned the following task:

... analyze community and public transportation services in the state and make recommendations for improved agency coordination and combining of services to achieve cost savings in the funding and delivery of community and public transportation services. (44.42.095)

C&PTAB has illuminated barriers associated with data and reporting requirements across state agencies.

Existing administrative, finance and

reporting structures tend to perpetuate funding and programmatic silos, duplication of effort and increased administrative burden. Only applicants for DOT&PF funding are required to coordinate at the local level. Outside DOT&PF, there is no coordination requirement—or impetus.

***C&PTAB recommendations provide a structure for coordination and a mechanism to provide for the most effective use of Alaska's human service and public transit resources.***

After looking across systems programs, contracts and grants, the IWG and the C&PTAB generated the following recommendations for facilitating a coordinated transportation policy framework throughout state programs. Programmatic coordination and consistency at the state level will foster and stimulate local coordination efforts—all intended to ensure the best use of Alaska's collective transportation.

C&PTAB Proposes an Administrative Order is issued to effect the implementation of the following recommendations.

## **Recommendation #1**

All state agencies that provide or in some manner pay for human service and public transportation *adopt the same, shared definition of coordination*. The intentional adoption of the definition provides funding entities a consistent framework and expectation for coordination in policy and in practice.

C&PTAB generated the following definition of coordinated transportation and vetted through stakeholders over the past two years.

*Coordination is an ongoing strategy of committed funders, providers and stakeholders working together to improve both local and statewide transportation options through planning, shared resources, and consolidation of programs.*

Implementation Considerations:  
Recommendation #1 infuses a consistent expectation for coordinating transportation funding and efforts across all state agencies

that manage transportation funding or where transportation is an aspect of their planning. While there is a level of coordination underway already in large part due to C&PTAB efforts to date, the expectation is not established in a manner that may sustain its practice as individuals transition in and out of the job positions. Coordination may look different among agencies depending on their role, programs and operations, but the common denominator will be a culture of coordination across state systems to ensure the best use of Alaska's collective transportation funding, accompanied by consistent practices and requirements.

Action:

Issue an Administrative Order infusing the definition of coordination and requirement to coordinate transportation resources and efforts across the following agencies:

- Department of Health and Social Services
- Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
- Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- Department of Revenue
- Department of Education and Early Development
- Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
- Military and Veteran's Affairs

## Recommendation #2

To foster and stimulate meaningful and consistent coordination practices at the local level, and to generate shared expectations for coordination across all public funding sources, *all state agencies use the following coordination requirements and template language in all Requests for Proposals, transportation service contracts and certification processes, and grants that support transportation services for client populations.*

In order to ensure the most effective and efficient use of government funding related to providing or paying for transportation services, C&PTAB proposes the following consistent language and requirements:

- Providers must demonstrate and verify their participation in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan.
- Providers must show where local planning processes provided for the meaningful involvement of representatives of public, private, non-profit transportation and human service providers, as well as members of the public including seniors and individuals with disabilities.
- Providers' services will directly correspond with the identified transportation needs of seniors, individuals with disabilities, and people with low income in the local coordination plan, supporting local strategies and prioritized services.

### Implementation Considerations:

DOT&PF grantees already practice this process, and in many areas

human service providers are already engaged in, or have the opportunity to be engaged in, such planning processes. This language will stimulate meaningful involvement in the planning process and link the grantee/provider in a meaningful way to the coordinated transportation effort.

Like DOT&PF grantees, other providers' funding would be contingent on demonstrating local coordination to ensure the best use of transportation resources. The consistent requirement across state agencies will ground the distribution of funding towards increasingly intentional coordinated practice in the local areas.

There are locations where no DOT&PF grantee operates and where no plan exists, but where another provider may apply for and receive funds for other services. In the instance where only a single provider exists, they may declare themselves such. Where two or more such entities exist, the coordination requirement kicks in regardless of DOT&PF grant presence to ensure the best use of transportation resources.

DOT&PF offers numerous resources for local use, including copies of existing coordination plans, planning resource guides and toolkits, and

more. These can be found at <http://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/transit/>

Action:

Issue an Administrative Order (see Recommendation #1) directing state agencies that purchase or fund transportation services to incorporate the template language in their grants, contracts and service agreements with their providers, and to collect the documentation that demonstrates their compliance.

**Recommendation #3**

In order to provide for increasingly consistent data regarding the use of human service and public transportation funding, streamline reporting requirements and potentially minimize the reporting burden on providers, and to make increasingly meaningful recommendations about how to optimize that funding and quantify funding needs, *recipients of human service and public transportation funding from any state funding agency will report annually to that agency a consistent set of data* in a manner that can be sorted, aggregated and reported across agencies.

- Local Match amount and partner
- Actual transportation expenditures by service and provider
- Number of people served
- Cost-per-ride or amount of purchased transportation services
- Level of engagement in Coordination Plan implementation per Recommendation #2

Implementation Considerations:

C&PTAB is in the process of generating a Cost-Per-Ride methodology providing human service and transit agencies the opportunity to establish a cost-per-ride using the same, standard elements. It is expected this methodology will be ready for release in late 2016.

