

2024

FAIRBANKS COORDINATED HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN



Prepared for
FAST PLANNING

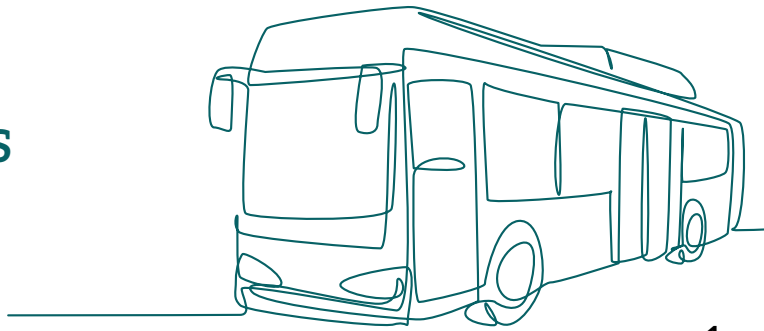
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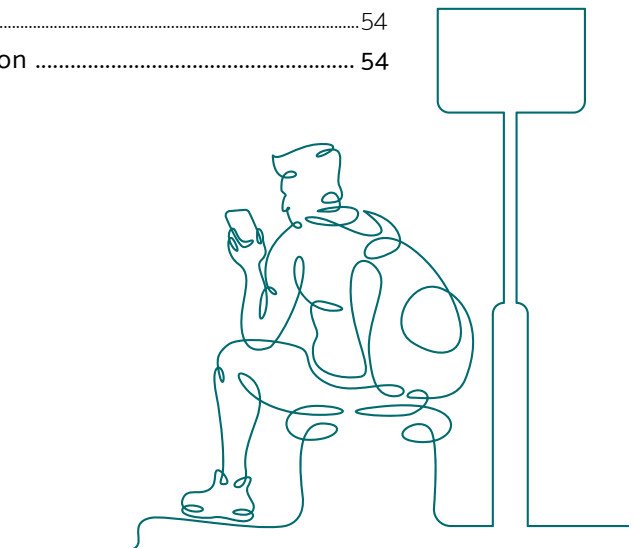
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GLOSSARY

Accessibility: Often used to refer to how accessible something is for people with disabilities, in this document it is also used to discuss how easily “accessible” (or physically navigable) a bus stop or roadway is for people on foot or bike.

Active Transportation: Bicycle or pedestrian travel, or other primarily human-powered means of transportation.

Adjusted Connectivity Ratio: How well-connected a bus stop is to surrounding streets that considers (or is “adjusted” by) the Level of Traffic Stress (LTS).

Bidirectional Service: Public transportation service provided in both directions on a route, rather than in only one direction.

Demand Response: Unlike fixed route service, “demand response” public transportation service picks up riders from and drops off riders at specific requested locations at specific times.

Environmental Justice: The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of income, race,

color, national origin, Tribal affiliation, or disability, in public transportation decisions.

Fixed Route Service: Public transportation service operating on fixed routes with predetermined schedules.

Frequency: See “Headways.”

General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS): A standard data format that public transportation agencies use to distribute route, stop, and timetable information to third-party users. For example, Google Maps uses GTFS to provide public transportation directions.

Headways: The time between vehicles moving in the same direction on a particular route, measured in minutes. Or in other words, the amount of time between buses.

Interlining: A fixed route public transportation scheduling practice that involves a transit vehicle from one route continuing on to serve a different route after arriving at the terminus of the first route.

Level of Traffic Stress (LTS): A measure of how comfortable

it is for bicyclists or pedestrians to travel along a roadway, usually measured on a 1 to 4 scale.

Paratransit: See Demand Response.

Productivity: How well-used or “busy” a public transportation route is, as measured by the average annual unlinked trips divided by average annual revenue service hours. This gives an indication of how productive a route is, as measured by how many riders use the route per revenue service hour on average.

Radial Network: A public transportation system that prioritizes one-seat rides (i.e., rides not requiring a transfer). This type of network is often accompanied by circuitous routes that cover more area but result in more out of direction travel and longer headways.

Revenue Service Hours: The number of hours that a public transportation vehicle is available for “revenue service,” or when the vehicle can be boarded by fare-paying passengers.

Ridership: The number of riders that board public transportation vehicles within a specified time. This can be considered at multiple levels, such as systemwide, on routes, or at individual stops.

Route Deviation: Out-of-direction travel that a public transportation vehicle undertakes to serve specific neighborhoods or locations.

Service Coverage: The amount of area that a public transportation network reaches (or “covers”) with its fixed route system.

Service Quality: A subjective measure that refers to the “amount” of transit service provided when considering service span and headways (or service frequency).

Service Span: The amount of time or hours during the day a public transportation route or system is in operation.

Timepoints: Important stops with scheduled arrival and departure times that help public transportation vehicle operators stay on schedule.

Timetable: A public transportation schedule that shows service times. These are often organized by “timepoints,” or important stops with scheduled arrival and departure times that help public transportation vehicle operators stay on schedule.

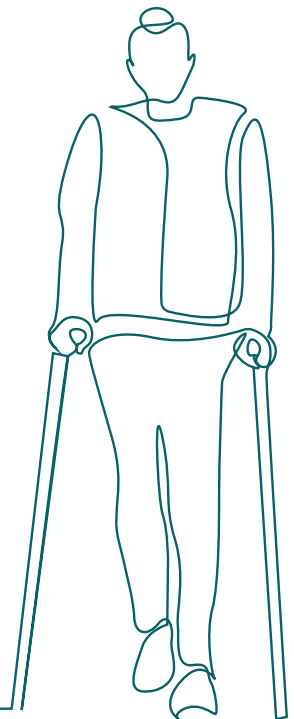
Title VI: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects people from discrimination based on race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance, including public transportation services.

Transit Corridor: A roadway that at least one fixed route public transportation service operates on.

Unadjusted Connectivity Ratio: How well-connected a bus stop is to surrounding streets without regard to the Level of Traffic Stress (LTS).

Unlinked Trips: A standard Federal Transit Administration (FTA) measure that counts the total number of trips (boardings) without considering transfers. For example, someone who boarded a bus and then transferred to another bus to complete their journey would count as two unlinked trips.

Winter Maintenance: The clearance of snow and ice from roads, bus stops, sidewalks, and other transportation infrastructure.





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 of the 2024 Coordinated Human 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 and partners to receive grant funding for transit and coordinated transportation services. It is also an essential step in coordinating efforts to be more efficient and effective.

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.

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-rout 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
3. Collect data consistently and coordinate information sharing to enhance transit equity and service delivery
4. Expand service availability through ongoing Coordination, Collaboration, and Partnerships
5. Plan and Coordinate safe, affordable and accessible services for Borough Residents



Needs And 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 and Strategies

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

These Transit Plan recommendations are categorized as either “constrained” or “unconstrained.” For the “constrained” scenario, the constraining factor is continued operator and administrative staffing limitations at MACS Transit and Van Tran. In the “unconstrained” scenario, improved staffing and resource levels are assumed.

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



2. Introduction and Background

The Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB), Fairbanks Area Surface Transportation (FAST) Planning, and the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) partnered to update the Fairbanks area 2013 Short- and Long-Range Transit Plan and 2015 Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (CHSTP) concurrently. The objective of combining the two plans under a single effort was to increase coordination among transportation providers, develop recommendations in an environment of greater understanding of community needs and available resources, and create efficiencies through the consolidation of certain tasks.

The 2024 Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (this document) creates a systematic approach for the community to collaborate and communicate across human service organizations and transportation providers, with the purpose of improving access, efficiency, and effectiveness of community transportation systems to meet the needs of persons with disabilities or mobility challenges, older adults and low-income households.

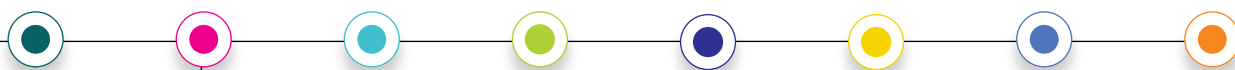
The plan process was guided by a project management team of agency planners and representatives and planning consultants, a steering committee of transportation and human services providers, FAST Planning advisory committees and Policy Board, and feedback from the public including transit riders. Staff representatives from the FNSB Transportation Department, who operates the Metropolitan Area Commuter System (MACS) Transit fixed-route bus service and Van Tran paratransit demand-response service (for eligible riders with qualifying needs and disabilities) were consulted at every major milestone.

The plan process included:

1. Developing a shared vision and set of goals for local transportation services;
2. Assessing the status of the Fairbanks community and available transportation services with respect to those goals;
3. Analyzing the top needs and opportunities for improving access to transportation by means of better coordination; and
4. Recommending strategies for the FNS, other transportation providers and partners to implement to improve coordination and maximize local and federal investments in transit, transportation, and human services.

Findings from each of these efforts are included in this plan and its appendices.

This chapter explains why this plan is important, who it serves, and sets the stage for later chapters.



Why A Coordinated Plan?

The hallmark of a livable community is how well it provides for its residents, regardless of socio-economic status and mobility needs. Access to transportation is a critical benchmark for livability, and the public transit and paratransit (transit for persons whose disabilities prevent them from using the regular bus system) investments are essential ingredients.

However, the efficiencies of a fixed-route transit system are partly due to its limited nature; transit risks losing efficiency and effectiveness if it expands its coverage and services too far. For this and other reasons, there will be many who still require additional or different transportation services, such as different schedules, assistance getting on and off the bus, and access from more distant or rural areas. Coordination among the many providers within a community's transportation ecosystem is key to filling gaps in the transit system, supporting economic and population growth, and providing access to jobs, schools, parks, and essential human services.

The CHSTP will identify goals and strategies to increase coordination, decrease duplication, address gaps in service, and provide better transportation options for our community. The outcome will be

better access to basic needs like healthcare, jobs, and food for those who cannot drive or choose not to do so.

The CHSTP is also required for projects to receive federal funding under the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility for Individual and Individuals with Disabilities Program or Alaska Mental Health Trust funds through the AKDOT&PF Community Transit office.

Transportation projects selected for 5310 funding or funded through the Alaska Mental Health Trust (AMHT) must be derived from a coordinated public transit or coordinated human services transportation plan.

Coordinated plans are required to have specific elements to meet FTA requirements. The State does not approve a community's CHSTP, it only certifies to FTA that all required elements are in the plan.

Coordinated plans must be locally developed, with demonstrated public participation by seniors, individuals with disabilities, representatives of the public, private, non-profit, and human services transportation providers, and other members of the public. CHSTP must be updated every five years.



Figure 1: Bus Stop



Who Does This Plan Serve?

The primary focus of the FAST Planning CHSTP is to improve transportation options and access to services for the following target population groups:

- ★ Older Adults (aged 65 and older)
- ★ Indigenous persons
- ★ Youth (ages 10-17)
- ★ Veterans
- ★ Individuals who are:
 - Living with disabilities
 - Living in poverty
 - Limited English proficiency

Historically, these population groups have higher rates of transit dependency and lower access to personal vehicles and are therefore the populations targeted for transit funding by the FTA. Additionally, households without personal vehicles and unhoused individuals struggle with limited access to transportation and may have limited means to pay for transit. Without access to transit these persons rely on rides from family and friends. These conditions make mobility a challenge, especially



Figure 2: Van Tran vehicles

in areas without access to public transit services and in rural areas. When transit services are designed to provide access to government services, employment and food these individuals experience significant benefits. Projects funded through this federal program as well as Alaska Mental Health Trust (AMHT) are required to be derived from a locally developed, coordinated plan.





3. Stakeholder & Public Engagement

Public engagement and participation in both the Transit Plan update and CHSTP update occurred simultaneously, and shared a project management team, steering committee, public outreach efforts, workshops, and adoption process.

Project Management Team

The project management team consisted of FAST Planning staff, planning consultants, and focused engagement from FNSB Transportation and Community Planning Departments staff. As FAST Planning and the FNSB Transportation Department

are responsible for much of the implementation of transit planning recommendations, including operation of the MACS Transit and Van Tran paratransit services, their frequent and intense engagement and review of planning milestones was critical.

Stakeholder Steering Committee

Membership

Stakeholders for the plan include those organizations whose constituents rely on public transportation or transportation assistance as well as those who provide transportation or help people access transportation resources.

The project management team identified public transit service providers, human health service entities who also provide transportation assistance to their clients, and private transportation services as stakeholders and potential Steering Committee members.

Leaders of non-profit advocacy groups and human service providers were chosen to represent the

needs of target populations in need of transit and transportation support: those experiencing low-income, disabilities, people on public assistance who need to work, senior citizens, and beneficiaries of the Alaska Mental Health Trust who are the mentally ill, sufferers of chronic alcoholism and mental illness, people afflicted with Alzheimer's or other dementias, and those who are developmentally disabled have also been identified as stakeholders.

A Stakeholder Contact List was continually updated throughout the entire planning process as providers and constituents and their roles in the transportation and human services community were discovered by or introduced to the project team.



Those contacts who were willing and able to commit to participating in a more intensive role as a Steering Committee member are listed in Table 1.

Meeting Schedule

Steering committee members were instrumental in the generation and review of planning milestones such as the vision and goals for the transit system, needs and gaps in the system, and recommendations and plan implementation strategies.

Public Workshops

Public Workshops were conducted to reach the broader public and generate ideas and feedback for the planning effort.

Table 2: Meeting Schedule

Date	Meeting Topic
9/19/2023	Discovery & Foundations: Get to know committee members and planning team, introduce the project, and identify issues and opportunities for transportation providers and transit riders.
10/17/2023	Foundations part 2: Plan Vision, Goals and Objectives workshopping to establish foundational elements that will inform the rest of the plan update and process.
3/7/2024	Analyze needs and identify action alternatives to address them.
9/5/2024	Review Draft Plans, Recommendations & Strategies.

Table 1: Steering Committee Members

Name	Organization	Role/Position	Representing
Michelle Denton	FNSB Transportation Department	Director	MACS Transit and Van-Tran
Dey Johnson	FNSB Transportation Department	Transportation Manager	MACS Transit and Van-Tran
Darlene Supplee	North Star Council on Aging (Fairbanks Senior Center)	Executive Director	Senior Citizens and Senior Services Providers
Emily Ennis	Fairbanks Resource Agency (FRA)	Executive Director	Persons with Disabilities
Bear Edison	University of Alaska Fairbanks	Campus Operations Manager	University Students
Ryan Hinton	FNSB School District	Transportation Manager	K-12 Students
Angi Thomas	Fairbanks Native Association	Family Wellness Coordinator	Fairbanks Area Native Alaskan Families
Carol Anthony	Foundation Health Partners	Community Partnerships Manager	Healthcare Providers and Recipients
Denise Daniello	FNSB Senior Citizens Commission	Chair	Senior Citizens
Michelle Leonard	FNSB Parks & Recreation	Recreation Specialist?	Senior and Adaptive Recreation Programs
Lt. Mark Richardson	US Army Garrison Ft. Wainwright	Installation Transportation Officer	Fort Wainwright soldiers and families
Lisa Slaba	Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation	Project Manager, Military Affairs	Service men & women and their families



Workshop #1

The first public workshop was hosted on Tuesday, October 17th, 2023 at the Pioneer Park Centennial Center Exhibition Hall from 5:00pm-7:00pm. The purpose of the workshop was:

1. Present and get feedback on the draft vision and goals for the transit system and for coordinated human services transportation.
2. Provide an opportunity for the community to share their transit-related needs and wishes.
3. Field questions about the planning process, local transit and paratransit systems and other transportation options.

Several interactive stations were available for attendees to read about the plan process, evaluate current routes, describe their transit and transportation patterns, provide ideas for how to improve the system, and enjoy a slice of free pizza. Attendees could also tour an off-duty MACS transit bus in the parking lot. A total of 30 attended this workshop.

Workshop #2 (in progress)

The second public workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, September 18th, 2024 at the Noel Wein Library Auditorium from 5:30pm-7:30pm. The purpose of this workshop will be to:



Figure 3: Workshop #1

1. Present and get feedback on the draft Transit Plan update and the draft Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan update.
2. Provide additional opportunity for the community to share their transit-related needs and wishes and respond to planning recommendations.
3. Field questions about the planning process, local transit and paratransit systems and other transportation options.

