



2024 Transit Plans Update

Fairbanks North Star Borough

DRAFT Coordinated Human Services Plan

Prepared for:



FAST Planning

Prepared by:



R&M Consultants, Inc.

IN COOPERATION WITH

Alta Planning + Design, Inc.

August 2024

Table of Contents

- 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1**
 - Purpose 1
 - Vision & Goals 1
 - Needs & Opportunities..... 2
 - Recommendations & Strategies 2
 - Priority Need #1: Formalized Transportation Coordination..... 2*
 - Priority Need #2: Expanded Services and Coverage..... 2*
 - Priority Need #3: Workforce Development, Recruitment & Retention 2*
 - Priority Need #4: Education and Awareness 3*
 - Priority Need #5: Year-Round Walkability 3*
 - Priority Need #6: Respond to Pending Changes in Demographics and Transportation Patterns and Needs 3*
 - Priority Need #7 Data Collection & Management 3*
 - Implementation Leaders 3
- 2. Introduction & Background 4**
 - Why A Coordinated Plan?..... 4
 - Who Does This Plan Serve? 4
 - Transit Modes Included in This Coordinated Plan 5
 - What Modes of Transportation Are Included in Other Coordinated Plans?..... 5
 - How Does This Coordinated Plan Fit into The Federal, State, And Regional Context?..... 5
- 3. Stakeholder & Public Engagement 6**
 - Project Management Team..... 6
 - Stakeholder Steering Committee..... 6
 - Membership 6*
 - Meeting Schedule..... 7*
 - Public Workshops 7
 - Workshop #1..... 7*
 - Workshop #2 (in progress) 8*
 - Transit Rider & Staff Surveys 9
 - On-Board and Online Rider Surveys 9*
 - Staff Surveys 9*
 - Other Outreach 10
 - Fast Planning Committees Review & Adoption Process..... 10
 - FAST Committees 10*
 - FAST Committee/Board Review and Adoption Schedule..... 11*
 - Transportation & Human Service Provider Engagement..... 11
 - Data Requests & Interviews..... 11*



4. Review of Existing Plans, Studies, and Reports 13

- State of Alaska* 13
- Fairbanks North Star Borough* 13
- Fast Planning* 13
- City of Fairbanks* 13
- City of North Pole* 13
- Eielson Air Force Base* 13
- Fort Wainwright* 13

5. Existing Conditions 14

- Community characteristics 14
 - Fairbanks North Star Borough Regional Overview* 14
 - Demographic Overview* 15
 - Households & Employment* 16
- Current Transportation Resources & Services 17
 - Human Services Transportation* 17
 - FNSB MACS Transit Fixed Route System* 17
 - FNSB Van Tran Demand-Response Paratransit Service* 19
 - Other Service Providers* 22
- Service Assessments 22
 - Demand & Equity* 22
 - Connectivity* 34

6. Transportation Needs & Gaps 41

- Need 1: Formalized Transportation Coordination 41
- Need 2: Expanded Services And Coverage 41
 - Coverage* 41
 - Schedule* 42
 - Service Types and Eligibility* 42
- Need 3: Workforce Development, Recruitment & Retention 42
 - Capacity* 42
- Need 4: Education & Awareness 43
 - Education and training for new riders* 43
 - Education & Training for Community* 43
- Need 5: Year-Round Walkability 43
 - Winter Maintenance* 43
- Need 6: Respond To Changing Demographics and Transportation Patterns and Needs 43
 - Growing Senior population* 43
- Need 7: Data Collection & Management 44
 - Redundant efforts* 44



7. Vision, Goals & Objectives.....45

Vision Statement45

Goals and Objectives45

Goal 1: Expand Communication, Education, and Awareness..... 45

Goal 2: Strengthen provider resources and ensure consistent and reliable funding for services and programs. 45

Goal 3: Collect data consistently and coordinate information sharing to enhance transit equity and service delivery. 45

Goal 4: Expand service availability through ongoing coordination, collaboration, and partnerships..... 46

Goal 5: Plan and coordinate safe, affordable, and accessible services for Borough residents. 46

8. Recommendations & Implementation Strategies for Coordinated Transportation47

Strategies for the 2023 Coordinated Plan..... 47

Priority Need #1: Formalized Transportation Coordination 47

Priority Need #2: Expanded Services and Coverage 49

Priority Need #3: Workforce Development, Recruitment & Retention50

Priority Need #4: Education and Awareness.....50

Priority Need #5: Year-Round Walkability.....51

Priority Need #6: Respond to Pending Changes in Demographics and Transportation Patterns and Needs51

Priority Need #7 Data Collection & Management.....52

Prioritized Strategies and Plan Implementation53

Potential Funding Sources for Implementation.....59

Accelerating Innovative Mobility (AIM)59

Capital Investment Grants (CIG) – 530960

Enhancing Mobility Innovation.....60

Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Program.....61

Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility Grants (ICAM)62

Integrated Mobility Innovation (IMI).....62

Metropolitan & Statewide Planning and Non-Metropolitan Transportation Planning - 5303, 5304, 5305..... 63

Capital Investment Grants (CIG)..... 63

Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities 64

Formula Grants for Rural Areas (5311).....64

9. Looking Ahead & Conclusions65

Annual Reporting on The Coordinated Plan69

Lead Agencies for Implementation69

10. Appendices69



1. Executive Summary

Purpose

The Fairbanks Area Surface Transportation (FAST) Planning partnered with the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) to update the 2013 Short- and Long-Term Transit Plan for the Metropolitan Area Commuter System (MACS) and update the 2015 Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (CHSTP) to improve transit and coordination between providers in the Borough. **This document consists only the 2024 Coordinated Humans Services Transportation Plan. The 2024 Transit Plan is available as a separate document.**

Each of these plans impacts the other. They were updated at the same time for more efficient and effective public engagement, to use the most current transportation data, and to develop transit plans that are informed by rider and provider needs in the FNSB.