The reporting requirement is a natural follow-on to the language proposed in Recommendation #2 regarding coordination, and can be included as part of the contracting/reporting process in its implementation stage. Other factors, such as how to connect and aggregate this information and house and manage it over the long term are still under development.

Action:

Direct state agencies to continue to collaborate and coordinate around the collection of data respective to public transit and human service transportation, with a goal to at a minimum be able to collect the information listed in Recommendation #3.

Agency stakeholders are prepared to apply the language in grants, contracts and certification processes as they come due. DHSS is taking the initiative to implement ways to standardize and simplify processes associated with Medicaid and Medicaid waiver transportation programs. DHSS is also checking its agreement with Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) to confirm its ability to implement these specific recommendations within the context of the existing agreement.

## 6 2016 Scope of Work

In 2016, the C&PTAB will support the implementation of the Coordination Recommendation through the following activities.

- C&PTAB will continue to pursue the completion of the Calculating Cost Methodology.
- At the April 2016 Alaska Community Transit Conference, C&PTAB will provide information and support to local human service and public transit providers in implementing the coordination recommendations.
- With the implementation of the Coordination Recommendations and the eventual influx of consistent data, the C&PTAB will start its process to 1) quantify the cost of transportation to the state, and 2) establish statewide performance measures for demonstrating the effective and efficient use of state resources.

In 2016, the C&PTAB will also

- Continue its study of effective Accessible Taxicab services through research coordinated with the Fairbanks North Star Borough, and subsequently hone its recommendations on developing such services in a way that resonates as

much as possible with business owners and responds to the needs of the individuals who use the service.

- Pursue a greater understanding of barriers and opportunities increased coordination of state and tribal transportation resources. Some examples of effective coordination of human service and public transit entities among Tribes and local stakeholders exist. Intentional coordination among public transit, human service, local governments and Tribes poses unique and potentially robust opportunities for more effective services in Alaska.

**Moving our People, Stimulating our Economy:  
Accessible Taxis in Alaska  
January 12, 2016**

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*A working draft product of the Alaska Community and Public Transportation Advisory Board*

## **Introduction**

Private vehicles, transit buses, vans, trains, airplanes, taxis, cruise ships, boats—all are a piece of the mobility infrastructure that helps people get where they need to be—to live their lives, purchase their goods, and access desired and needed services. For many, mobility and transportation is a given—we walk out with the keys to our car, drive to the airport, rent a car and go about our business. For others of us—our parents, our neighbors with disabilities, our friends without similar means, our citizens traveling from remote locations for medical services—mobility isn't as simple. One important tool in the mix of mobility options is accessible taxicabs.

Why do we need to ensure that accessible taxis are on the streets of Alaska's cities?

- Approximately 11 percent of our total population<sup>1</sup> are Alaskans with disabilities.
- Approximately 8 percent of our population are seniors<sup>2</sup>, who are also the fastest growing population and whose numbers will double in Alaska within 30 years.
- Of our seniors, approximately 41 percent report having a disability<sup>3</sup>.
- Support tourism in Alaska and the prevalence of the aging population who travel here.

Estimates report the disabled population has upwards of \$175 billion dollars in disposable income nationally, and more than 75 percent of people with disabilities eat out at restaurants at least once a week. AARP reports people age 50 and older spent nearly \$400 billion in 2013. At age 50, adults are likely to experience age-related physical changes that may affect hearing, vision, cognition and mobility. While they may not think of themselves as having disabilities, people in this age group often seek out businesses that accommodate those changes by offering better access, lighting, less ambient noise and fewer stairs. The New York Times reports that spending by travelers with disabilities exceeds \$13.6 billion annually. Among the most effective and flexible tools to support these populations are accessible taxicabs.<sup>4</sup>

Like many other accessible tools, such as curb cuts and text messages, accessible taxis make life easier, save time, and increase access. Accessible taxis, typically small SUV-type vehicles modified with a ramp, give the riding public an option between a standard sedan and a mini-van. It provides persons with disabilities, parents with strollers, and seniors who chose to not drive the opportunity to access shops, healthcare, employment, recreation, social, and spiritual outlets without having to disassemble and reassemble equipment. It offers greater flexibility than public transportation or paratransit, which are restricted by hours of operation, time schedules,

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<sup>1</sup> (Table 1.3 Civilians living in the community, 2014)

<sup>2</sup> (Hunsinger, 2012)

<sup>3</sup> (Selected Social Characteristics in Alaska, 2008-2012)

<sup>4</sup> (Customers with Disabilities Mean Business, 2006)

and routes. Like other accessible tools, accessible taxis are useful to the entire community, disabled or not, depending on individual preferences, circumstances, and opportunities.

### **C&PTAB Studies Accessible Taxicabs**

For nearly four (4) years the C&PTAB has been studying barriers to coordination and access to services, hearing from providers, advocates, stakeholders, consumers and others in communities throughout Alaska and annually at the Alaska Community Transit Conference. For four years prior to that its predecessor group – the Governor’s Coordinated Transportation Task Force (CTTF) – practiced the same outreach. From the first CTTF report in 2010 to the present day, accessible taxicab resources have been an identified barrier to and need for to effective coordinated community and public transportation.