This section will be updated upon completion of the second public workshop.

Transit Rider & Staff Surveys

On-Board and Online Rider Surveys

FAST Planning and R&M Consultants conducted a Rider Survey for riders of the Metropolitan Area Commuter Systems (MACS) Transit. The survey was distributed in person while riding on bus routes and online through self-selective sampling. The purpose of the survey was to:

- ★ Understand ridership behaviors, preferences and desired improvements;
- ★ Supplement data analysis; and
- ★ Guide improvements to the MACS System.

The full rider survey report can be found in Appendix D.



Rider Surveys Executive Summary

A total of 255 people responded to the survey about riding transit, including 63 (25%) who never ride transit. The analysis benefited from revealing differences between those who use local transit and those who do not.

Overall riders are positive about their experience using the local bus system, with one criticism: lack of service on certain days and times, primarily weekends.

Non-riders were supportive of providing transit service, but less positive about using it. Many felt the bus is not convenient or close enough to access, desiring broader coverage to residential areas outside the current system.

Respondents had many opportunities to make recommendations and suggest improvements throughout the survey. The preferred means of improving current service include upgrading technologies (including cashless or mobile payment options and better or more accurate real-time bus location tracking) and maintaining and improving bus stops to be safer and more accessible.

If resources are available to expand service and increase ridership, riders and potential riders prefer adding Saturday service to Blue and Red lines and expanding service in outlying areas of Goldstream Valley, Chena Ridge and Chena Pump Road, North Pole, Fort Wainwright and the airport.

Recommendations for further research include specific outreach to paratransit users, specific outreach to military communities at Fort Wainwright and Eielson Air Force Base, and investigating potential demand for transit to and from the areas of West Fairbanks/Chena Pump, the Goldstream Valley, and throughout North Pole.

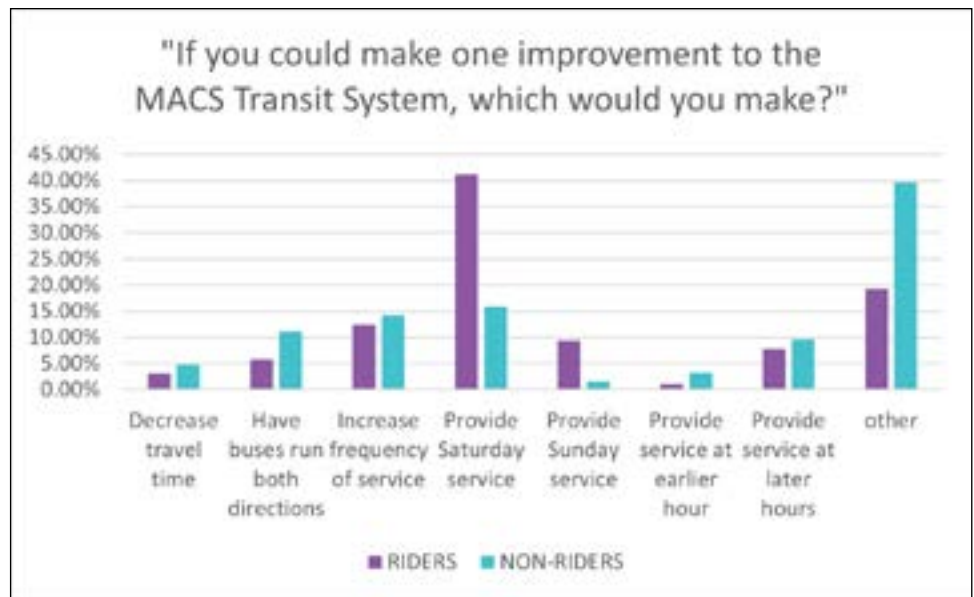


Figure 4: Suggested Improvements

Staff Surveys

FAST Planning and R&M Consultants conducted a Staff Survey for drivers, dispatchers, and supervisors, and an interview with maintenance employees serving Metropolitan Area Commuter Systems (MACS) Transit and Van-Tran systems. The purpose of the study was to understand the experiences, needs, and issues faced by staff on the front lines of operating and servicing Fairbanks's transit systems. The full staff survey report can be found in Appendix A: Public Involvement Record.

Staff Surveys Executive Summary

The planning team conducted two efforts to study staff needs and experiences. Seven (7) complete questionnaires from drivers, dispatchers, and supervisors and a group interview with ten (10) maintenance staff gave insight into the daily struggles of the people who keep Fairbanks transit systems moving. Issues identified and/or reinforced include:

- ★ Limited staff capacity for driving and maintenance.
- ★ The importance of recruitment and retention efforts.



★ The costs, inefficiency, and risk associated with keeping a vehicle fleet past its lifespan and of not having adequate space.

★ A shared concern among drivers about safety from unruly passengers and the need for training and support to manage that risk.

Other Outreach

The planning team also took advantage of opportunities to engage community groups in the planning process through presentations.

Table 3: Outreach Events

Date	Organization/Audience	Outcomes
Jan 12, 2024	Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce: Military Affairs Committee	Greater understanding of Military Service family transportation needs and available transportation on posts. Contacts for transportation providers on Fort Wainwright (Shuttle Service and Armed Forces YMCA).
Feb 8, 2024	FNSB Senior Citizens Advisory Commission	Engagement with senior citizen representatives.
Mar 8, 2024	Foundation Health Partners Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP): Senior & Elder Care Team	Introduced to the CHIP effort and stakeholders.

Fast Planning Committees Review & Adoption Process

FAST Committees

Policy Board

The FAST Planning Policy Board creates, reviews and approves plans and policies for the Fairbanks Metropolitan Planning Area. Guided by the Technical Committee and adopted plans, the Policy Board creates policy and plans to improve the community's quality of life while supporting economic progress and environmental protection. The Policy Board membership includes the mayors from the Borough, City of Fairbanks and City of North Pole, representation from the City Council and Borough Assembly, and state of Alaska DOT and DEC regional and division directors. The Policy Board is responsible for adopting the updated Transit Plan.

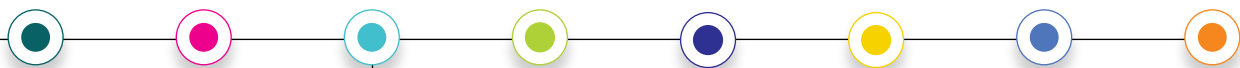
Technical Committee

The Technical Committee is a guiding body for FAST Planning. Made up of local technical experts at the city, state and borough levels, the Technical Committee reviews draft decisions being made for

the FAST Planning area before going to the Policy Board. The Technical Committee will review this Transit Plan update and provide recommendations to the Policy Board regarding its adoption.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

The FAST Planning Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) promotes active transportation in the Fairbanks Metropolitan Planning Area. The BPAC follows policies and plans as they are updated or created, advising the Technical Committee on project-specific opportunities, deficiencies, and future needs, as well as innovation, safety, and best practices for bicycle and pedestrian users. While the BPAC is not formally part of the adoption process, it was kept apprised of progress throughout the planning effort to solicit their advocacy and feedback.



FAST Committee/Board Review and Adoption Schedule

FAST Planning Committees were kept informed about the Transit Plan updates throughout the process and given the following opportunities to review and weigh in on recommendations:

Table 4: FAST Committee/Board Review and Adoption Schedule

Date	Committee/Board	Action
February 29, 2024	Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee	Presentation/No action.
March 6, 2024	Technical Committee	Presentation/No action.
March 27 2024	Policy Board	Vision Goals and Objectives
March 28, 2024	Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee	TPU Update Presentation/ No action.
July 25, 2024	Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee	TPU Update Presentation/ No action.
September 4, 2024	Technical Committee	Recommendation to release draft plan for 30-day public comment period.
September 18, 2024	Policy Board	Authorize release of plan for 30-day public comment period.
November 6, 2024	Technical Committee	Review Public Comment Response Summary and final plan draft. Recommendation to Policy Board to adopt plan.
November 20, 2024	Policy Board	Review Public Comment Response Summary and final plan draft. Adoption of Transit Plan Update.

Transportation & Human Service Provider Engagement

Data Requests & Interviews

To inventory and assess current existing transportation resources and services, a contact list of likely transportation providers was generated based on those in the 2015 CHSTP, knowledge within the planning team and steering committee, and internet research. A data request survey was emailed to more than a dozen suspected transportation providers to ask about their operations, types of service, available resources (vehicles, staff, facilities, etc.), service schedules, eligibilities, and more. Planners made follow up phone calls throughout

the winter to ensure the correct point of contact and solicit responses.

After only six surveys were completed (not including data from MACS and VanTran), planners continued phone calls and emails to find additional contacts and informally interview staff to try and understand what, if any, transportation assistance these organizations provide their clients. Follow up phone calls soliciting information revealed:

- ★ Some organizations are no longer in Fairbanks (e.g. LOVE, Inc) or no longer provide transportation (Boys and Girls Club, Fairbanks).



- ★ Information about transportation was hard to come by from staff: Many just did not know what transportation services their organization offered or who to contact to assist customers who need help accessing their services.
- ★ Employee turnover was common within the nearly 10 years since the last plan, increasing the challenge of contacting someone with institutional knowledge of past transportation services or familiarity with the concept of a Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan.
- ★ Some organizations wanted a centralized transportation coordinator or similar resource.
- ★ Many did not characterize themselves as a “transportation provider” and the survey sent to them did not feel applicable: They were providing transportation assistance via Medicaid, Medicare or other taxicab vouchers rather than actual rides.

To address this, a new Human Services Provider form was created and filled out by planners during phone interviews. This was more successful and resulted in interviews with or information from 28 different organizations that either directly provide transportation or help the customers access transportation in some other way.

Outcomes and insights from this effort are summarized in Chapters 4 and 5.

The Transportation Provider Data Request form and Human Services Provider Survey can be found in Appendix A Public Involvement Record.





4. Existing Conditions

Community characteristics, existing conditions of the transit and paratransit systems, and the transportation network collectively inform the level and types of transit and mobility needs in the greater Fairbanks community. This chapter covers highlights from the Existing Conditions report. The full report, which also includes a review of relevant existing plans, studies, and reports, can be read in Appendix B.

Community Characteristics

Fairbanks North Star Borough Regional Overview

The Fairbanks North Star Borough is in the interior region of Alaska. It was incorporated in January 1964 as a second-class borough. It encompasses 7,361 square miles. FNSB is the third most populated borough in Alaska, with 95,655 residents in 2020. Within the FNSB are the incorporated cities of Fairbanks and North Pole. The 2020 population of the City of Fairbanks was 32,515 and North Pole was 2,243. Approximately one-fifth of the FNSB's population consists of military personnel and their families posted at US Army Garrison Fort Wainwright and Eielson Airforce Base. Additionally, FNSB is home to the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), which employs approximately 3,000 full and part time faculty and staff and had 7,425 students in Fall 2022.

As a second-class borough, the FNSB does not have area-wide road powers. Road maintenance and street light maintenance are accomplished through service areas. The FNSB has a transportation department that is responsible for monitoring air

quality and operating a fixed route bus service (MACS Transit) and a paratransit demand response service for eligible riders (Van Tran). In 2002 the area surrounding Fairbanks and North Pole qualified as an Urbanized Area and the Fairbanks Metropolitan Planning Organization, originally named the Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System, was established in 2003. In 2018 the MPO transitioned to an independent non-profit organization, FAST Planning. FAST Planning is responsible for transportation planning within the urbanized area.

Demographic Overview

Understanding the demographics of Fairbanks will help shape transit services to effectively serve those most dependent on transit and expand ridership. The Alaska Department of Labor (DOL) notes that FNSB's population had declined about 1% per year since 2012, but in 2019 an influx of new military personnel and their families began to arrive. The Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development (DOL&WD) is forecasting a 4.6



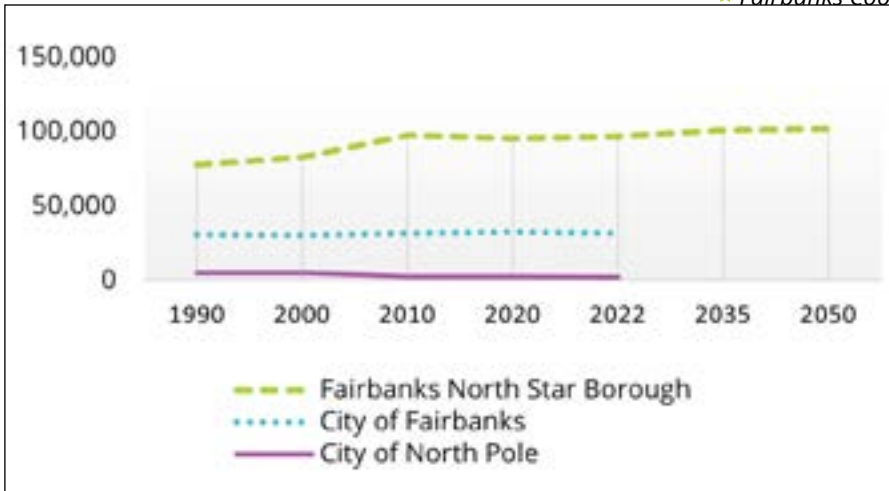


Figure 5: Population Trend

percent increase in population within the FNSB by 2050, compared with 4 percent statewide¹. The FNSB’s population is expected to grow to 101,136 by 2035, and to 102,013 by 2050. The FNSB is the only area in the interior region of Alaska projected to grow.

Fairbanks, on average, is a young community. In the City of North Pole nearly one third of the population is 18 years old or

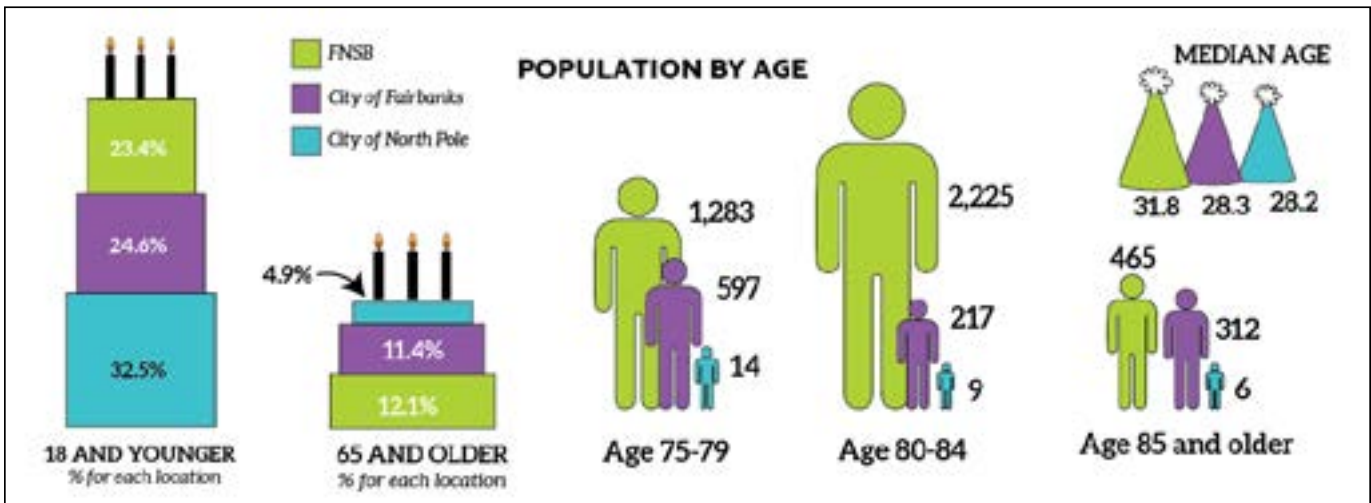


Figure 6: Population by Age

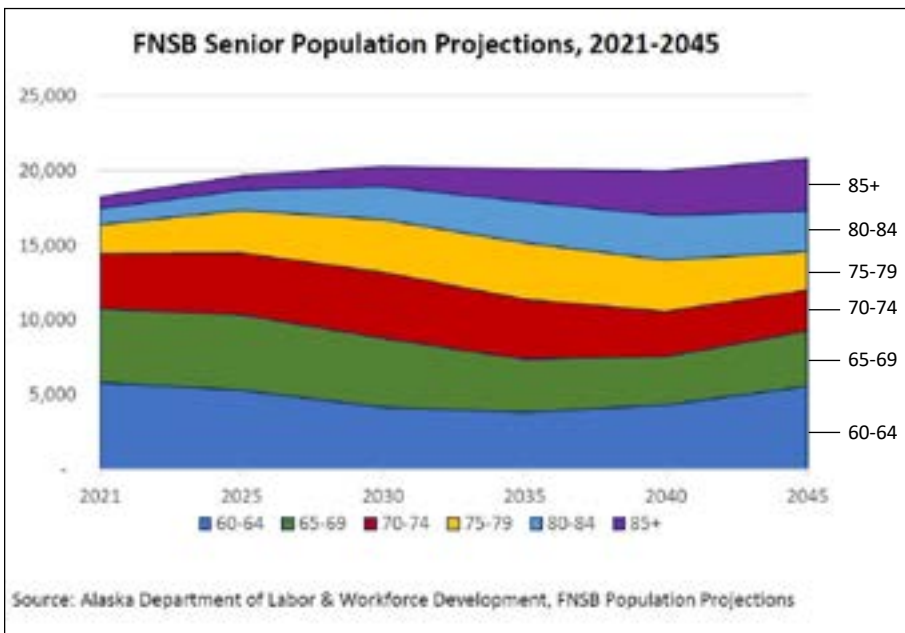


Figure 7: Senior Population Projections

younger. An aging population is a national trend, and it is reasonable to expect FNSB to experience an increase in residents aged 65 and older. According the 2023 North Star Borough Senior Needs Transportation Report and Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the population of senior citizens is expected to grow substantially over the next decades. The age distribution among seniors is also expected to become older, with