Updating these plans fulfills federal requirements for the FNSB to receive the grant funding necessary to provide transit service. It is also an essential step in continuing to provide transit services that meet the needs of the FNSB.

Vision & Goals

The vision and goals for the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan shape the plan’s recommendations and were developed in coordination with MACS Transit, FAST Planning, and the project’s Steering Committee.

Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan Update Vision and Goals

VISION "Any member of the community, from most to least advantaged, including elderly and people with disabilities, whose mobility needs are not met through their own means or MACS fixed-route services, is connected to the community through a range of transportation options to elevate their independence, freedom and opportunities for a cohesive and enriching public life."



GOALS

- 1** Expand Communication, Education, and Awareness
- 2** Strengthen provider resources and ensure consistent and reliable funding for services and programs
- 4** Expand service availability through ongoing Coordination, Collaboration, and Partnerships
- 3** Collect data consistently and coordinate information sharing to enhance transit equity and service delivery
- 5** Plan and Coordinate safe, affordable and accessible services for Borough Residents



Needs & Opportunities

After analyzing existing conditions, receiving feedback from stakeholders and the community, and interviewing dozens of human service transportation providers, the project team identified a range of high-priority transportation needs, service gaps, and redundancies that could be addressed with better coordination among providers and partners.

Need 1: Formalized Transportation Coordination

Need 2: Expanded Services and Coverage

Need 3: Workforce Development, Recruitment & Retention

Need 4: Education & Awareness

Need 5: Year-Round Walkability

Need 6: Respond to Changing Demographics and Transportation Patterns and Needs

Need 7: Data Collection & Management

Recommendations & Strategies

The following are recommendations that FAST Planning, MACS Transit human services transportation providers, and partner agencies can pursue to address the needs and goals identified above.

Please see the Chapter 8 of the full Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan document for a table of implementation strategies that includes priorities, provider roles, and expected timeframes for implementation.

Priority Need #1: Formalized Transportation Coordination

Strategy A. Establish a Borough-wide Mobility Coordination Committee (MCC)

Strategy B. Establish Borough-wide Mobility Management Program: Fairbanks Area Mobility Management (FAMM)

Strategy C. Formalize partnerships to leverage funding opportunities

Priority Need #2: Expanded Services and Coverage

Strategy A. Grow and expand a coordinated Volunteer Driver Network.

Strategy B. Investigate and evaluate partnerships and models to increase connections between rural areas and the transit network.

Strategy C. Increase partnerships with Transportation Network Companies (TNC) like Uber and Lyft to provide first- and last-mile coverage and connections to the transit system.

Priority Need #3: Workforce Development, Recruitment & Retention

Strategy A. Partner across organizations and agencies for a cohesive, cooperative, coordinated outreach campaign to recruit drivers and personal care service staff.

Strategy B. Share driver training resources.



Strategy C. Partner with UAF to grow educational/vocational programs to grow workforce necessary to take care of aging population.

Priority Need #4: Education and Awareness

Strategy A. Establish a formal marketing campaign to educate about transportation resources and encourage use of public transportation.

Strategy B. Design and develop a Travel Training and Outreach Program.

Priority Need #5: Year-Round Walkability

Strategy A. Improve transit accessibility at the corridor level.

Strategy B. Incorporate access to human services providers as a criteria for prioritizing pedestrian access projects.

Priority Need #6: Respond to Pending Changes in Demographics and Transportation Patterns and Needs

Strategy A. Ensure the transportation needs of seniors, disabled, and low-income community members are considered in ongoing, relevant planning processes.

Strategy B. Support current investment in transit system with appropriate land use and development planning.

Strategy C. Complete needed community planning processes and highlight the role of transportation in community development.

Priority Need #7 Data Collection & Management

Strategy A. Establish a Data Collection and Management Plan.

Strategy B. Collect information about need.

Strategy C. Collect information about available resources.

Strategy D. Collect evaluative information about perceptions/satisfaction

Implementation Leaders

Lead agencies may evolve over time. To build momentum and achieve consistency, established organizations may be best equipped to lead coordination efforts after this plan is adopted. Pending their acceptance of a leadership role, suggested organizations to tackle the top three short-term actions include:

1. Establish a Borough-Wide Mobility Coordination Committee
 - *Lead: Fairbanks Resource Agency*
 - *Support: FAST Planning, FNSB Transportation and Community Planning*
2. Coordinated Outreach Campaign to Recruit Drivers and Personal Care Service Staff
 - *Lead: FNSB*
 - *Support: FAST Planning, Fairbanks Resource Agency*
3. Establish a Data Collection Management Plan
 - *Lead: FAST Planning*
 - *Support FNSB and Fairbanks Resource Agency*