The CTTF Recommendations Report of February 2010 specific identifies Taxi Accessibility as a barrier to effective transportation:

“Taxis appear to be an obvious choice to provide individual and incidental transportation services to people with special needs, but cost and accessibility is frequently an issue. Finding a way to make effective and accessible taxi service available would be a helpful solution for many Alaskans” (page 16.)

The Report goes on to recommend the state “develop a minimum taxicab standard for state-owned facilities such as airports and ferries to ensure those with disabilities are not overlooked.” The Report explains

“State owned ferry or airport terminals area major destination for taxi businesses. To ensure those with disabilities are not overlooked, generate accessibility standards or regulations for taxicab businesses service state-owned facilities, which includes a provision for permitted use of designated pickup and drop off zones. Alternate strategies include a recommendation for local government taxi codes that establish minimum capacity for accessible taxicabs and establish a basic standard in state law” (page 23).

In February 2012, the CTTF Final Report provided a needs assessment quantifying the need for additional types of service and resources, specifically identifying accessible taxis as a resource to help meet existing and growing need.

Other research in Europe and in the United States explores the challenge and opportunities. The International Road Transport Union produced the Economic Aspects of Taxi Accessibility for the European Conference of Ministers of Transport in 2001<sup>5</sup> and in 2007 a follow-up report on “Improving Access to Taxis.”<sup>6</sup> The work focused on the study of European countries, where public transportation is evolved more than anywhere in the world. The 2001 report concludes:

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.internationaltransportforum.org/IntOrg/ecmt/pubpdf/01TaxiAccess.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.internationaltransportforum.org/pub/pdf/07TaxisE.pdf>

## ATTACHMENT A: ACCESSIBLE TAXIS IN ALASKA

- It is very important that all vehicles can provide easy access for the very large and growing number of people who are frail, elderly or have difficulty walking;
- There is no one universal solution to design and technical issues;
- Taxi operators should not be put at a competitive disadvantage by a requirement to provide accessible taxis, either in terms of a higher purchase price for taxis or in a different exterior appearance;
- The use of information technology can increase the quality and cost-effectiveness of taxi booking and dispatch systems, particularly where the service to people with mobility handicaps is integrated within general taxi operations;
- In areas where a significant proportion of taxi use is through on-street hailing or where standardised [sic] vehicle fleets are required, there is a strong case for all taxis to be capable of carrying a person in a wheelchair;
- In areas where taxi hire is predominantly by means of telephone booking or at taxi ranks, the needs of wheelchair users may be met by a proportion of the taxi fleet (to be determined in the light of local circumstances);
- The long term objective should be to achieve fully satisfactory access for people who use ISO (International Organization for Standardization) wheelchairs;
- In both the short and long term, design features such as swivel seats, adequate door apertures, handholds, colour [sic] contrasts, etc. make an important contribution to improving access for all users.

In March 2010, the Center for Transportation Studies published *Assessing the Full Cost of Implementing an Accessible Taxicab Program* on behalf of the Taxicab, Limousine & Paratransit Foundation. The report summarizes the activities of a number states, and articulates costs, challenges, legal constraints and implementation strategies. It also provides an Accessible Taxicab cost calculator.<sup>7</sup>

Even with all the challenges, the report identifies a number of options for providing for accessible taxicabs. Integration in full service taxi companies the report concludes is the best option. With the thorough integration of wheelchair accessible taxicabs in full service taxi companies with the ability to dispatch, track and bill trips taken by subsidized or public provided users, the integrated services could eventually become the norm.

“Utilizing privately accessible taxicabs for passengers capable of using curb-to-curb wheelchair accessible vehicles – both those in wheelchairs and those incapable of walking to the nearest transit stop, will greatly lessen the financial burden upon public transit systems. In some communities, the cost difference between the publicly provided service and the full cost of the integrated accessible taxicab is \$20 per trip. The user benefits greatly by being able to call for a taxi just as any other individual would. The user would be picked up by a private taxi, rather than a large public transit vehicle. The community gains accessible taxicabs within their overall taxi service fleet that may be utilized for non-subsidized wheelchair accessible trips. As the market grows and if the publicly-provided or other subsidized trips are turned over to the privately provided taxi operations, we would expect the presence of wheelchair accessible taxicabs to become much more prevalent” (p. 46).

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<sup>7</sup> <https://tla.org/costcalculator/report.pdf>

## ATTACHMENT A: ACCESSIBLE TAXIS IN ALASKA

As city governments recognize the importance of accessible taxis, more and more are requiring cab companies to include accessible taxis in their fleets. New York City, Seattle, San Francisco, Houston, and many other cities have found ways to introduce accessible taxis on city streets. Each city tackled the introduction in different ways but also with some similarities. The purpose, to provide efficient rides for those who want and need them, remains the same.

