



KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH TRANSPORTATION GAPS AND SOLUTIONS

APRIL 16, 2024

Prepared by: Denali Daniels + Associates



INTRODUCTION

On April 16th, 2024, 53 community members came together and discussed transportation gaps and solutions within the Kenai Peninsula. Those who attended represented transportation service providers, community support organizations, Tribal entities, Borough government officials, and individuals representing themselves. This was a hybrid meeting, with people participating in person and over Zoom. Participants collaborated on information about the current status and possible solutions to address the needs of the community regarding transportation. This event was hosted by the Kenai Peninsula Borough, sponsored by the Kenai Peninsula Community Foundation, and Bridges Community Resource Network, facilitated by Denali Daniels + Associates.

PARTICIPANTS:

Many representatives from community organizations and members of the public attended. A list of participants is displayed below.

- Bieber, Sara – State of Alaska
Department of Labor
- Bouasri, Samantha – State of Alaska
Department of Corrections
- Bunch, Julie – Kenai Public Health
Center
- Cameron, Cassidi – Kenai Peninsula
Economic Development District
- Cannava, Dana – Kenai Peninsula
Borough Mayor Office
- Carbone, Tyler – State of Alaska
Department of Corrections - Reentry
- Ciapponi, Chiara – Kenai Public
Health
- Cochran, Taylor – Alaska Cab
- Cook, Sheryl - Soldotna Senior Center
- Coreson, Caitlin – Kenai Peninsula
Economic Development District
- Dillon, Tim – The Jotimaz Group
- Dye, Jacob – Peninsula Clarion
- Einerson, Linnie – State of Alaska
Department of Corrections,
Wildwood Correctional Center
- Engebretsen, Julie – City of Homer
- Fallon, Sasha – Nikiski Senior Center
- Geisler, Joyanna – Peninsula
Independent Living Center
- Gensel, Kathy – Kenai Peninsula
Homelessness Coalition and Bridges
Community Resource Network, Inc.
- Gottlob, Alecia – Cook Inlet
Counseling
- Hall, Laura – Anchor of Hope Church
- Hunter, Susan – State of Alaska
Labor & Workforce Development
Alaska Workforce Investment Board
- Kimberlin, Kathryn – State of Alaska
Department of Corrections with
Medical Social Work
- Kyle, Brandon – The Salvation Army

- Lautaret, Tanya – Kenai Peninsula Office of US Senator Lisa Murkowski
- Lipps, Renee – The LeeShore Center
- Lyon, Kevin – Kenai Peninsula Borough School District
- Marks, Karin – Homer Economic Development Advisory Commission / Board of Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District
- Martin Tichenor, Karen – Kenai Peninsula Homelessness Coalition
- McKinley, Amanda – State of Alaska Public Health
- Mctrusty, Nicole – The LeeShore Center
- Medcoff, Wyatt – Kenai Peninsula Borough
- Meyer, Greg – Kenai Peninsula Food Bank
- Micciche, Peter – Kenai Peninsula Borough Mayor
- Murray, Lilly – Kenai Peninsula Food Bank
- Navarre, Tim – Kenai Peninsula Foundation and Kenai Peninsula Homelessness Coalition
- Norris, Natalie – Red Eye Rides
- Parker, Lisa – City of Soldotna Vice Mayor
- Parsons, Bradley – Southern Kenai Peninsula Transit Coalition & Peninsula Independent Living Center, Homer
- Patterson-Moe, Angel – Red Eye Rides
- Piersee, Astrea – Kenai Senior Center
- Piltz, Beth – BUMPS, Ninilchik Traditional Council
- Pree, Jon – State of Alaska Department of Corrections, Wildwood Correctional Center
- Rangel, Levi – Red Eye Rides
- Reid, Brian – Alaska Bus Company
- Reinhart, Lisa – Alaska Mobility Coalition
- Rohr, Leslie – Love INC
- Romain, Kathy – City of Kenai / Kenai Senior Center
- Schaefer, Jill – Office of the Governor
- Schultz, Jessica – Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc.
- Shaw, Casey – State of Alaska Department of Corrections – Reentry
- Sison, Natasha – Kenai Peninsula College
- Smith, Cheri – The LeeShore Center
- Struffert, Abby, Southcentral Alliance for Family Resilience, 100% Alaska
- Stuart, Jodi – Kenai Adult Probation
- Taylor, Eric – State of Alaska Department of Transportation
- Vines, Leslie – State of Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Alaska Workforce Investment Board
- Wiste, Gina – BUMPS, Ninilchik Traditional Council

PROGRAM

10:00 AM: Welcome Comments

Denali Daniels welcomed participants and invited Kenai Peninsula Borough Mayor Peter Micciche to provide opening comments.