1 – ADOL&WD, Alaska Population Estimates, 2021, <https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/pop/index.cfm>



MEDIAN INCOME & POVERTY

	FNSB	City of Fairbanks	City of North Pole
POPULATION	95,655	32,515	2,610
MEDIAN INCOME	\$83,519	\$66,572	\$83,524
% POPULATION BELOW POVERTY LEVEL	7.9	9.1	5.3

Figure 8: Median income and poverty

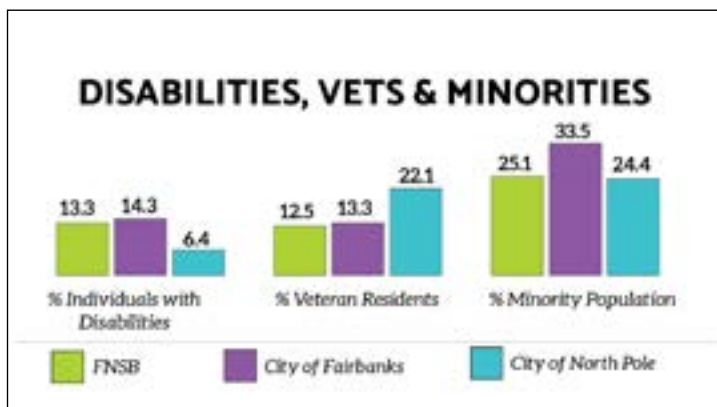


Figure 9: Disabilities, Vets and Minorities

the 80+ population expected to triple over the next 20-30 years (Figure 7). As people age, they may experience changes in vision, mobility, and health that prevent them from driving a personal vehicle.

The City of North Pole has a median income slightly higher than the FNSB’s median income. The City of Fairbanks has both a lower median income and higher percentage of those living below the poverty level.

Individuals with disabilities, veterans and minority populations typically make up a higher percentage of transit users. Additionally, persons whose disabilities make them unable to use MACS may apply to use Van Tran, the demand-response paratransit service.

Households & Employment

The median household size throughout the FNSB is slightly more than two and one half. The City of North Pole’s median household size is larger than both the City of Fairbanks and the FNSB. This is likely related to the greater number of residents aged 18 years and under. Households that are “rent burdened” or paying more than 30 percent of their income on rent are more likely to be reliant on public transit to travel to work, medical appointments, shopping, and errands. Nearly 25% of households are rent burdened.

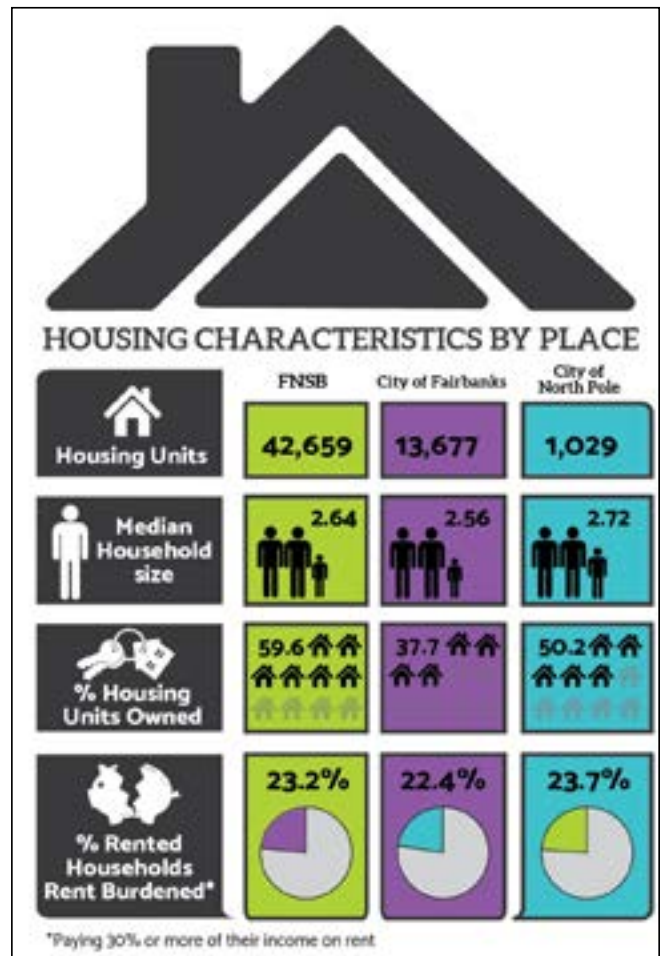


Figure 10: Housing Characteristics



Workers in the City of Fairbanks spend less time traveling to work than their neighbors. Fairbanks workers, on average spend less time traveling to work than the national average of almost 27 minutes. Additionally, most workers have access to a vehicle.

Most workers travel to work alone in a personal vehicle. Workers living in the City of Fairbanks are more likely to walk or bike to work compared to residents of other parts of the FNSB.

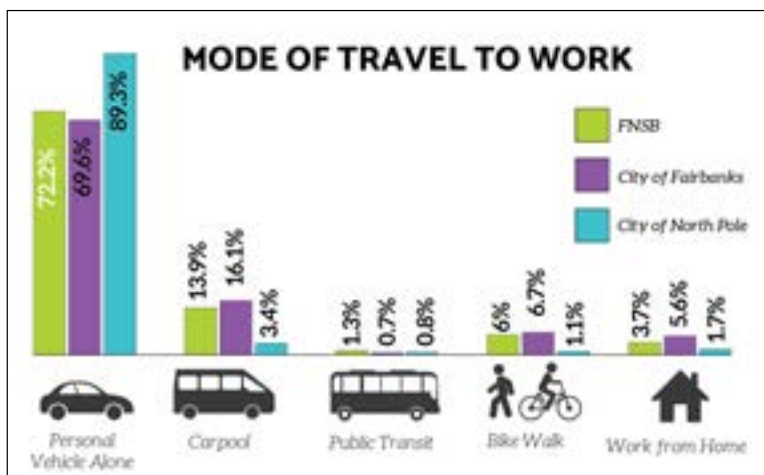


Figure 11: Mode of travel to work

Table 5: Employment & Travel to Work by Place

Location	% Employed	% Zero Vehicle Workers	Zero Vehicle Households	Average Travel Time to Work
Fairbanks North Star Borough	53.3	2.1	1653	19.5 Minutes
City of Fairbanks	47.2	2.9	980	15 Minutes
City of North Pole	66.3	1.9	42	20.9 Minutes

Current Transportation Resources & Services

Human Services Transportation

According to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), human services transportation “includes a broad range of transportation service options designed to meet the needs of transportation disadvantaged populations including older adults, disabled persons and/or those with lower income.”¹ These services could include any transportation that helps meet the needs of transportation disadvantaged populations, from paratransit services like MACS Van Tran to shuttle services provided by Fairbanks Memorial Hospital or the University of Alaska Fairbanks. It also includes MACS fixed route bus services, given the system’s ability to serve people with disabilities and provide low-cost transportation for other transportation disadvantaged populations.

¹ <https://www.transit.dot.gov/what-human-service-transportation>, accessed 10/31/2023.

This section draws from the Existing Conditions Report and identifies existing human services transportation providers in the FNSB. Due to Van Tran’s importance in providing mobility services to transportation disadvantaged populations in the FNSB and data availability, the Existing Conditions report also provides an analysis of Van Tran service metrics in relation to several peer agencies. This section includes highlights from that report.

FNSB MACS Transit Fixed Route System

Service Overview

The MACS Transit service currently operates eight fixed-route bus lines that serve the FNSB, including the City of Fairbanks and the City of North Pole. MACS also operates a supplementary paratransit



service called Van Tran. Figure 12 - MACS Routes & Stops provides an overview of the fixed-route bus system and the associated Van Tran demand-response service area. Analysis of Van Tran is addressed in Section 3.

The MACS fixed-route system consists of two types of fixed route bus lines:

Regular: Bus lines that provide service at varying intervals for most of the system's regular span of service. These lines are intended for all-day use for many different types of trips.

Limited: Bus lines that only provide service that is mostly aligned with traditional morning and evening peaks. These lines are oriented towards serving traditional commuter needs.

Table 6: Services Details by Line (FY2019-FY2023)

Line	Peak Headway	Days	Service Span	Type of Service	Average Annual Unlinked Trips	Average Annual Productivity
Blue	30 minutes	M-F	6:60AM-9:45PM	Regular	88,519	14.8
Brown	30 minutes	M-F	7:00AM-9:10PM	Regular	28,940	13.7
Green	90 minutes	M-F	6:00AM-8:52PM	Limited	25,406	8.3
Grey	60 minutes	M-F	6:45AM-6:40PM	Limited	7,158	5.7
Orange	60 minutes	M-F	6:30AM-6:00PM	Limited	15,959	5.8 m
Purple	30 minutes	M-F	6:30AM-9:44PM	Regular	53,651	19.9
Red	30 minutes	M-F	6:15AM-9:45PM	Regular	77,877	14.0
Yellow	75 minutes	M-F	7:15AM-6:59PM	Limited	10,930	4.3

Total system-wide averages for annual unlinked trips is 308,441. The system-wide average for annual productivity is 10.8

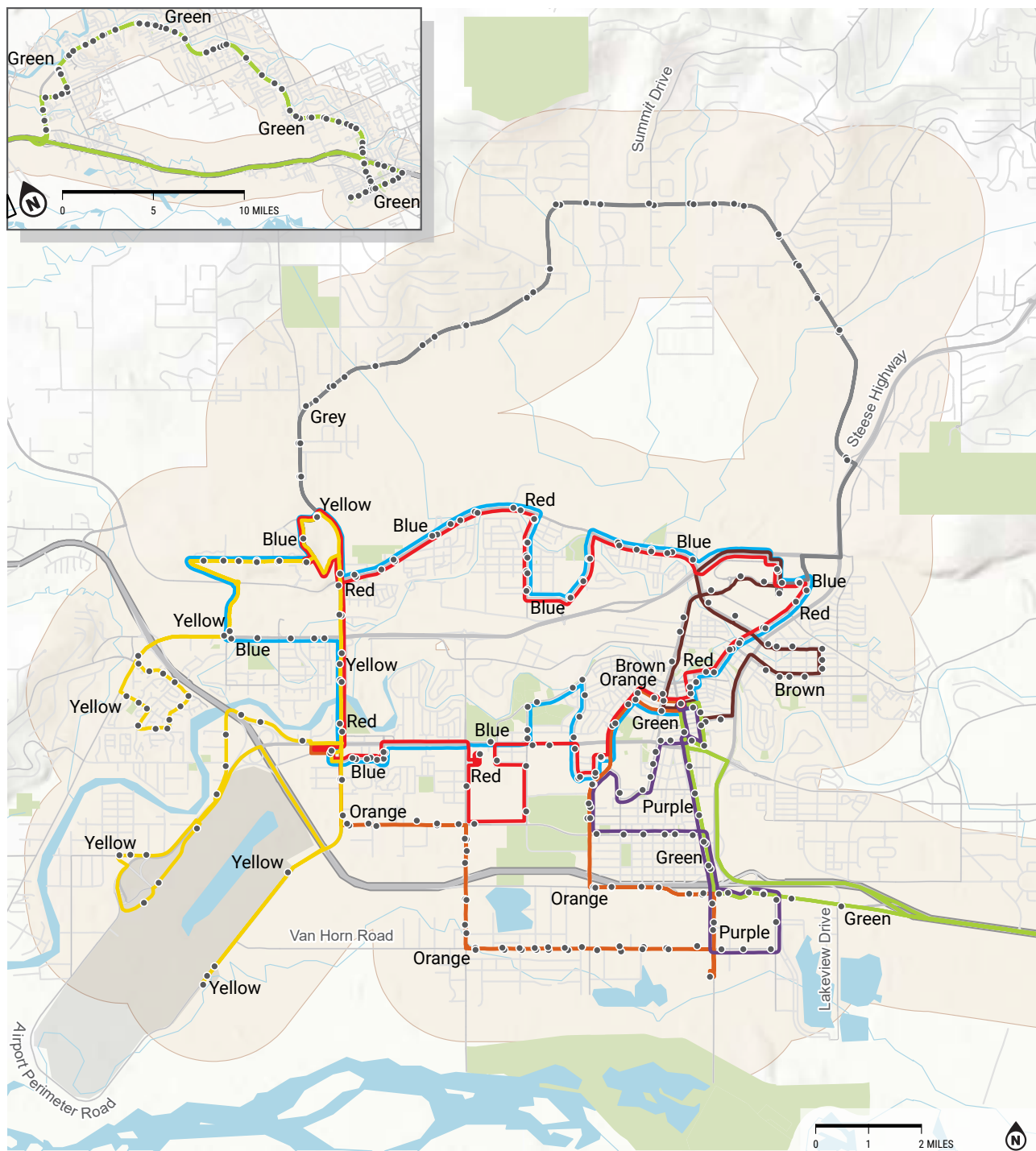
Table 6 -Service Details by Line shows the service span, peak frequency (or headway, displayed in minutes between transit arrivals), operating days, type of service, average annual unlinked trips,¹ and average annual productivity² for each MACS fixed route bus line. Generally, the regular bus lines operate every 30 to 60 minutes on weekdays between about 6am and 10pm, while the limited bus lines operate every 60 to 90 minutes on weekdays during select morning and afternoon/early evening commuting hours. There is currently no weekend

service, with Saturday service having been eliminated in 2021 due to a shortage of bus operators.

¹ Unlinked trips are a standard Federal Transit Administration (FTA) measure that counts the total number of trips (boardings) without considering transfers. For example, someone who boarded a bus and then transferred to another bus to complete their journey would count as two unlinked trips.

² "Productivity" is the average annual unlinked trips divided by average annual revenue service hours. This gives an indication of how productive a route is, as measured by how many riders use the route per revenue service hour on average.