In April 2012, thirteen new accessible taxis were introduced to Rhode Island, greatly improving access to transportation for the mobility impaired. Local taxi companies purchased these vehicles, with support from the Federal Transit Administration. The taxis will serve seventeen communities in Rhode Island.

The C&PTAB continues to hear about the need for accessible taxicab service in Alaska, and pursues the issue in earnest. C&PTAB folds into its study the recent adoption of Chapter 11.10 Municipal Code in the City of Anchorage, where some attempt is made to address the issue of training for staff and taxicab accessibility for persons with disabilities and others need to use the service. It is also continues to watch the development of Uber services in Anchorage, and Uber's recent initiatives to serve individuals with developmental disabilities.

### User Survey

In late 2015, the C&PTAB, along with the Statewide Independent Living Council and the Fairbanks North Star Borough, generated and distributed a survey designed to help the C&PTAB understand users' (and any interested person's) experience and ideas regarding accessible taxicab availability and use in Alaska. The feedback was intended to inform the C&PTAB's future direction regarding this important resource.

The Survey was open from September 1 to October 30, 2015, and was distributed to stakeholders and users throughout the state by C&PTAB members and other partners.

Pages of inputs were generated, a summary of which has been organized into a PowerPoint Presentation included as an attachment to this report. Summarily, the C&PTAB learned and confirmed the following from the user perspective:

- "Accessible Taxi" means many things, not just wheelchair access as evident by the responses of the need for many methods of assistance. Accessibility means equipment installed within the vehicle, policies that dictate operation, communication issues and training for both the operators and users (e.g. where does a person with a disability learn about how to use an accessible taxi?).
- Fares paid by vouchers accounted for 40% by those responding. This emphasizes the importance of being able to easily use this type of payment and any other non-standardized ways of compensating the taxi driver.
- Some type of standardized or mandatory training for taxi operators would probably assist with dealing with the issues of safety, treatment and respect.
- In areas where accessible taxicabs exist, respondents report that 43% of the time they

## ATTACHMENT A: ACCESIBLE TAXIS IN ALASKA

ask for one, one is available. While this percentage is higher than what the CPTAB anticipated prior to the survey, it does indicate room for improvement and better accessibility is necessary.

- Individuals responding to this survey and making trips on taxis indicate a high percentage of those trips are medically driven and are regular in cycle or need. Obviously, the reliance on taxi service is high for these trips. It is concerning that 45% of those responding did not make their trip if a taxi wasn't available, regardless of the reason.
- The response that over 66% of respondents will again use a taxi even if it means significant challenges with accessibility highlights the reality that taxi service may be the only transportation option for them.
- The reality is that only a few of our major population areas provide accessible taxis at all.
- There are pockets of areas where effective accessible taxi service was identified, appreciated and noted as effective. While these areas have different business models, the models they use might be worth exploring in other areas.

The C&PTAB concludes that yes, Accessible Taxis are an important need, and their prevalence and capacity warrant further development. In spite of some working business models, C&PTAB speculates that the cost to operate Accessible Cabs, the cost to purchase them, and the need for driver training are primary barriers for Taxicab business owners to develop the resource.

### **Current Inventory of Strategies**

Through the course of its investigation, the C&PTAB has identified and collected a number of strategies potentially available to develop increased Accessible Taxicab service in Alaska. At this point in time, several options have been articulated for generating accessible taxicab service in Alaskan communities. As the discussion continues, it is possible more options and/or variations of options are developed.

#### *Leverage Local Partnerships among non-profits, taxi companies, local governments:*

A non-profit agency located in Juneau, Southeast Alaska Independent Living (SAIL), has partnered with a local taxi company to find a solution that allows for the taxi company to provide accessible taxi service for Juneau residents. As a non-profit human services agency, SAIL applies for and receives FTA Section 5310 funding that is designated for the enhanced mobility of seniors and individuals with disabilities. SAIL uses this funding to purchase accessible vehicles, which it then leases to a local taxi company. As part of the lease agreement with SAIL, the taxi company pays for a portion of the local match required for the federal grant and agrees to operate the accessible vehicles as needed on a 24 hour 7 days a week basis. This partnership allows seniors and individuals with disabilities unrestricted access to transportation. The partnership has successfully operated for several years. Similarly, local governments can partner with non-profits that would like to establish similar projects in other communities by providing a portion, or the full 20%, required match for the FTA Section 5310 funding.

## ATTACHMENT A: ACCESSIBLE TAXIS IN ALASKA

SAIL has been funded for a similar project in Ketchikan.

By leveraging existing resources, providing match, and using the right venue to provide the right service, communities can increase the availability of accessible services. For best results, a sustainable match source (local governments ideal) is needed. Exploring opportunities available through FTA Section 5310 funding may open the door to unconsidered possibilities.

### *Retain X percent of 5310 rural transit funding and dedicate to Accessible Taxicab purchases*

To incentivize such partnerships in the pursuit of accessible taxicabs, another option is for the DOT&PF to retain a certain percentage of 5310 rural transit funding and dedicate that to an applicant's purchase of accessible taxicabs. Again, coordination in the service area with local stakeholders and partners and an appropriate match source is integral to the purchase.