10:30 AM: Introductions & Accomplishments

Participants were given instructions to introduce themselves to their tables and choose a scribe/speaker to introduce their table to the room. While the groups were introducing themselves, they also shared accomplishments which were recorded on a flip chart. The following accomplishments were shared by each group:

Group One: Dana Cannava, Wyatt Medcoff, Levi Rangel, Natalie Norris, Angel Patterson-Moe, and Tim Navarre.

Accomplishments

- Kenai Peninsula Borough Working Group
- “We Move People”
- Anchorage – Seward
- 7 days a week 3x a day
- 907-769-1818 RT - \$175
- April 28th 2 year anniversary

Group Two: Renee Lipps, Abby Struffert, Alecia Gottlob, Julie Bunch, Chiara Ciapponi, and Kathy Romain.

Accomplishments

- 100% Alaska
- 100% Alaska, Levering Partners
- Strike Consortium
- Collaboration with Community Partners
- New to the community
- 5-day Transportation, Highest level of service in 52 years

Group Three:

- Beth Piltz, Gina Wiste, Jill Schaefer, Tanya Lautaret, Karen Martin-Tichenor, and Sasha Fallon.

Accomplishments

- Double ridership in the past year
- Seeking viable grants – 5311 judging (+)
- Bringing awareness to the Pen.
- Awareness, resources needed, sharing info from DC
- Continuing to push awareness + cooperative efforts to meet the Kenai’s transportation needs.
- Purchased transit van with Department of Transportation grant funding 5310
- Launched in-house transportation program

Group Four:

- Karin Marks, Julie Engebretsen, Tim Dillon, Leslie Rohr, Caitlin Coreson, and Cassidi Cameron.

Accomplishments

- BUMPS: Homer Communications Facebook Page
- Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District transportation planning EFFORTS – Regional Planning Organization Pilot Program
- Homer Transportation Study
- Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District Survey – Workforce Development Focus
- Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc. Transition
- Kenai Peninsula Borough Safety Action Plan
- Who is in this room! Participation, Engagement, Recognition of transportation as a key complement to social fabric
- GIS Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District – ARC Programs – Mapping Resources

Group Five:

- Jodi Stuart, Joyanna Geisler, Brad Parsons, Lilly Murray, Greg Meyer, Taylor Cochran, and Jessica Schultz.

Accomplishments

- Happy to see everyone.
- \$3.5M grant ADA, Hiring Brad! Work with city of homer.
- 30 stakeholder interviews, community needs assessment/needs identified homer/anchor point.
- Brochure for transit, comprehensive map (Bus ride)
- Going out monthly/weekly to meet folks as needed, increase in awareness to communities.
- Getting to know everyone, veterans grant \$75,000.
- Staffing – new drivers, on-time performance

- Going after new \$\$\$

Group Six:

- Lisa Parker, Kathy Gensel, Natasha Sison, Sheryl Cook, Jon Pree, Lisa Reinhart, and Lynnne Einerson.

Accomplishments

- Key Place for Destination
- City funding coming for Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc.
- Through Hospital connections get local group support to help
- ACC Collaboration
- 100% Alaska (10 Vital things needed)
- 16-24% caseload
- Barriers – Transportation use Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc. Gas Cards ACC - ?'s being asked beyond ride.
- SR 55+ Reentry
- Use Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc. & Cabs & \$\$
- Need Transit – Distance – Challenges
- Various APPTS – Need
- Now Here!
- Transportation needs for clients
- Assist

Online Group:

- Tyler Carbone, Amanda McKinley, Kevin Lyon, Kathryn Kimberlin, Casey Shaw, Cheri Smith, Samantha Bouasri, Leslie Vines, Astrea Piersee, Sara Bieber, Nicole McTrusty, Brian Reid, Eric Taylor, and Susan Hunter.

Accomplishments

- Kenai Senior Center is providing transportation to people 60+ and caregivers 9:15 to 3:30PM M-F
- Department of Labor supporting youth with cost of bus passes, gas, etc. for employment and training
- Alaska Bus purchased 3 new 23 passenger buses last week.