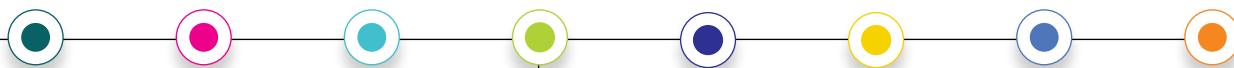


METROPOLITAN AREA COMMUTER SYSTEM (MACS) SYSTEM

- Blue Line Orange Line Green Line Red Line VanTran Service Area
- Brown Line Purple Line Grey Line Yellow Line



Figure 12: MACS Routes and Stops



Existing Conditions

FNSB Van Tran Demand-Response Paratransit Service

Service Overview

Van Tran is a paratransit service run by MACS. Paratransit is door-to-door transportation service that is provided to people who are not able to use the fixed route bus system due to a qualifying disability. Whether or not a disability qualifies an individual for Van Tran service is determined through an application process that requires input from a medical provider in addition to an interview and assessment with MACS staff. If an individual is determined eligible for Van Tran service, the application process results in one of the following eligibility determinations:

Unconditional Eligibility: There will be no restrictions to Van Tran service within the program guidelines.

Temporary Eligibility: Van Tran service will be provided to people who are determined capable of using accessible MACS Transit bus service but have a temporary need for Van Tran.

Conditional Eligibility: Van Tran service will be provided for certain trips for which it is determined that the person’s disability prevents him or her from using MACS Transit independently.”¹

Anyone who is determined to be ineligible for Van Tran service may appeal the decision or reapply if there is a significant change in their condition related to eligibility.

¹ All eligibility language quoted from Fairbanks North Star Borough Van Tran Application.

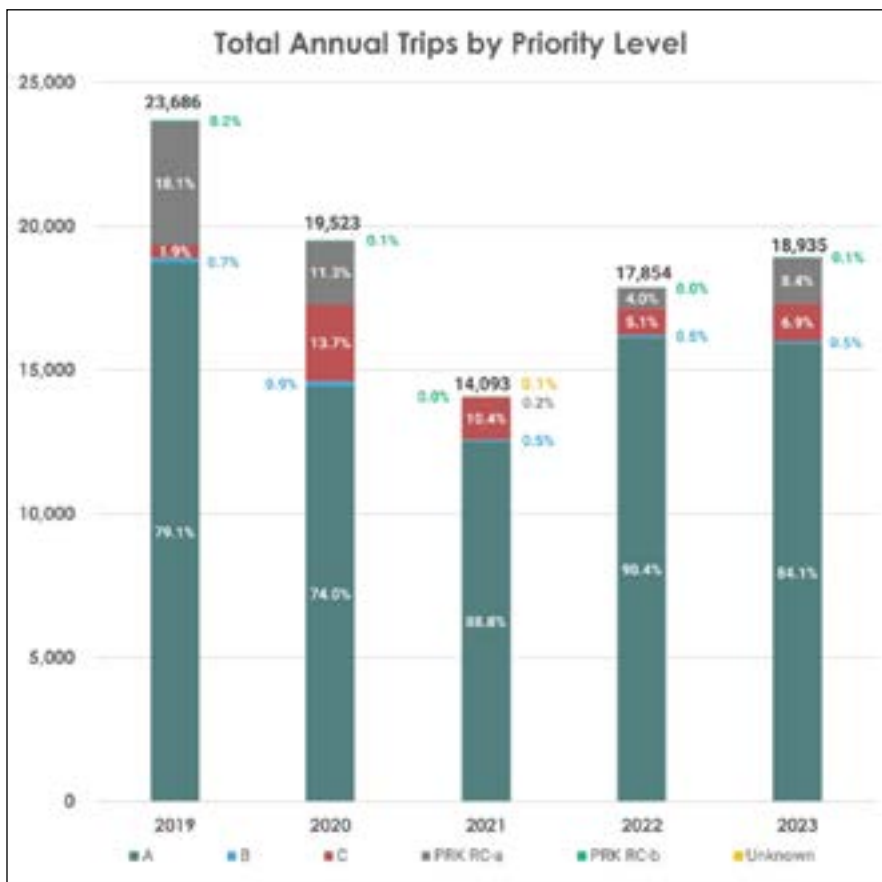


Figure 13: Total annual trips by priority level



Existing Conditions

For qualifying individuals, Van Tran service is typically provided anywhere within the Van Tran service area, which is 3/4 of a mile on each side of MACS fixed route lines. This is the minimum service area required for systems receiving FTA funding, and the extent of that service area is shown on Figure 12: MACS Routes and Stops.

Van Tran may also provide rides outside the minimum service area and to seniors older than 60 years of age who do not meet Van Tran eligibility criteria related to disabilities. Such riders are assigned a lower priority than rides within the minimum service area for people that meet eligibility requirements. A description of Van Tran ride priority levels is provided in Table 7- Van Tran Priority Levels.

Riders must generally request demand trips¹ by 5:30pm on the business day preceding the trip, although riders may also request same-day rides subject to availability via a standby list. Pickups are

scheduled for a 30-minute window, from 15 minutes before the requested time to 15 minutes after the requested time.

One-way fares for all rides are \$2.00, and a \$20.00 ten ride “punch card” is available for convenience.

Table 7: Van Tran Priority Levels

Priority Category	Priority Level	Area Served
A	1	Patrons with qualifying disabilities wanting to travel (both origin and destination) within ¾ mile of a fixed bus route
B	2	Patrons with qualifying disabilities wanting to travel (either origin or destination) beyond ¾ mile of a fixed bus route.
C	3	Patrons over 60 years of age who do not meet the criteria identified in priority category A or B.

Key Transit Service Assessments

Transportation services were assessed to see how equipped they are to meet the needs of individuals in the FNSB who rely on others for transportation.

Service Metrics

Similar to the fixed route system, the MACS Van Tran paratransit system reports performance statistics to the FTA. However, because paratransit operates based on demand (if people need the service and choose to use it), direct comparisons cannot be made to MACS fixed route service, which has a consistent schedule. The analysis in the Existing Conditions report compares Van Tran to the paratransit systems of peer agencies in Pocatello, ID; Dubuque, IA; and Josephine County, OR. As with the fixed route analysis, this analysis relies on data from the NTD between 2013 and 2021.

The report analyzes seven service metrics: investment, relevance, productivity, operating expenses per vehicle revenue hour and per vehicle unlinked trip, average fare, and ridership by priority level.

Key findings show:

- ★ Local investment in paratransit is relatively low in terms of revenue hours per capita and number of vehicles.
- ★ Van Tran service is relatively less relevant as measured by number of trips provided per capita, but productivity is average as measured by number of trips per vehicle revenue hour.

¹ A “demand trip” is a single trip. Trips may also be requested through a “subscription service” that accommodates trips that occur one or more times a week.



- ★ Van Tran operating expenses per vehicle hour and per trip (around \$100 per vehicle trip) are nearly double the average of peers, and growing, while average fares are similar to peers (around \$2 per passenger trip).
- ★ Ridership may be rebounding since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Demand & Equity

Purpose & Importance

Is the transit network located where people are most likely to use it?

Is the transit network located near the people who are most vulnerable and may need it the most?

Demand and equity measures help identify locations that have the greatest potential for high ridership and those where the need for public transportation services may be highest. These assessments also highlight important gaps in transit services that may currently be or need to be filled by other transportation providers through coordinated efforts.

In this analysis, **demand** measures population density and job density, and then shows where their combined density is highest. When quality service is provided in such areas, it often results in higher ridership and higher productivity than service in areas with lower demand measures.

Equity, on the other hand, is analyzed here using factors that suggest need:

- ★ Low-income households
- ★ Racial or ethnic minorities
- ★ People with disabilities
- ★ Youth and seniors
- ★ People with limited English proficiency
- ★ People without access to vehicles

These are factors that are prominent in Title VI and Environmental Justice considerations, and used to assess how well both fixed route and demand

response services are meeting the needs of the FNSB's most vulnerable populations.

The results of the demand and equity analyses are two important inputs that should be considered side-by-side when determining recommendations for the future of both fixed route and paratransit services in the FNSB, and identifying gaps that are most important to fill with human services transportation providers.

The following sections highlight results of each analysis. The full analysis can be found in the Existing Conditions Report.

Demand

Methodology and data sources for the demand analysis are discussed in detail in the Existing Conditions report

Population Density

Figure 14, *Map of Population Density*, visualizes population density by the number of people per square mile. Population density is generally highest around the routes in the MACS fixed route system with the shortest peak headways, in addition to a notable area of relatively high population density along the Yellow Line west of Chena Pump Road and south of the Parks Highway. The highest population densities are around and to the south of downtown Fairbanks. The City of North Pole has some pockets of relatively high population densities near the terminus of the Green Line.

Job Density

The highest job densities shown in Figure 15, *Map of Job Density*, also correspond with the MACS fixed route lines with the shortest peak headways. The highest job densities, however, are even more concentrated in and around downtown Fairbanks.

Demand

Figure 16, *Map of Demand*, shows the results of this demand analysis by combining population density and job density to highlight areas where the density of both factors overlap. Areas with the highest

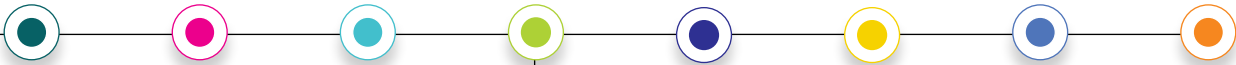


Existing Conditions

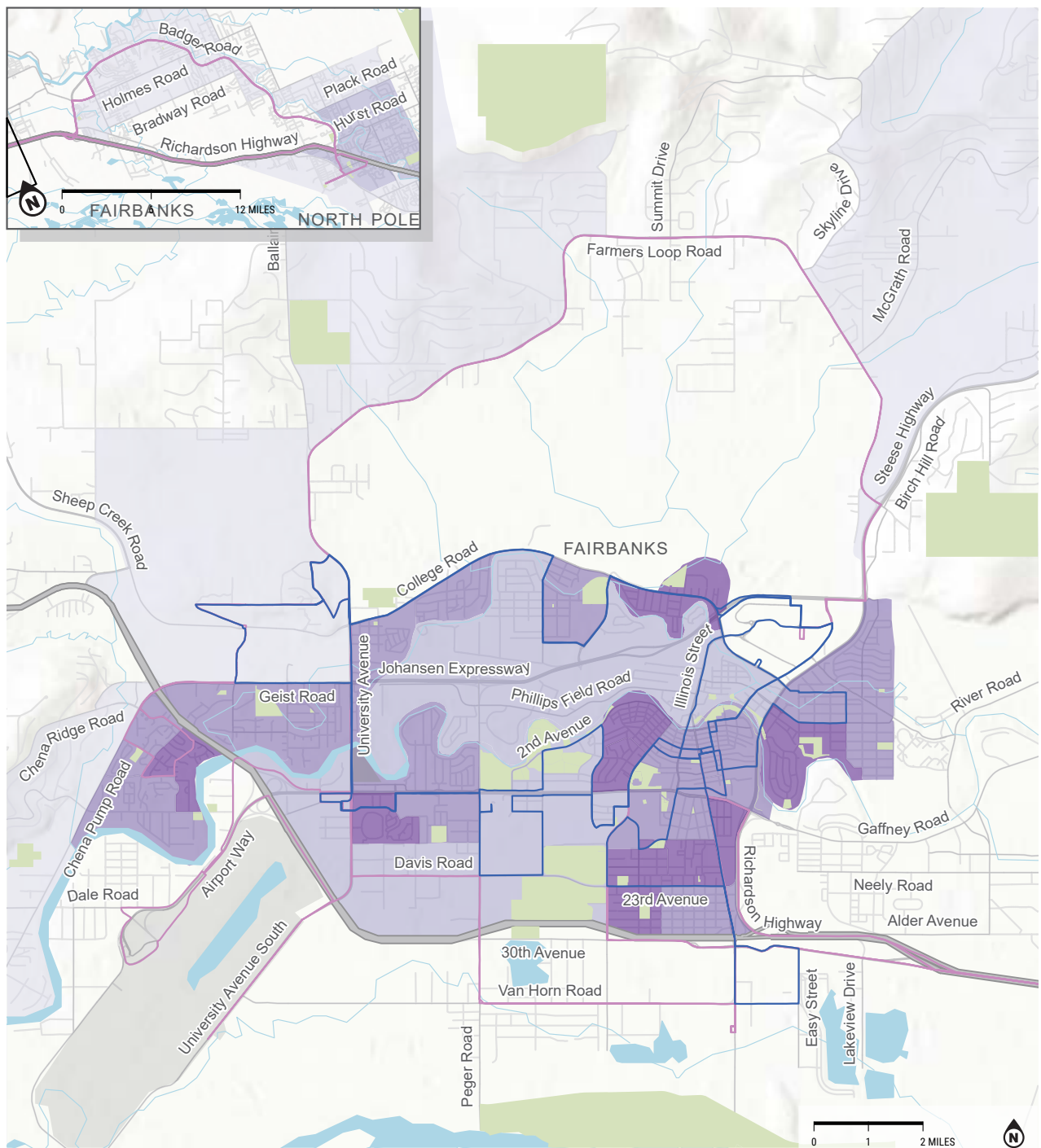


density of both population and jobs may have higher demand for public transportation services due to a relatively high density of a wide variety of trip types

The results suggest areas of high demand generally corresponding with routes that currently have the highest peak headways in the MACS system, with the highest demand occurring around and the south of downtown Fairbanks. These results generally correspond with the service areas of MACS' most productive fixed route bus lines.



Existing Conditions

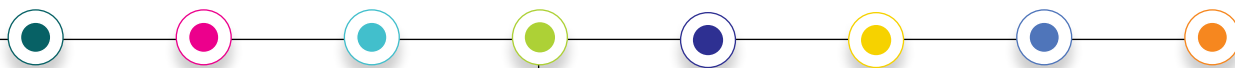


**METROPOLITAN AREA
COMMUTER SYSTEM (MACS)
SYSTEM**
by Peak Headway
— 30 Minutes
— Limited

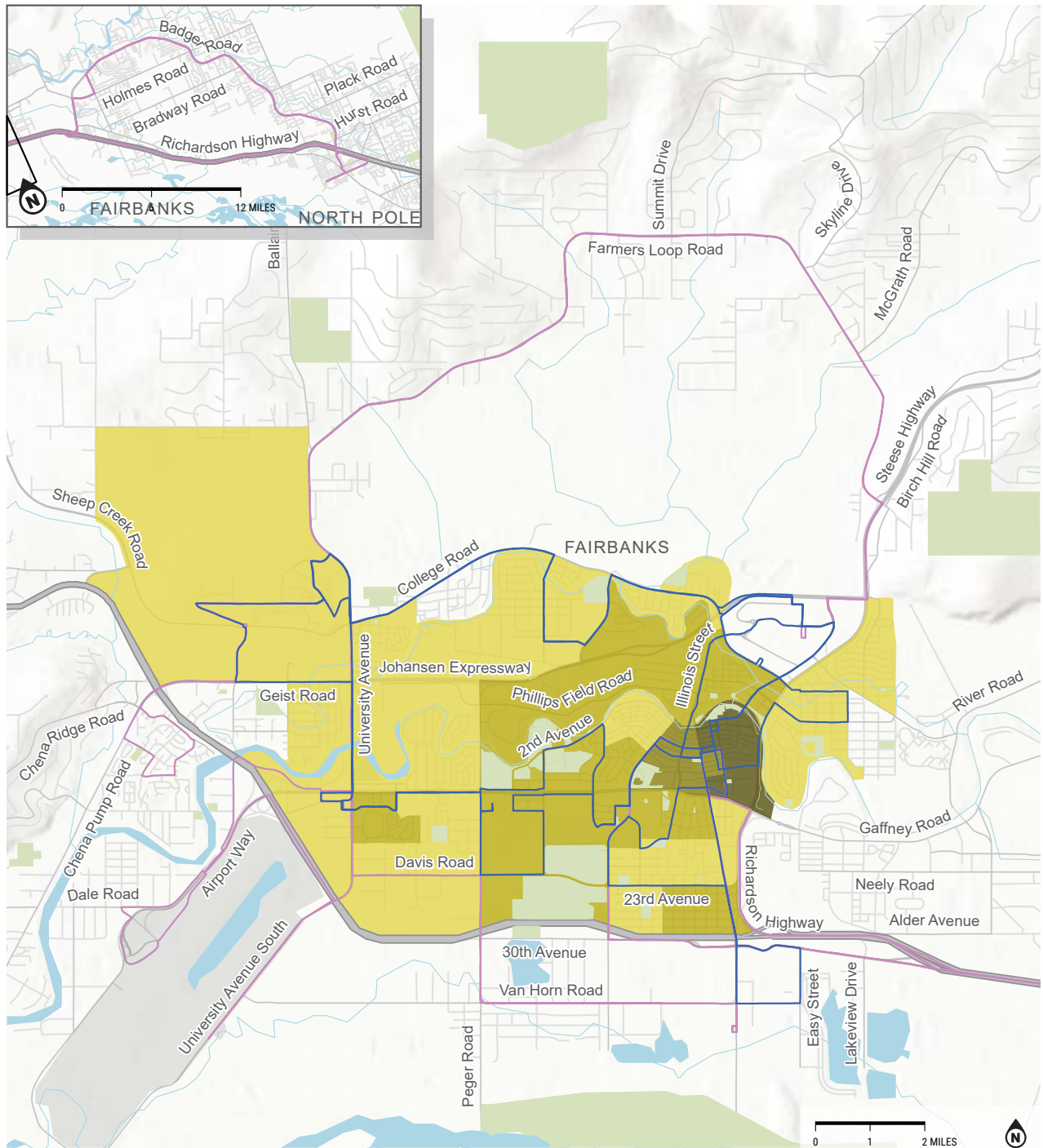
Population Density (People per Sq. Mile)
1 - 250
251 - 650
651 - 1,500
1,501 - 4,000
4,001 - 6,820