### *Establish local transportation advisory boards*

Local transportation advisory boards are a locally effective way to study, understand and pursue the most effective transportation options in a community or service area. There, issues regarding accessibility and other local dynamics can be studied and solutions developed and proposed in a specifically local context.

### *Develop local ordinances requiring accessible taxicabs*

Many Cities throughout the country and Anchorage specifically have developed taxicab ordinances with minimum accessibility requirements. Such ordinances are an effective way to ensure municipalities ensure the services and standards they seek for their community are available and of appropriate quality. Many such ordinances exist, most embedded in codes with purposes that far exceed that of accessible taxicabs only. Examples accompany this white paper.

### *Develop a minimum taxicab standard for state-owned facilities such as airports and ferries.*

Per the CTF Recommendations Report of 2010, these major destinations for taxicab businesses are state owned and provide a direct opportunity to impact accessible resources. Accessibility standards or regulations for taxicab businesses at state-owned facilities can include a provision for permitted use of designated pickup and drop off zones.

The state can provide leadership in ensuring accessibility at its facilities by establishing such a standard in state law.

### *Find a way to replicate effective private practices*

All cabs operated by Alaska Cab in Soldotna are Accessible Taxicabs. All users of Alaska Cab services use the appealing accessible vehicle to provide all their services. People with disabilities have an Accessible Cab available to them at any time Alaska Cab is operating. Alaska Cab has chosen to integrate accessibility into its business model and does so utilizing normal revenue sources (without government incentives). It is a management choice, provides effective service, and an effective partner with public transit providers.

## ATTACHMENT A: ACCESSIBLE TAXIS IN ALASKA

Generating additional services based on this model is the specific choice of Taxicab business owners.

### Considerations

Regardless of how accessible taxis are introduced into a community at some point, local government has to get involved to ensure the safety of the riding public.

Ordinances help delineate what modifications must be made to consider a vehicle accessible. To ensure the modifications meet standards, cities in the United States often include specific language out of the Americans with Disabilities Act and/or the 2010 Standards of Design manual to outline what will be allowed or disallowed. If the cab company does not comply, then they do not receive the incentives. Some cities will fine companies for being out of compliance.

Cities also use positive reinforcement to increase the time accessible vehicles are on the street, with most cities mandating that the accessible vehicles run 24/7/365. Also, the ordinances can mandate that the accessible vehicle is the first one on the road (in other words, the driver must select the accessible or the non-accessible vehicle until the number of accessible vehicles are on the road). But, with this requirement comes incentives that can include monetary bonuses, reduction in fees, and/or priority placement in high traffic areas (such as the airport).

There are a number of strategies states have used to integrate accessible taxicabs into the pool of mobility options. Doing so is not without its challenges, among them:

- Cost - providing accessible taxis can be expensive, due to the vehicle modifications and/or added equipment.
- Training – for dispatchers and drivers
- Awareness – unless one has a direct connection or relationship with the consumers who have unique transportation needs, many can believe that the need does not exist and not find the need compelling
- Leadership – in some cases municipal leaders assume some responsibility for the transportation needs in their communities and support the pursuit of transit options; in others it is community and human service transportation providers only who assume that responsibility, but remain independent on local support and match to help fill that gap. While many providers excel in providing the breadth of service needs, local support is imperative to sustaining, let alone building, such an infrastructure.
- Compliance – if taxi companies were to accept federal funds to purchase accessible taxicabs, additional requirements exist, such as reporting, maintenance standards and drug testing for drivers.

### **Next Steps**

People with disabilities, their families and friends, visitors to and residents in the community, service agencies are all impacted by the limited transportation options for people with

## ATTACHMENT A: ACCESSIBLE TAXIS IN ALASKA

disabilities. With accessible transportation available, people with disabilities can engage in more activities. By pursuing innovative options and enacting local ordinances, the city and businesses are more readily able to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (both the spirit and the letter of the law).

Next, the C&PTAB seek to better understand the needs and challenges of Taxicab business owners. The C&PTAB will capitalize on a study to be undertaken by the Fairbanks North Star Borough. In addition to doing some national research around the issue, the study will specifically identify real (rather than perceived) barriers to providing the service and identify strategies to address those barriers, including specifically exploring what it would take to motivate business owners to want to provide the service.

draft

# Accessible Taxis In Alaska

- Survey Results
- September – October, 2015

Alaska Community and Public Transportation Advisory Board  
 Statewide Independent Living Council  
 Fairbanks North Star Borough

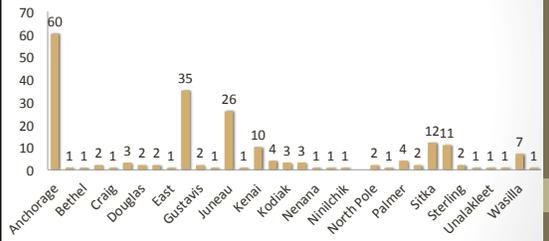
## Who Responded?