11:00 AM: Guest Speakers

- Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District (KPEDD) – Cassidi Cameron,
- City of Homer – Julie Engebretsen
- Red Eye Rides – Angel Patterson-Moe and Natalie Norris

- Alaska Cab – Taylor Cochran
- Alaska Bus Company – Brian Reid
- Peninsula Independent Living Center – Joyanna Geisler
- Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc. – Jessica Schultz
- Alaska Mobility Coalition – Lisa Reinhart
- 100% Community – Abby Struffert



To watch a recording of these presentations, or to view the slides provided by the presenters, please click [HERE](#).

12:00 PM: Lunch & Workshop Questions

During lunch, facilitators shared the following workshop questions for groups:

- What are the gaps for future discussion?
- What Ideas do we have for solutions?
- Next Steps!

The table below represents what was shared. As is often the case in planning discussions, there tends to be a large overlap when discussing gaps and solutions. At the conclusion of the workshop participants were asked to prioritize their top three priorities.

GAPS, SOLUTIONS, & NEXT STEPS

Group One

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Getting info to community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ FB ○ Newspaper ○ Internet ○ Apps ● Park N Ride (1) ● Something Like “Anchor Rides” ● Money (3) ● Get all players to the table. (2) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bus Stops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Food Bank ○ Job services ○ Stores ○ Love Inc. ○ Airport ○ Hospital ○ Senior Centers |
|---|--|

Group Two

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of action (1) ● Amount of duplication ● Location, Location, Location (1) ● Southern VS Central VS Eastern ● DOT Reporting ● Low-income VS Disability VS Other funding ● Medicaid rules/difficulties in getting \$\$ ● Drug testing costs/processes. ● Training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coordinator for each community (5) ● Connect key people ● Let transit systems do the work ● Address Medicaid payment issues ● Create smaller groups to focus on unique issues. ● Door to Door services replicated. (11) ● Subsidized transit/improve access to \$\$ (1) |
|---|--|

Group Three

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Door to fix routes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Last mile rural transportation to services ○ Connecting riders to resource providers ○ Reliability for pick up/drop off times (3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workforce related | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaboration partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complement services ● Identify \$\$ ● Continuous Communication ● Information sharing ● Collaboration |
|---|--|

Group Four

- Cost (rider)
- Full route coverage **(4)**
- Individual needs for individuals
- Knowing resources (transportation) to collaborate + Coordinate complete rides.
- Funding **(6)**
- Finding a coordinator that can sift through the needs. **(11)**
- Hubs **(1)**
- Dedicated stops/routes
- Complete coverage of the main roads/highway
- Central info system



Group Five

- Homer to Seward Route
- Seward public transportation
- Affordable transit for employment
 - Minimum wage **(2)**
 - Teen workers
 - Seniors
- School activity busses
 - workforce issues
- CDL drivers – workforce
 - Can't compete wage wise
 - What are requirements?
- Class B W/passenger endorsement
- Collaboration – partnerships **(11)**
 - “No Wrong Door”

Group Six

- Affordable transportation – public year round **(7)**
- Centralized access **(2)**
- Coordinator - transportation **(5)**
- Where is Kenaitze?
- Is there an agency among us who could act as a clearing house?
- Online resources (user-friendly) navigation
- App for transportation
- Human services strategic plan **(3)**

1:45 PM: Sticker Activity: Priorities & Next Steps

GAPS, SOLUTIONS AND NEXT STEPS	VOTES
Door to Door services replicated	11
Collaboration – partnerships	11
Finding a coordinator that can sift through the needs	11
Affordable transportation	7
Funding	6
Alaska Cab Dispatch system (centralized)	6
Coordinator - transportation	5
Coordinator/coordinator for each community	5
Full route coverage	4
Money	3
Reliability for pick up/drop off times	3
Pass – Peninsula pass	3
Human services strategic plan	3
Get all players to the table	2
Affordable transit for employment	2
Centralized access	2
Coordination amongst service providers	2
Collaborative Media Campaign	2
Park N Ride	1
Lack of action	1
Location, Location, Location	1
Subsidized transit/improve access to \$\$	1
Utilize resource/organizations for information dissemination	1
Hubs	1

As with the 2023 event, the 2024 voting activity came with a lot of excitement. In conclusion, there were gaps, solutions, and next steps that overlapped. These are color coded above and in summary, include:

- | |
|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Door to door services replicated |
| 2. The need for a coordinator |
| 3. Funding |

The work during this session recognized that much has been accomplished since 2023, and many of the same priorities continue to be important to key players. There was an interest in scheduling follow up discussions about how to take action on this work in the short term.

Participants were eager to continue the conversation and set intentions to follow up with a transportation planning group that would work toward addressing gaps through identified solutions.