Figure 14: Population Density



Existing Conditions

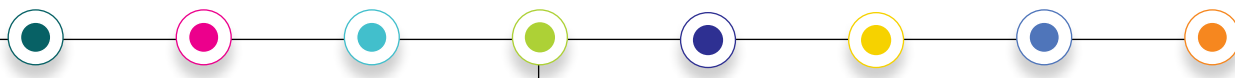


**METROPOLITAN AREA
COMMUTER SYSTEM (MACS)
SYSTEM**
by Peak Headway
— 30 Minutes
— Limited

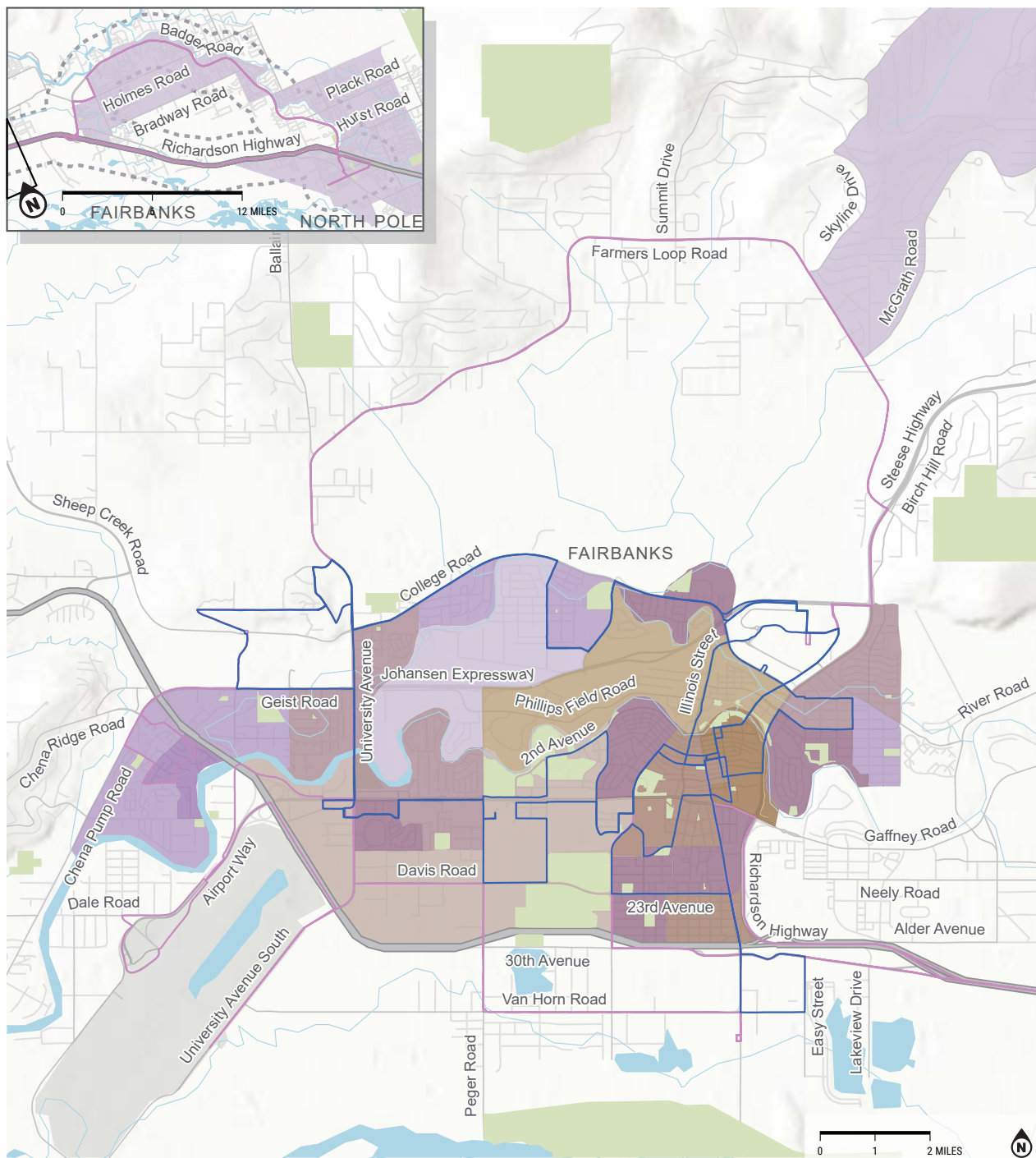
Jobs per Sq. Mile
 < 400
 401 - 1,500
 1,501 - 3,000
 3,001 - 5,500
 5,501 +



Figure 15: Job Density



Existing Conditions



METROPOLITAN AREA COMMUTER SYSTEM (MACS) SYSTEM
 by Peak Headway
 — 30 Minutes
 — Limited

DEMAND (POPULATION + EMPLOYMENT)

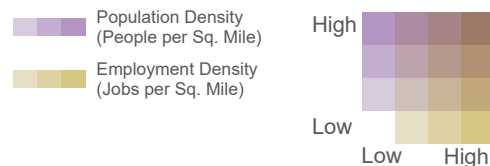


Figure 16: Map of Demand



Existing Conditions

Equity

Methodology

The project team gathered Census Tract-level data from the 2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates for Fairbanks North Star Borough on the six-equity metrics. Each tract was assigned a percentage rank based on the highest and lowest percentages within the FNSB. The equity metrics were ranked as follows (detailed methodology available in the Existing Conditions report):

- ★ Low-income households.
 - Weight = 25%
- ★ Racial or ethnic minorities.
 - Weight = 20%
- ★ People with disabilities.
 - Weight = 20%
- ★ Youth and seniors.
 - Weight = 15%
- ★ People with limited English proficiency.
 - Weight = 10%
- ★ People without access to vehicles.
 - Weight = 10%

Percentile ranks are used to generate a weighted “Equity” score for the census tract.

Data Limitations: The ACS 5-Year Estimates provide estimates at the Census Tract level, which in some areas of the FNSB represents small geographies while others are much larger. The larger size of the Census Tracts may obscure spatial differences, which are especially important when planning for public transportation. In general, smaller tracts are located within Fairbanks and North Pole, while larger tracts are in the surrounding rural areas, especially to the north and east.

Results: The Existing Conditions report details the composite score for each metric as well as a combined composite score. Highlights from these results that pertain to populations targeted in the coordinated human services planning framework include:

Poverty Status: Low-income households (households with incomes below 150% of the federally defined poverty level) are likely to be more burdened with travel-related costs and may benefit from the provision of transit service.

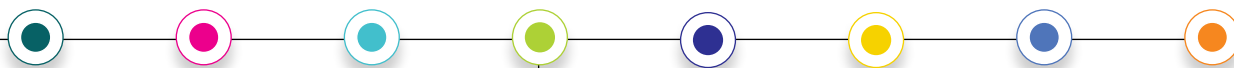
Figure 17, *Map of Poverty Status*, shows parts of the FNSB with higher rates of households below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level include Census Tract 7 in west Fairbanks, the location of the Fred Meyer hub, as well as Census Tract 9800, which includes the military base and rural parts of the FNSB. Census Tract 14.01 is another area with elevated poverty outside of Fairbanks.

People with Disabilities: The US Census Bureau provides estimates on numbers of individuals in Fairbanks North Star Borough with disabilities of different kinds: those with hearing difficulty, a vision difficulty, a cognitive difficulty, an ambulatory difficulty, a self-care difficulty, and/or an independent living difficulty. The “people with disabilities” metric in this equity analysis combines these disability types into one measure for comparison across the FNSB. Van Tran is provided to travelers whose physical, cognitive, or sensory disabilities prevent them from using MACS fixed route services. Given Van Tran’s operational objectives as a demand response ADA service, it is important for the agency to understand where people with disabilities are living in the FNSB. Figure 18, *Map of People with Disabilities*, conveys that the areas with major concentrations of people with disabilities are in Fairbanks and largely within Van Tran’s service area. However, there are several areas that exist outside of Van Tran’s service area that have elevated proportions of people with disabilities, including:

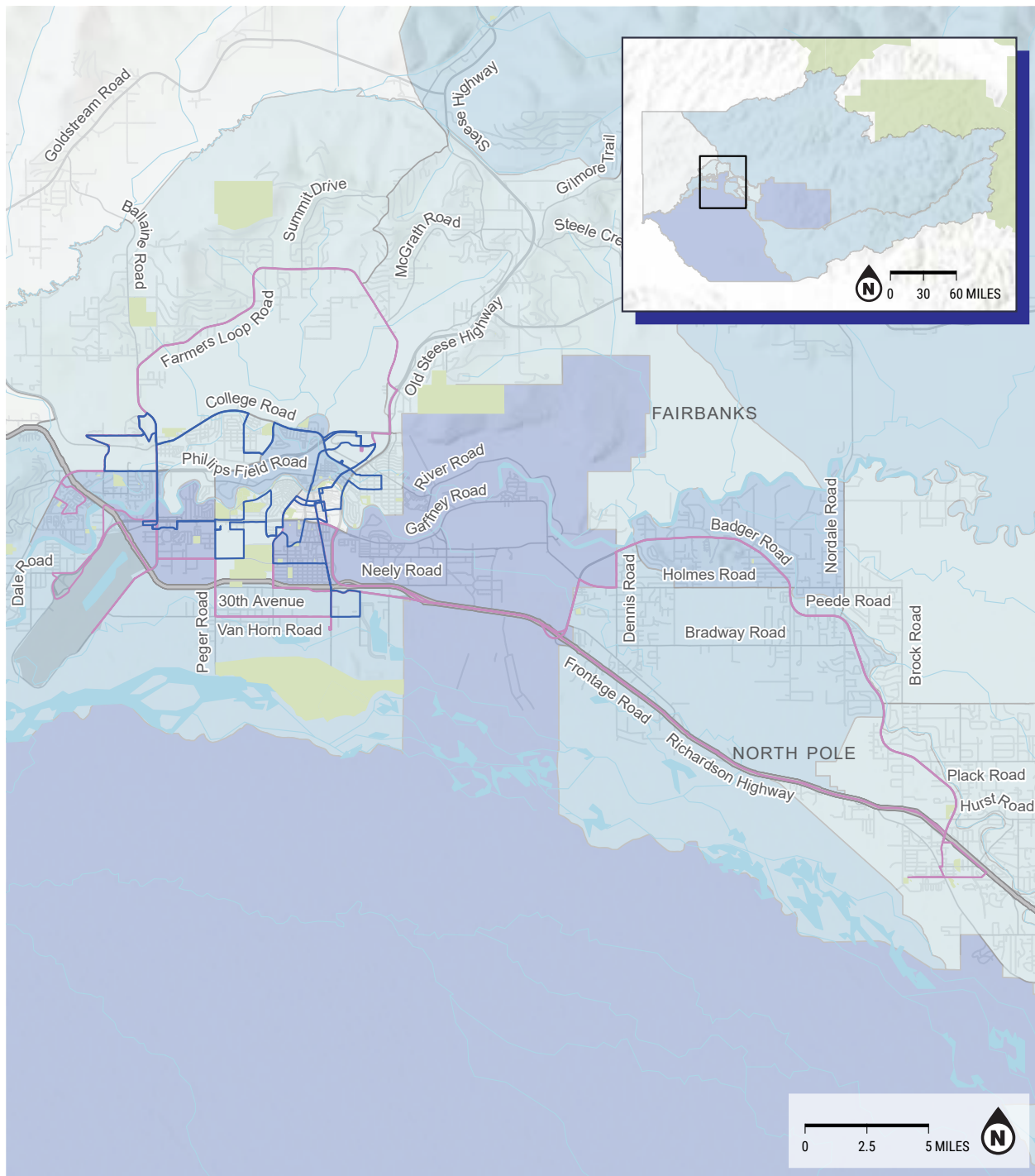
- ★ Areas east of North Pole and east of Mistletoe Drive
- ★ Large rural areas of Fairbanks North Star Borough east of Fairbanks and North Pole



Youth and Senior: Areas of Fairbanks North Star Borough with higher concentrations of proportions of Youth and Seniors include Census Tract 10 in Fairbanks as well as Census Tract 14.01 in the community of Badger. Census Tracts 12 and 13 north of Fairbanks also have elevated proportions of youths and seniors. These results are visible in Figure 19 - *Map of Youth & Senior*.