242

- Total Responses

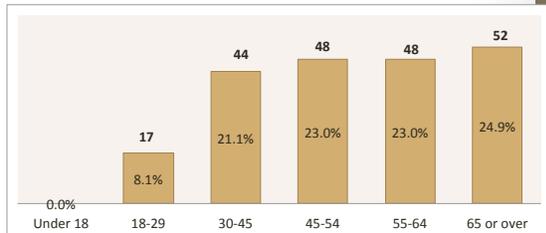
## Location

- Answered: 204
- Skipped: 38



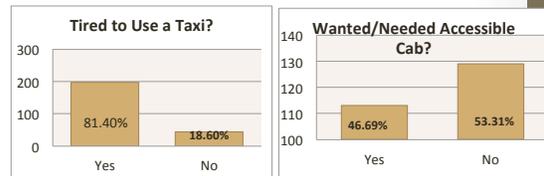
## Age

- Answered: 209
- Skipped: 33



## In the past six (6) months, have you, or a family member or friend:

- Answered: 242
- Skipped: 0



Comments

- There are no ADA/Wheelchair accessible taxis in Kodiak. I am in a wheelchair.
- I can't answer questions about how often I use a an accessible taxi because THERE ARE NO ACCESSIBLE TAXI'S in Fairbanks. This survey assumes we regularly use taxi's but in general they are not affordable, even if there were accessible.

Comments

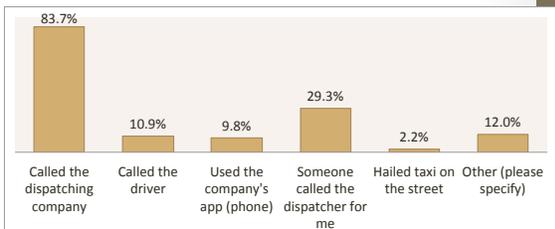
- Sitka needs an Accessible Taxi
- It would be very helpful if taxis in Juneau accepted the Medicaid vouchers
- The taxi company in Kenai provides good service

Comments

- There is not a taxi company in Ketchikan that accepts Medicaid taxi vouchers. This can be very expensive for residents on Prince of Wales who travel to Ketchikan for medical reasons and are eligible for Medicaid.

Accessibility - Processes

Which methods did you use to contact the taxi company (check all that apply)?

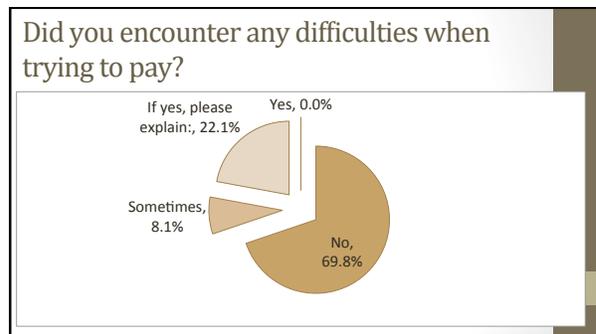


Other (11 responses)

- Care Coordinator
- Internet
- Medicaid
- POC
- Text Message



- ### Other
- Debit Card
  - Check
  - SAIL Card
  - Waiver/Voucher
  - Medicaid



- ### Other (19 responses)
- Charged waiver 10 miles/me 6
  - Drivers refused app payment
  - Not knowledgeable
  - Limited availability of rides
  - Voucher use/processing issues
  - Debit machines don't work
  - Cumbersome and time consuming
  - Drivers won't give or don't have correct change
  - Refused Voucher

- ### Comments
- Cab driver could not find the ALH, did not understand the State voucher system. The driver returned to the ALH days later demanding payment from the recipient, upsetting her tremendously!
  - Unwieldy system, don't like having to depend on someone else to set up a taxi ride every time I need to go to the doctor.

### Comments

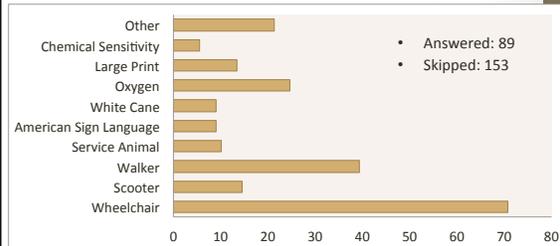
- Sometimes the machines didn't work, so I had to give cash. They don't always offer a receipt, so it's awkward to ask for one.
- Cab companies do not give change back when paying with tokens. When a limited amount is purchased to provide for a specific amount of trips the drivers will no give the change in return.

### Comments

- In Anchorage for surgery, driver refused the voucher.

## Accessibility - Physical

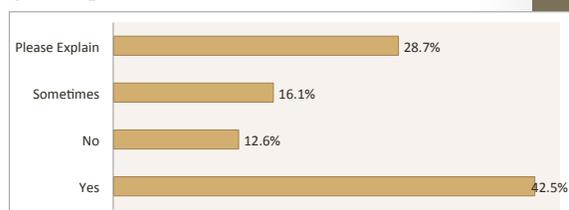
### What durable medical equipment / accommodations do you commonly use?