Existing Conditions



**METROPOLITAN AREA
COMMUTER SYSTEM (MACS)
SYSTEM**

by Peak Headway

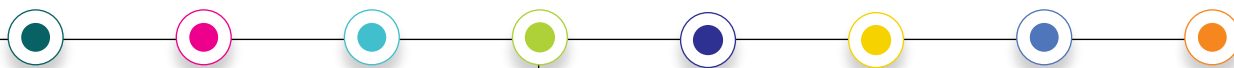
- 30 Minutes
- - - Limited

**Poverty Status (Below 150% of
Federal Poverty Level)**

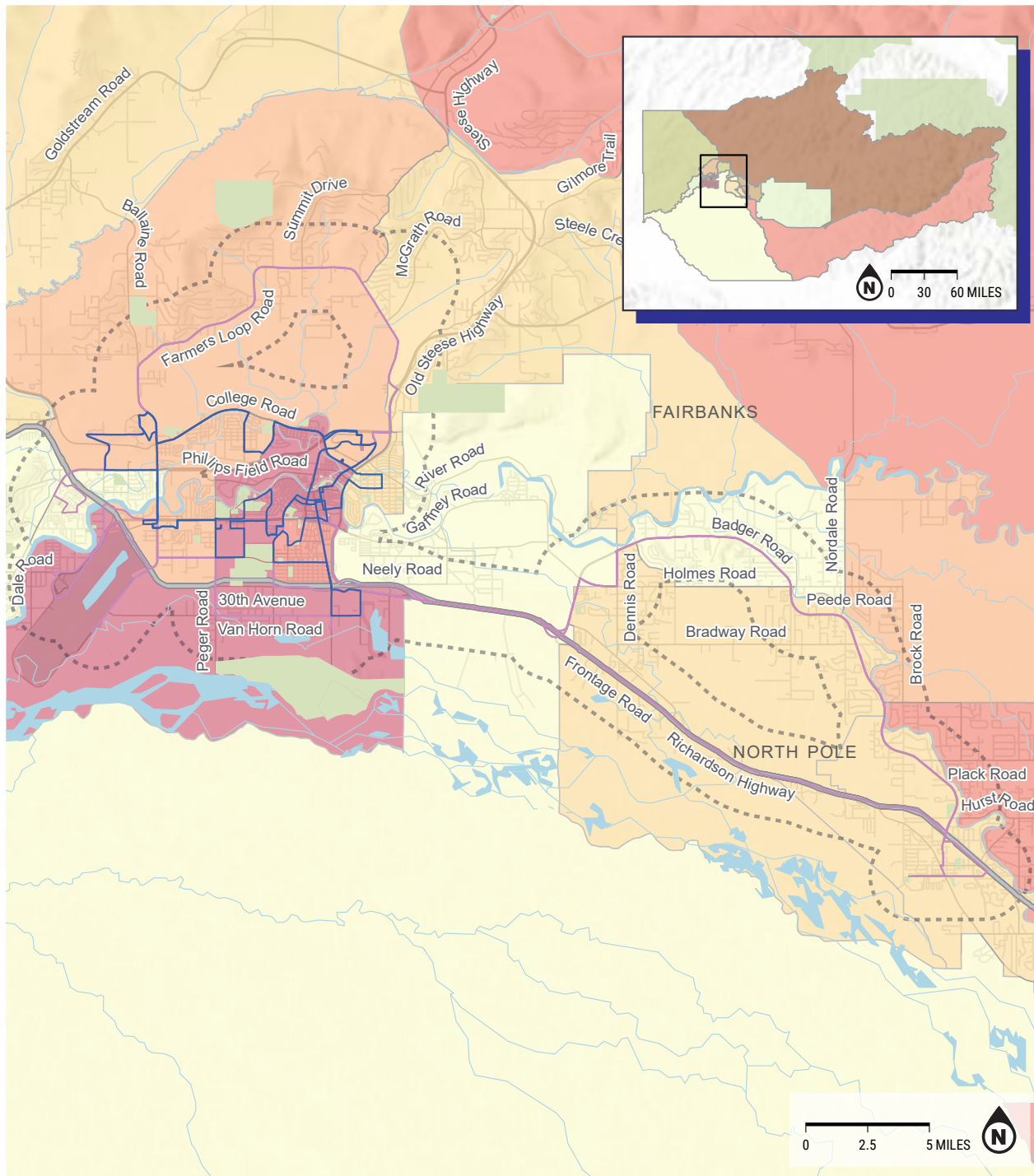
- 0%
- 0 - 7%
- 7% - 11%
- 11% - 14%
- 14% - 27%
- Parks



Figure 17: FNSB Equity Profile Poverty Status



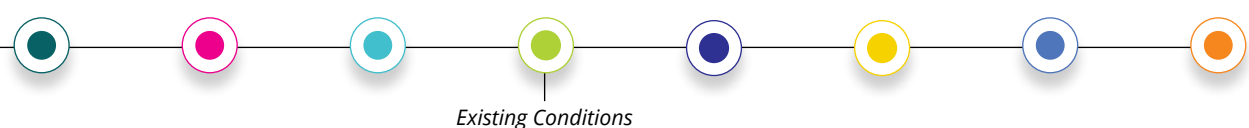
Existing Conditions

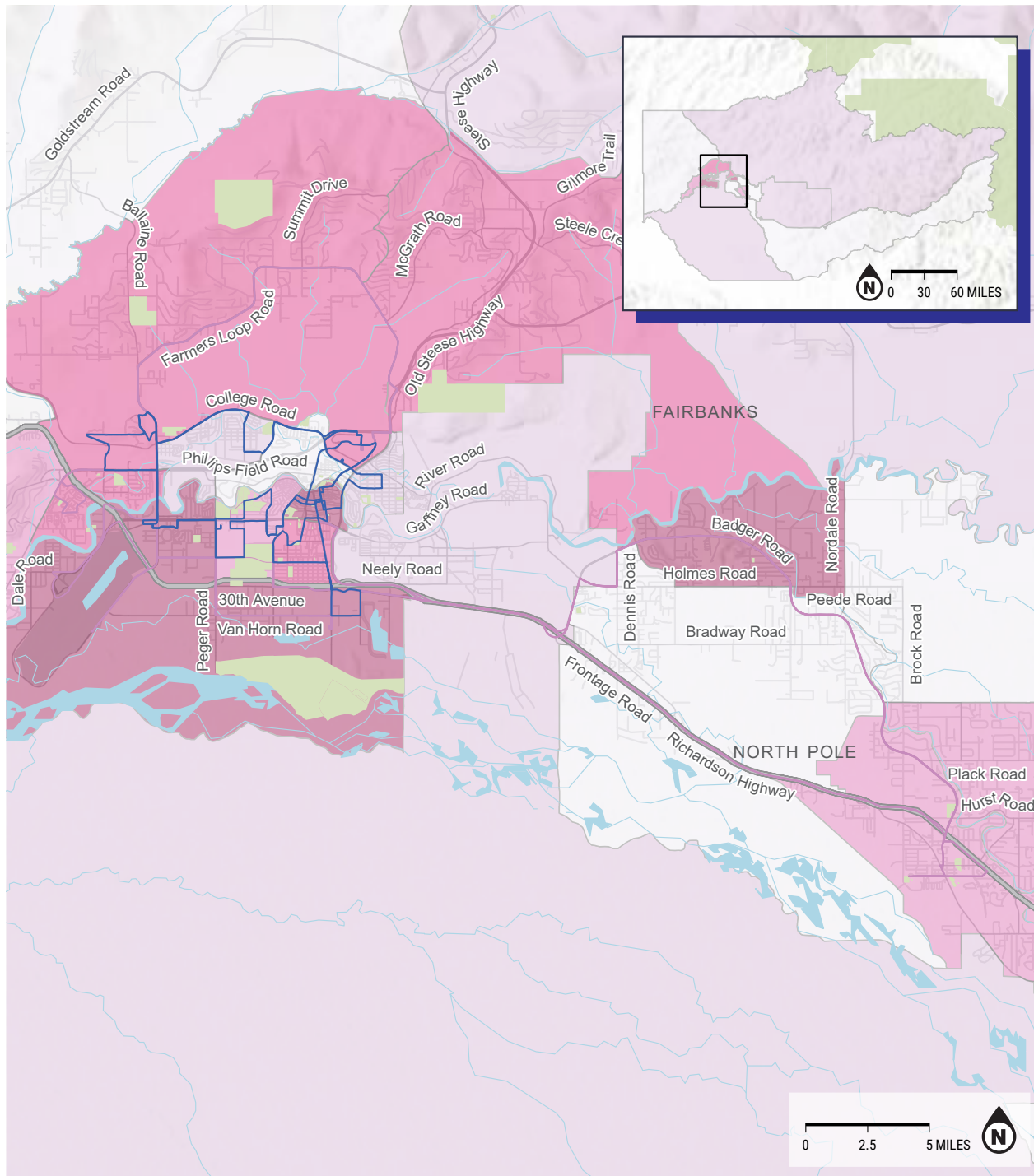


METROPOLITAN AREA COMMUTER SYSTEM (MACS) SYSTEM	People with Disabilities		VanTran Service Area
	by Peak Headway		
— 30 Minutes	2% - 6%		
— Limited	6% - 12%		
	12% - 13%		
	13% - 16%		
	16% - 28%		



Figure 18: FNSB Disability Equity Profile

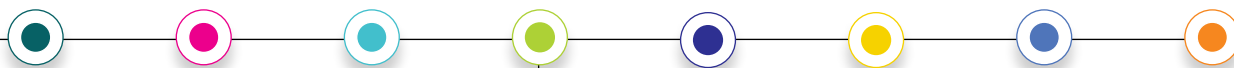




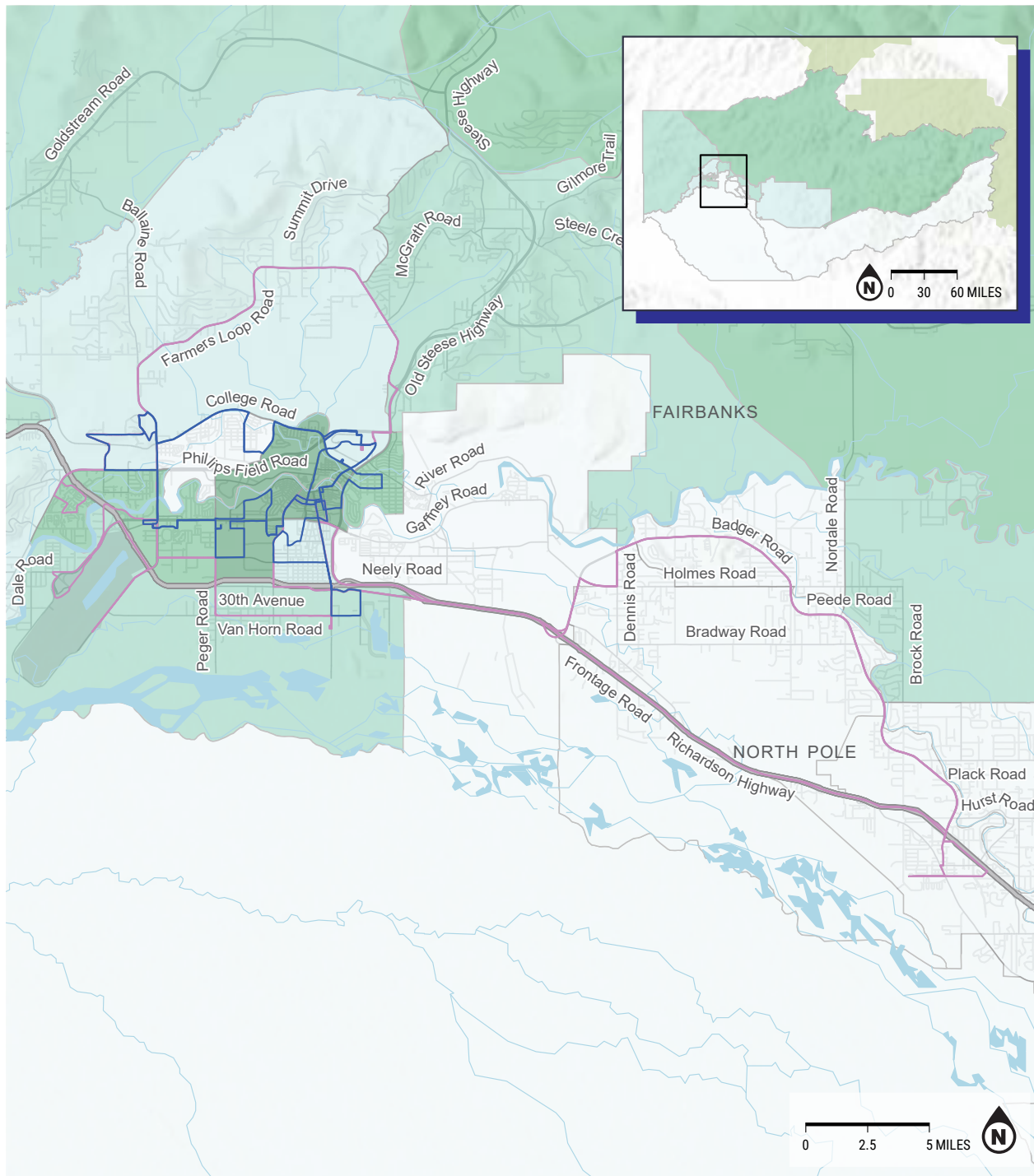
METROPOLITAN AREA COMMUTER SYSTEM (MACS) SYSTEM by Peak Headway — 30 Minutes — Limited	Youth and Senior 22% - 29%
	29% - 35%
	35 - 38%
	38% - 41%
	41% - 44%
	Parks



Figure 19: FNSB Youth and Senior Equity Profile



Existing Conditions



**METROPOLITAN AREA
COMMUTER SYSTEM (MACS)
SYSTEM**

by Peak Headway

- 30 Minutes
- Limited

**No Vehicle Access For Workers
Over 16**

- 0%
- 0% - 2%
- 2% - 4%
- 4% - 10%
- 10% - 17%



Figure 20: FNSB No Vehicle Access for Workers over 16 Equity Profile



Connectivity

Purpose & Importance

Can people who need transportation access or connect to the transit network?

The usefulness of any fixed route bus network is contingent upon how accessible and connected its bus stops are to riders. All stops must be accessible to riders of all ages and abilities for the network to maximize its return on service investments. Accessibility and connectivity is also important for paratransit services, although the door-to-door nature of paratransit means that it can more effectively bridge accessibility and connectivity gaps. In fact, paratransit services often bear an increased burden when the fixed route network is less accessible and connected because that may force some riders with disabilities to abandon fixed route service in favor of door-to-door paratransit rides.

The Existing Conditions report’s connectivity analysis measures the connectivity of each bus stop in the MACS fixed route network, where “connectivity” is considered the degree to which each stop is reachable by pedestrians and bicyclists.

Ultimately, the results will help identify gaps and needs which inform plan recommendations. Detailed methods and analysis can be found in the Existing Conditions report.

Walkshed Metrics

The project team also calculated characteristics of the populations that live within the adjusted and unadjusted walksheds of all bus stops in the FNSB.

Table 8: Walkshed Metrics

Area	Population ^[1]	Percent People of Color ^[2]	Number of Jobs ^[3]	Percent no vehicle ^[4]	Percent Low Income ^[5]
Unadjusted walkshed	49,407	36.5%	19,904	6.7%	7.2%
LTS-adjusted walkshed	44,601	36.8%	16,851	7.2%	7.8%
Fairbanks North Star Borough	97,149	31.1%	33,200	4.3%	7.0%

[1] American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2021

[2] Ibid.

[3] Smart Location Database, 2021

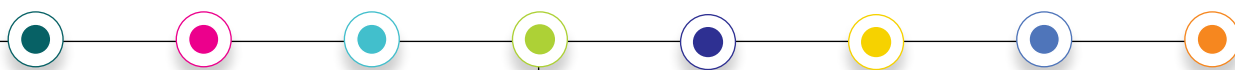
[4] Ibid.

[5] Defined as the percentage of households with incomes below the federal poverty line (ACS, 2021).

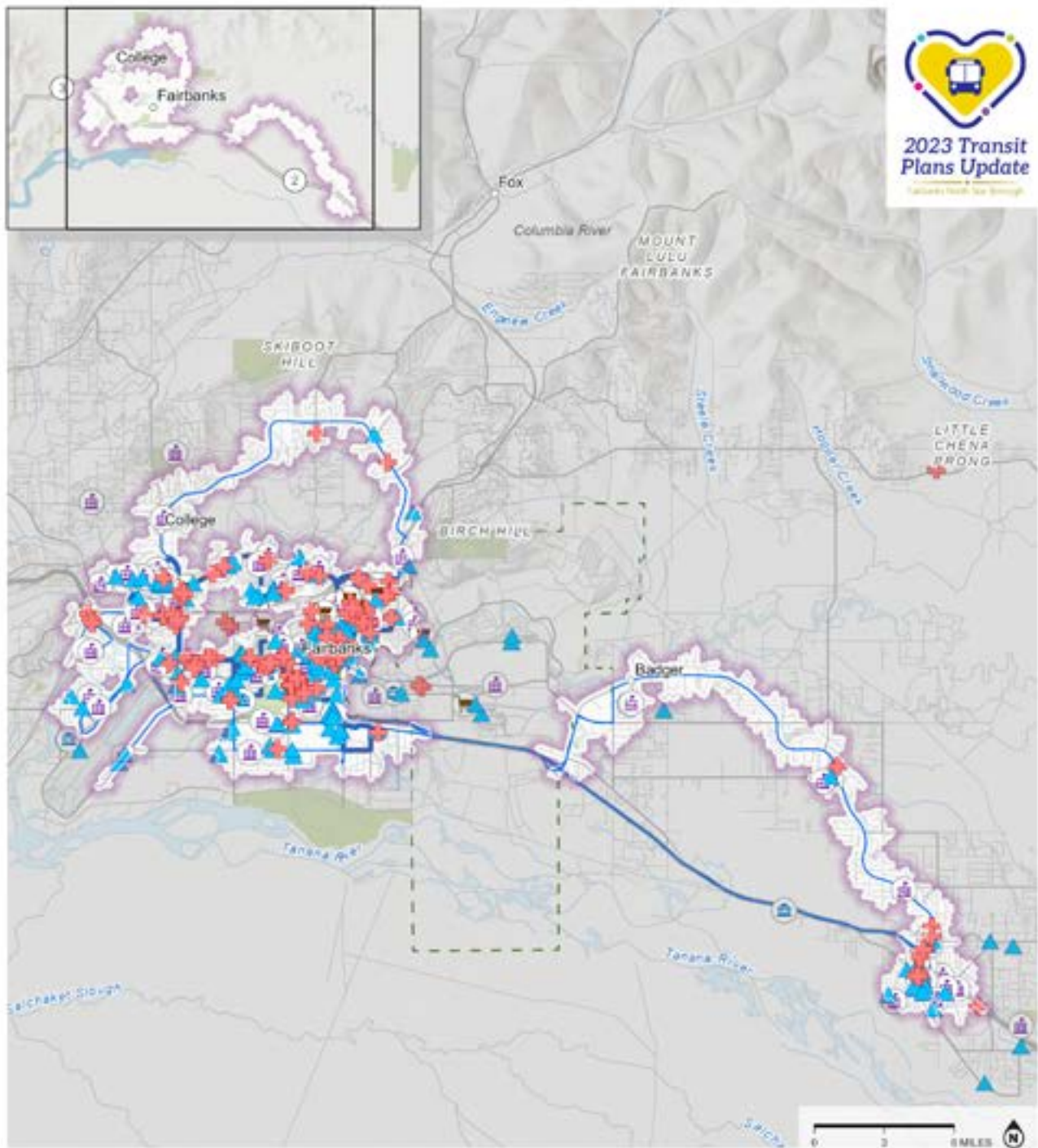
As shown below in Table 8, *Walkshed Metrics*, just over half (51%) of the FNSB’s population of lives in the 10-minute raw walkshed of a bus stop. People living within the walkshed are more likely to be people of color, live below the poverty line, and to not own a car when compared to the population characteristics of the entire FNSB.

The project team also evaluated the degree to which various human and social services destinations are located within and accessible from the bus stop walksheds. Figures 21-25 Bus Stop Access and Destinations show the locations of local destinations that could be categorized as medical services, educational services, government services, other social services, and grocery stores. The maps show that with few exceptions, a large majority of these services are located within the transit walkshed. A notable exception if the growing complex of medical facilities just west of the Phillips Field Road and Peger Road intersection.

This development includes the relatively new location of the Fairbanks Veterans Affairs (VA) Clinic. This corner is not served by transit and is outside the adjusted 10-minute walkshed of any stop, making it hard for veterans to access care. While other communities offer Disabled American Veterans (DAV) van service, this is not available in Fairbanks. Further exacerbating this connectivity gap is the fact that the next closest veteran’s health care facility is Bassett Community Hospital on Fort Wainwright, which is also not served directly by the transit system.



Existing Conditions

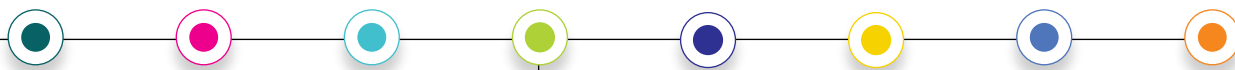


2024 BUS STOP ACCESS AND DESTINATIONS

- + Medical Facility
- ▲ Social Services
- 🏪 Grocery Store
- 🎓 Schools and Education
- 🏛️ Government
- Peak Bus Frequencies
- 30 Minute All-day Service
- Limited, AM and PM Peak Only
- 10 Minute Stop Walkshed



Figure 21: Bus Stop Access and Human & Social Services Destination: FNSB Transit-Shed Overview



Existing Conditions

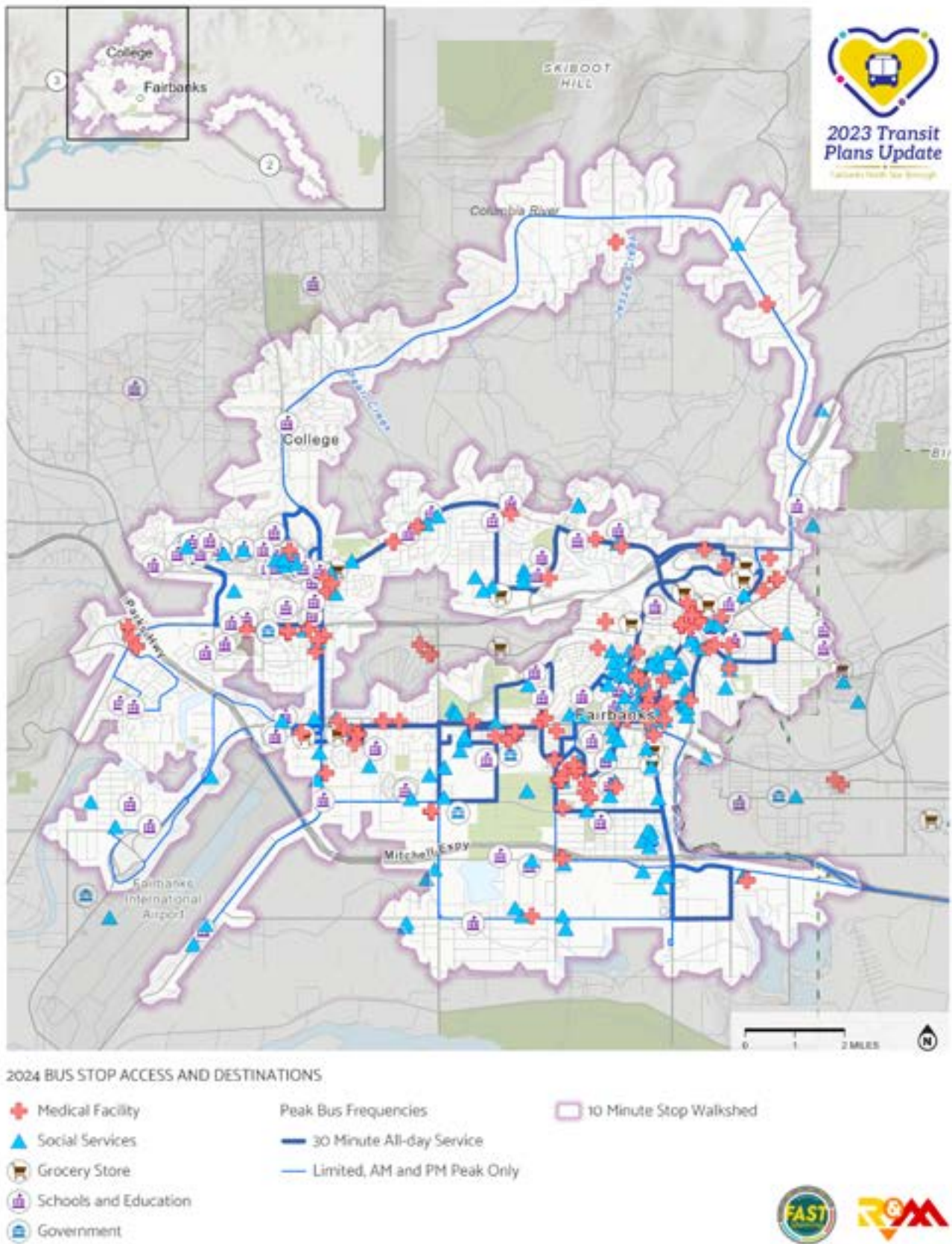
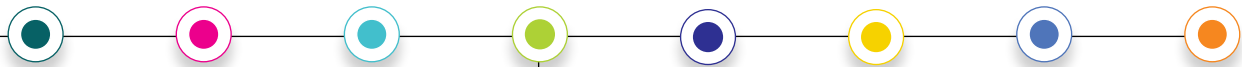
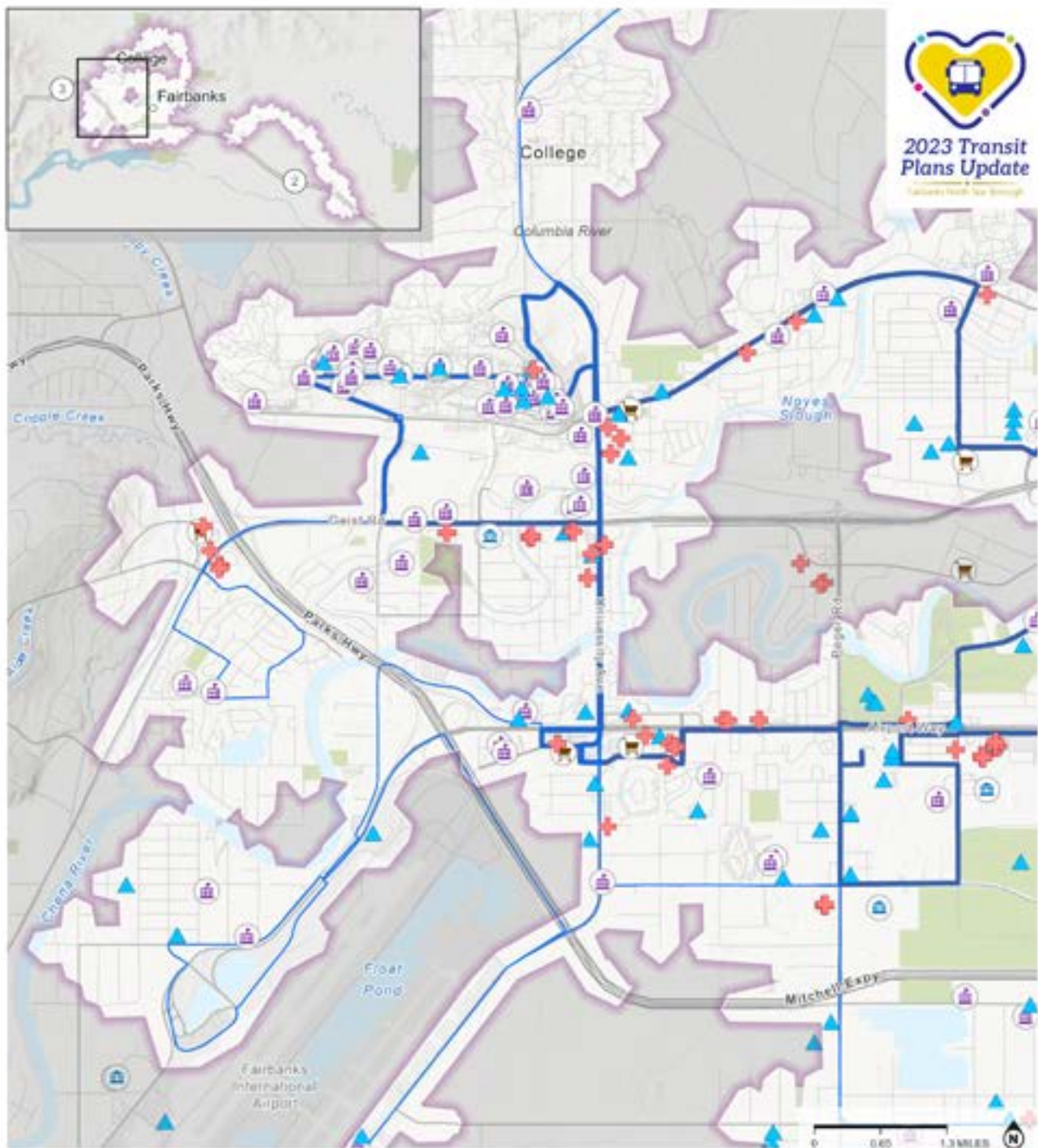


Figure 22: Bus Stop Access and Human & Social Services Destinations: City of Fairbanks



Existing Conditions

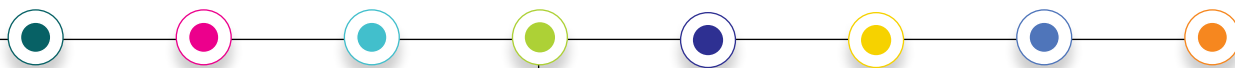


2024 BUS STOP ACCESS AND DESTINATIONS

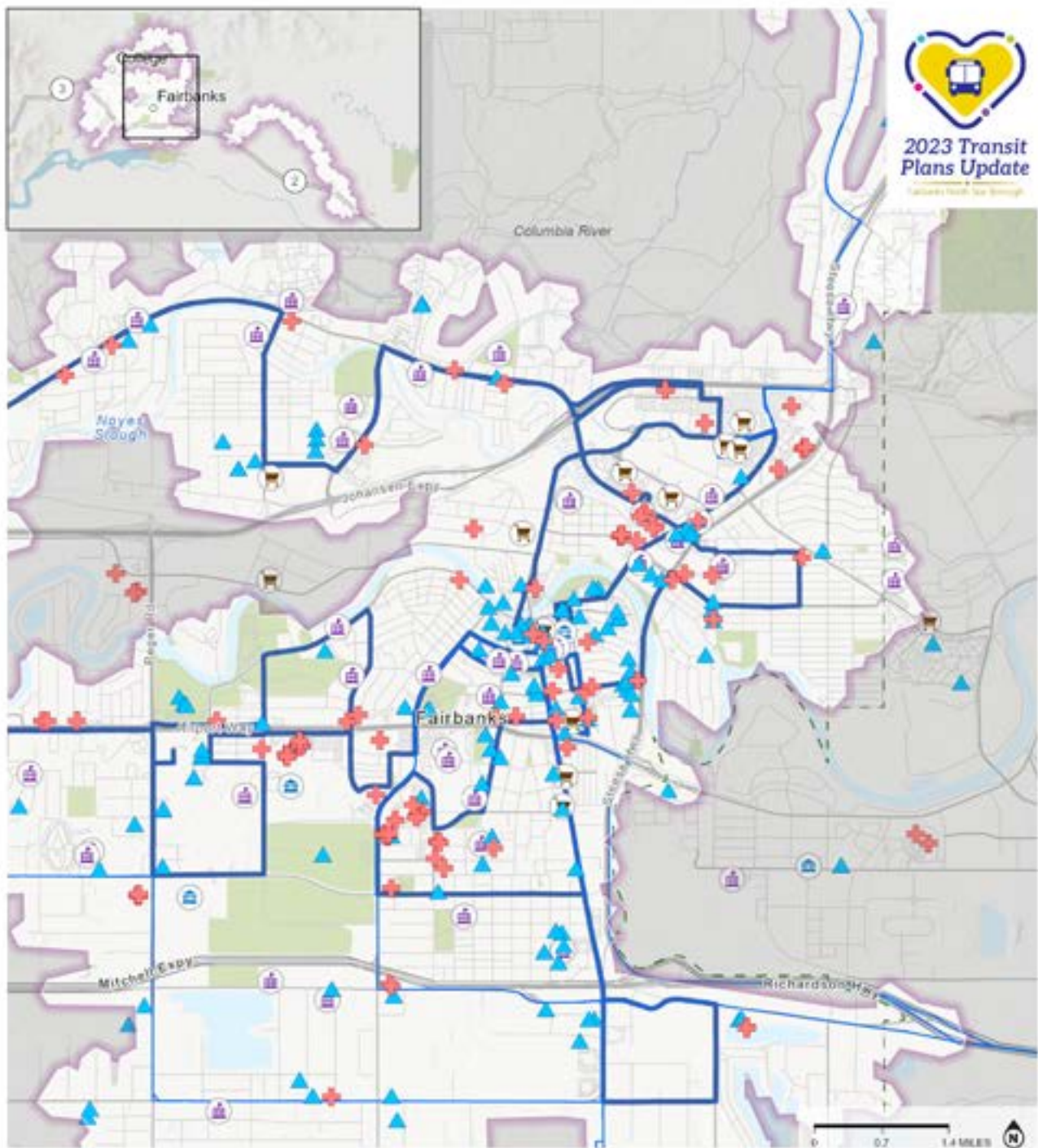
- + Medical Facility
 - ▲ Social Services
 - Grocery Store
 - Schools and Education
 - Government
- Peak Bus Frequencies
- 30 Minute All-day Service
 - Limited, AM and PM Peak Only
- 10 Minute Stop Walkshed



Figure 23: Bus Stop Access and Human & Social Services Destinations: West Fairbanks