### Other (19 responses)

- All modes - providers
- Behavioral Health
- CPAP Machine
- Grocery Cart
- Canes and Crutches
- Power Wheelchair
- Prosthesis
- Vision/Hearing Impairment

### Overall, during the past six (6) months, did you use taxis that were accessible and met your specific needs?



### Other (25 responses)

- Attitude
- Availability
- Can't accommodate DME
- Don't Use
- Long Waiting Time
- Payment Issues
- Need met/timely (Fairbanks)

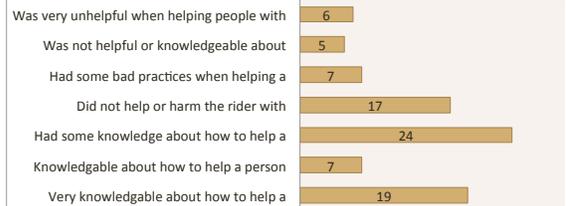
### Comments

- I have tried to call yellow taxi in Anchorage prior to flying in to see if I can schedule a wheelchair accessible taxi. Their response, every time, is that I will have to call when I need the taxi. They can never tell me if one that is wheelchair accessible will be working that day. One time, I got off the plane in Anchorage and had to get back on the plane to go home because I could not get a ride from the airport. Another time, they told me that I could get a taxi at 5 AM to go catch my flight home to Fairbanks but the taxi never showed. When I called, they said that they didn't have any wheelchair accessible taxis running at that time. They are rude every time I call and treat me like I am a burden because I need a wheelchair accessible taxi.

### Comments

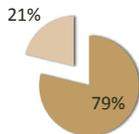
- People who are deaf or hard of hearing need to be able to communicate with the taxi's. The visually impaired need the driver's to notify them when they arrive verbally. I am so tired of taxi's that say they are accessible when they really are not.
- I will ask for an accessible cab and it can take over an hour sometimes 2 to get one.
- Had to make due because wheelchair taxi was not available and the driver charged me an extra \$20 to load/unload my chair into the trunk

### Overall, the driver(s) was/were: • Answered: 85 • Skipped: 157



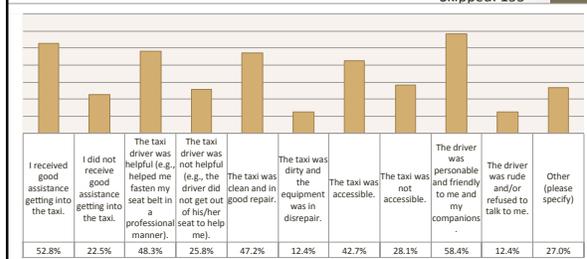
### Overall, the driver(s) was/were:

- Did not help or harm the rider or better
- Had some bad practices or worse



• Answered: 85  
• Skipped: 157

### Describe your experience(s) when using a taxi in the last six (6) months: • Answered: 89 • Skipped: 153



### Other (24 responses)

- Consistently late
- Denied access
- Depend on family/friends
- Didn't show
- Indifferent
- Mixed quality service
- Smells
- Not appropriately equipped
- Professional and Nice (Anchorage, Juneau)
- Refused service animal
- Rude, unkind, disrespectful
- Takes advantage
- Unresponsive

### Comments

- Seldom do any taxi drivers secure my chair without my insistence. And when I do insist, they almost all get mad. And the wait time for WC taxis is unacceptable. I have waited well over an hour on many occasions. It is common knowledge that they sit at the airport and refuse to come into town to get a ride, unless they have a fair from the airport to the area you are waiting. Have had both dispatchers as well as other drivers tell me this more than once.

### Comments

- The taxi cabs that are paid with federal funds from the voucher program in Seward are not wheelchair accessible and none of the cab companies have accessible communication for the deaf and hard of hearing. This violates federal and State civil rights laws.
- Taxi service in Anchorage, Kenai, etc. are too expensive. The state should not be paying for these services unless the Taxi company lowers rates. There is no competition so they charge ridiculous rates.

### Comments

- Wheelchair taxis have limited service times. If you go to the hospital by ambulance you cant use a Waiver transport to get home. You need medical authorization and cant get a ride easily so you have to pay for it yourself. Hospital does not help you get home. You can't call the taxi to go to the hospital either if you are really sick on a weekend or holiday. You must have the care coordinator call and they are not always available. So you have to pay for a cab to go to and to come back from the hospital. Assisted living homes cannot set up your transportation because they have to call the care coordinator for all appointments. We are all adults and know how to use the phone. Why cant we just make the transportation arrangements ourselves?

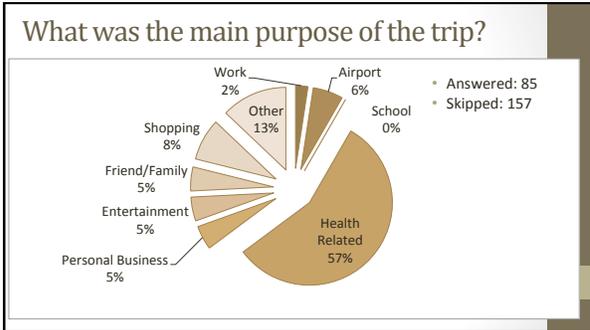
### Comments

- I am disabled but have never called for an accessible taxi. I am actually somewhat afraid of using Taxis in Fairbanks and will not use them alone in Fairbanks or Anchorage due to concerns that as a Native woman I may not be safe doing so. They are often not clean and the last one I did ride in a couple of years ago to go to work was so full of cigarette smoke that my breathing was affected.
- I work intellectual and developmentally challenged individuals. They often complain about taxi drivers being rude and incommunicative with them.

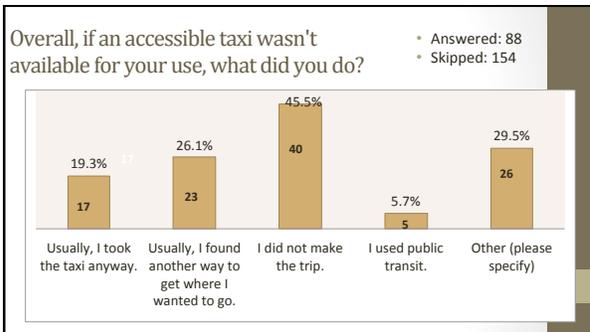
### Comments

- Driver was downright dangerous . . . Couldn't speak English so I had to use hand signals to point out the way to destination. He had trouble making change. He couldn't parallel park in an easy location and stopped in the middle of a busy street with traffic backed up behind him while I tried to hop on one foot towards the curb in order to get to my wheel chair which he left on the sidewalk.
- Most of the taxis I used were in need of repair. One cab, that I had the misfortune of getting twice smells of tobacco and urine.

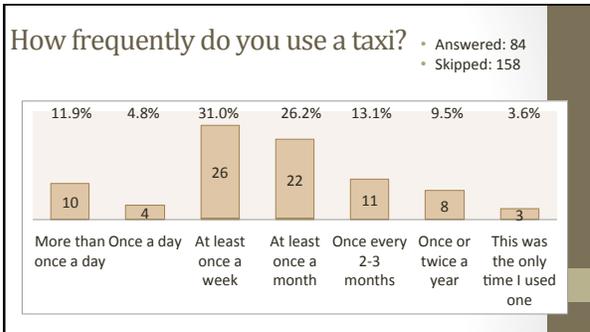
# Accessibility – the implications

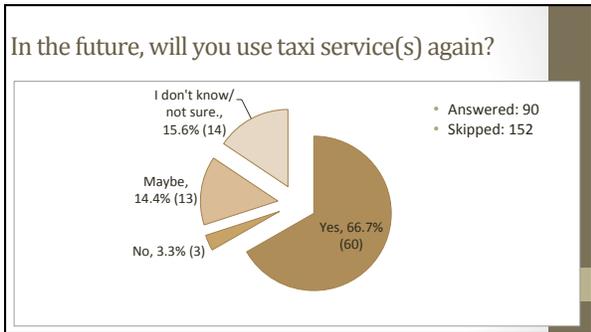


- ### Other
- Church
  - School



- ### Other
- Non Emergency Medical Transportation
  - Facility Transportation
  - Found another source
  - Called private individual
  - Took wheels off chair
  - Rode my Wheelchair
  - Care Coordinator
  - Missed appointments
  - Always available (Nome, Soldotna)





- ### Additional Thoughts
- Answered: 117
  - Skipped: 25
- A necessity for all aspects of living
  - Issue of availability
  - Be considerate of clients
  - Concerned for safety
  - Disabilities require more time
  - Don't have accessible cabs here
  - Driver training needed
  - Good services, drivers exist
  - Too expensive
  - Would appreciate the resource
  - Timeliness
  - Incentivize
  - Need evening and weekend services

- ### Comments
- Please please someone understand without these services people such as myself who are unable to drive are stuck and helpless
  - Difficult to get taxis to stop
  - We have a separate contract with the cab company to take our residents to physician appointments when staff is not needed and family is available – very economical

- ### Comments
- I think taxi cabs should have at least one vehicle in their fleet to accommodate wheelchairs
  - I'm not happy with the companies themselves. They appear to have little care in the customer service and timeliness of their drivers. I wish Uber (or similar service) was back. The drivers were friendly, accommodating, and clean.

- ### Comments
- I didn't need an "accessible" taxi but I required extra help and extra time getting into and out of vehicles because I was almost unable to walk for about 5 weeks. It took me about 5 minutes to make the "transfer" into and out of the vehicle seat. I did not call a taxi during this period because I had never heard about "accessible taxis" and did not think that a taxi driver would tolerate that amount of time at both ends of the trip. I WOULD have used such a taxi had I known some taxi drivers would accept that amount of time spent getting into and out of the taxi (because buses were out for me because the bus stop was ½ mile away).

- ### Comments
- All public buses are required to be ADA compliant.
  - Very reliable but need government assistance to keep them in service and be able to run the cab or taxi safely.