Existing Conditions

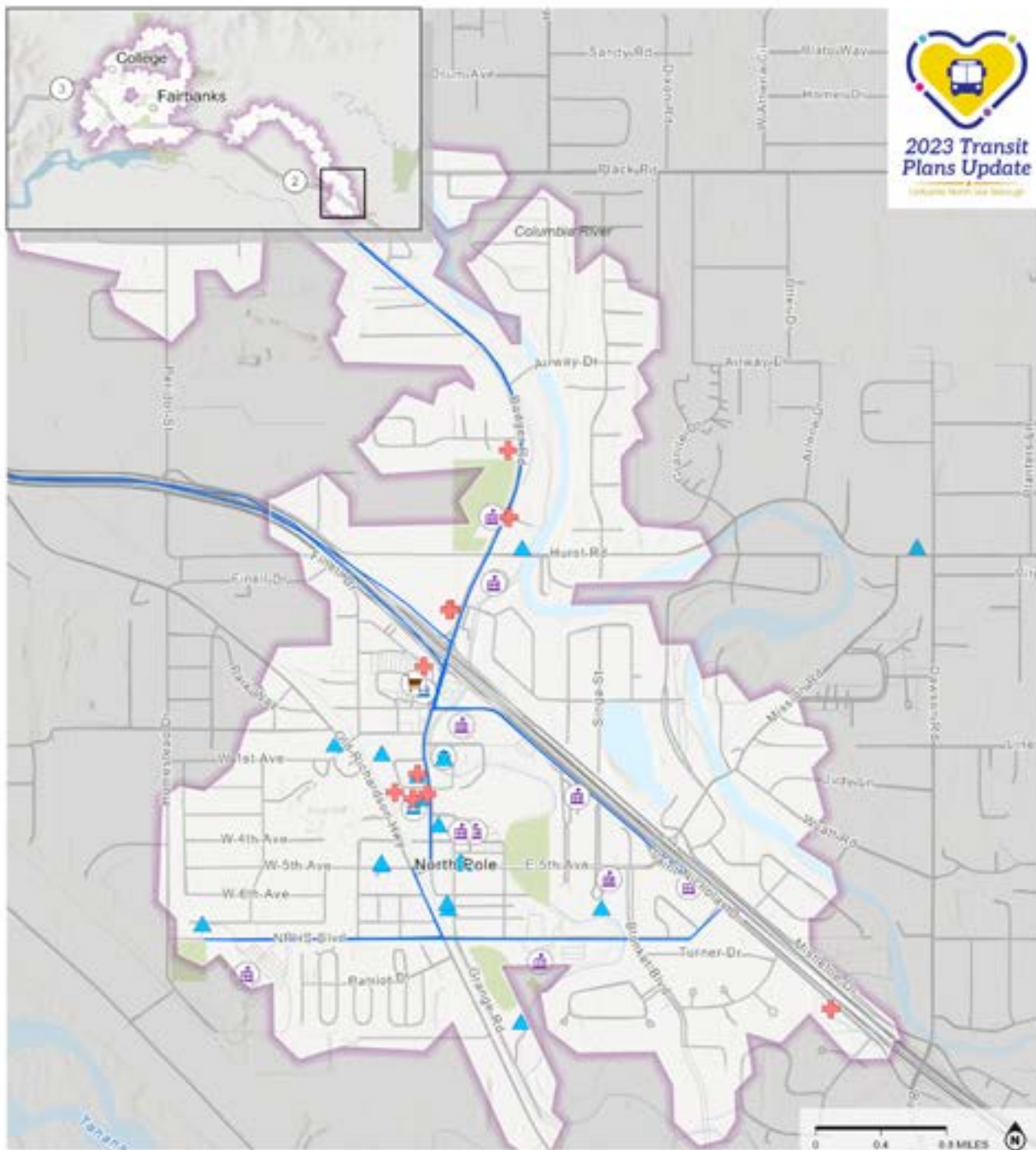


2024 BUS STOP ACCESS AND DESTINATIONS

- + Medical Facility
 Peak Bus Frequencies
□ 10 Minute Stop Walkshed
- ▲ Social Services
 — 30 Minute All-day Service
- 🛒 Grocery Store
 — Limited, AM and PM Peak Only
- 🎓 Schools and Education
- 🏛️ Government



Figure 24: Bus Stop Access and Human & Social Services Destinations: Downtown Fairbanks



2024 BUS STOP ACCESS AND DESTINATIONS

- Medical Facility
- Social Services
- Grocery Store
- Schools and Education
- Government
- Peak Bus Frequencies**
- 30 Minute All-day Service
- Limited, AM and PM Peak Only
- 10 Minute Stop Walkshed



Figure 25: Bus Stop Access and Human & Social Services Destinations: North Pole



Existing Conditions

Other Transportation Service Providers

Many other organizations in the FNSB provide transportation or transportation assistance to ensure their customers have access to essential human services. These organizations cater to the specific needs of their clientele or beneficiaries and often fill in service gaps not addressed by the transit system. Brief descriptions of each organization are followed by tables comparing their services in terms of service types, eligibility, available resources, and schedules.

Access Alaska

Access Alaska serves persons with any type of physical or mental impairment that significantly impacts their ability to live independently in the home and community. They focus on removing barriers to independent living, such as by making modifications to homes. There are direct service providers that help with daily living. They also assist with pre-employment for youth, helping them with cooking, budgeting, and getting ready for before and after school. They also loan out medical equipment. Access Alaska supports access to their and other services by occasionally providing rides or funding bus tokens or cab rides. Aging at Home Fairbanks

Aging at Home Fairbanks

Aging At Home Fairbanks (AAHF) is a membership-based volunteer service where senior citizens in the community can request limited assistance from participating volunteers. Among other services like house chores, yardwork and meal deliveries, volunteer rides are one of the most popular services.

Arctic Medical Transport

Arctic Medical Transport is a private commercial business that specializes in non-emergent medical transportation services, offering wheelchair transportation, ambulatory transportation, and specialized services for elderly patients. Their goal is to ensure that all individuals have access to timely and efficient transportation to medical appointments, procedures, and healthcare facilities.

Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center

The Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center provides comprehensive outpatient services to the Alaska Native and American Indian population in Interior Alaska. The Health Center is owned by Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) and operates a shuttle to assist Alaska Native patients who are traveling from out of town, usually remote villages, to access care in Fairbanks. Flights are arranged through TCC Transportation. The Health Center on-demand service picks travelers up from the airport and takes them to TCC-owned hotels. The fixed route shuttles takes patients between the hotels, the Health Center, and Fairbanks Memorial Hospital.

Denali Center, Fairbanks Memorial Hospital

The Denali Center is a 90-bed comprehensive skilled nursing facility located next to Fairbanks Memorial Hospital, The Denali Center provides short- and long-term care for terminally ill patients.

Fairbanks Native Association

The mission of the Fairbanks Native Association (FNA) is "to improve the quality of life for individuals and families by promoting justice, healing and wellness in our community." FNA provides an array of programs and support services for local Alaska Natives and their families including behavioral health, educational, justice and community services. FNA provides or supports transportation to several programs including the Elders program, Street Outreach Advocacy Program Basic Center, Family Health & Wellness, and New Hope treatment program.



Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks & Recreation

FNSB Parks & Recreation offers programs for Seniors and Adaptive programs for persons with intellectual disabilities. Eligible participants can use Van Tran to receive rides to these programs.

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District Transportation

The FNSB School District contracts with Durham School Services to bus k-12 students to schools.

Fairbanks Pioneer Home

The The Fairbanks Pioneer Home is one of six Alaska Pioneer Homes accommodating resident elders of the state of Alaska. It is an Eden Alternative® Registered Home and is dedicated to ensuring quality of life for elders and staff. The Pioneer Home is located next to the local senior center and accommodates 91 elders.

Fairbanks Resource Agency

Fairbanks Resource Agency (FRA) provides support for individuals with developmental/physical disabilities including children, adults, and seniors who experience Alzheimer's disease and related dementias and/or other disabling conditions. FRA owns and operates supported residences; provides educational, job training or activity programs; and employs disabled individuals through federal contracts in the community or at Eielson Air Force Base.

Fairbanks Taxi Services (Alaska Cab, King Cab, Arctic Cab)

Fairbanks Taxi Services operates the largest taxi cab business in the interior. With the very recent closure of Fairbanks' Eagle Cab/Yellow Cab, Fairbanks Taxi Services is now the only large scale taxi service in the Fairbanks area. Arctic Cab works with several human service providers under contract to provide rides through various voucher programs (Medicaid ride vouchers or other).

Fort Wainwright Shuttle Service

The Fort Wainwright Shuttle Service began in 2020 in response to morale issues among soldiers on post. A weekday shuttle circulates within the post to provide access to FWW services and destinations. An on-demand ride service will take service men and women to necessary medical appointments off post.

Interior Alaska Bus Line

Interior Alaska Bus Line is a public transit service based in Tok, Alaska. The operation is partially funded through Section 5311 grants. It offers service between Tok and Fairbanks (to the Fairbanks Transit Center) and between Tok and Anchorage. The bus makes one round trip per day on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, starting and ending in Tok.

North Star Council of Aging (Fairbanks Senior Center)

Fairbanks Senior Center is under the umbrella of the North Star Center for Aging, which supports Fairbanks area senior citizens in their efforts to access services they need, commune with others, and maintain quality of life in advanced age. The Senior Center is a community space for events and activities, supports Aging At Home Fairbanks, operates Meals on Wheels, and houses the Aging and Disability Resource Center. The Senior Center offers rides for any reason, scheduled every half hour during operating hours, and subject to availability.

Timber Creek Senior Living

Timber Creek Senior Living is the newest senior residence in Fairbanks. It offers a weekly group shuttle to destinations based on resident demand.

University of Alaska Fairbanks

The University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) offers a campus shuttle service to help students, staff and visitors travel around campus and to major Fairbanks destinations like Fred Meyer and Downtown. UAF hosts a shared bus stop transfer location with the MACS Transit Red, Blue and Yellow Lines to improve campus-community connections.



Existing Conditions



Service Types, Eligibility, and Ridership

Table 9: Service types and eligibility for other transportation providers

Organization	Transportation Type(s)	Passenger Eligibility	Eligible Destinations or Trip Purpose
Access Alaska	Demand Response	Persons with physical or mental impairment	For access to programs and independent living access
Aging At Home Fairbanks	Demand Response.	Seniors 60+ who are paying members of Aging at Home Fairbanks	Anywhere, any purpose.
Arctic Medical Transport	Demand Response NEMT; door-to-door	NEMT trips for the elderly, ambulatory disabled, or wheelchair-bound clients. Accepts Medicaid. ADA-accessible.	Anywhere. Medical purposes if Medicaid/Medicare trip.
Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center	Fixed route; Demand Response	Indian Health Service beneficiaries from outside of Fairbanks who are visiting for medical reasons.	Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center or other medical facility. Airport and hotels.
Denali Center	Demand response	Terminally ill residents of Denali Center.	Medical appointments; limited non-medical appointments.
Fairbanks Natives Association (various programs)	Shuttles to programs (locations may vary)	Fairbanks area Alaska Native (specific eligibility varies by program)	FNA Programs
Fairbanks Resource Agency	Fixed Route; Demand Response; Other (Limited individualized services)	Individuals with developmental/physical disabilities (all ages).	Fixed Routes Transport employees to contract locations. Demand response to access FRA facilities or sponsored trainings and activities.
FNSB Parks & Recreation	Demand Response	Van Tran eligible Senior and Adaptive Program Participants	Access to FNSB Adaptive and Senior Programs
FNSB School District	Fixed Route	FNSB School District Students	Access to FNSB Schools
FNSB Transportation - MACS	Fixed Route	General Public	Fixed Route bus stops
FNSB Transportation - Van Tran	Demand Response paratransit	Persons with Disabilities	Destinations within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of MACS fixed route.
Fort Wainwright Shuttle	Fixed route and limited demand response	Soldiers or FWW residents	Fixed route shuttle on FWW Post. Demand response van limited to limited medically necessary appointments off post.
Interior Alaska Bus Line	Fixed Route	General Public	Fixed route bus along the Richardson & AK Highway (Tok to Fairbanks)
King Cab	Demand Response	General Public	Anywhere, any reason.
North Star Council on Aging	Demand Response	Seniors age 60+	Anywhere, any reason.



Organization	Transportation Type(s)	Passenger Eligibility	Eligible Destinations or Trip Purpose
Pioneer Home	Prearranged client access, shuttle	Pioneer Home residents (Seniors 60+)	Medical appointments by reservation. Shuttles for Pioneer Home field trip events.
Timber Creek Senior Living	Shuttle	Timber Creek residents (Seniors 60+)	Excursion destinations determined by residents.
UAF	Fixed Route	UAF Students & Staff, Campus Visitors	Access around UAF Campus and between Campus and Fairbanks.

Resources & Ridership

Table 10: Resources for transportation providers

Organization	Vehicle Type(s)	Total Fleet Vehicles	Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles	Drivers	Admin Staff	Average Trips/month (approx.)
Access Alaska	Van, car	2	No	4	6	Unknown
Aging At Home Fairbanks	Volunteer personal vehicles (varies)	0	No	12-16 volunteer drivers	1.5 (total organization)	30
Arctic Medical Transport	Minivans	6	1	5	3	300
Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center	Vans	5	1	5	1	Information not provided.
Denali Center	Bus, van	2	2	3	10	100
Fairbanks Natives Association	No info.	No info.	No info.	No info.	No info.	Information not provided.
Fairbanks Resource Agency	Vans, minivans, cars, SUVs, trucks	32	Unknown	80	1 fleet manager, 5 program directors	3,233
FNSB Parks & Recreation	Uses Van Tran	Uses Van Tran	Uses Van Tran	Uses Van Tran	Uses Van Tran	Information not provided.
FNSB School District	No info.	No info.	No info.	No info.	No info.	Information not provided.
FNSB Transportation - MACS	Bus	15	12	27	2	25,700
FNSB Transportation - Van Tran	Transit Van	9	9	6	2	1,600
Fort Wainwright Shuttle	Van, bus	4	Unknown	4	Unknown	Shuttle: 603 On-Call: 6,194 Total: 6,765
Interior Alaska Bus Line	Transit Van, minivan, buses	5	4	2	2	Information not provided.



Organization	Vehicle Type(s)	Total Fleet Vehicles	Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles	Drivers	Admin Staff	Average Trips/month (approx.)
King Cab	Sedans, Mini-vans, SUVs	24	No	0 (Drivers are contracted)	1 book-keeper, 5 dispatchers	18,000
North Star Council on Aging	Minivan, Van	2	1	1	1	180
Pioneer Home	No info.	No info.	No information	No info.	No info.	Information not provided.
Timber Creek Senior Living	No info.	No info.	No info.	No info.	No info.	Information not provided.
UAF	Bus, van	7	Unknown	6	1	6,000

Schedules and Availability

Table 11: Schedule for other transportation

Organization	Monday - Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Access Alaska	8am-5pm	NO SERVICE	NO SERVICE
Aging At Home Fairbanks	24/7 (subject to volunteer availability)	24/7 (subject to volunteer availability)	24/7 (subject to volunteer availability)
Arctic Medical Transport	7am-4pm	NO SERVICE	NO SERVICE
Chief Andrew Isaac Shuttle	7:30am-6pm	8AM-8PM	8AM-8PM
Chief Andrew Isaac Airport pickup	5:30AM-8PM	6:30-8PM	8am-6pm
Denali Center	8am-4:30pm (after hours service by request based on availability)	NO SERVICE	NO SERVICE
FNA	Information not provided	Information not provided	Information not provided
FRA Residential, Respite On-Demand, and Federal Employment Shuttle	24/7	24/7	24/7
FRA Senior Services & Family Support	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm
FNSB Parks & Recreation	6:30am-10:00pm (for programs during Van Tran hours)	NO SERVICE	NO SERVICE
FNSB School District	6-9:30am; 3-5pm	NO SERVICE	NO SERVICE
FNSB Transportation - MACS	6:30am-10:00pm	NO SERVICE	NO SERVICE
FNSB Transportation - Van Tran	6:30am-10:00pm	NO SERVICE	NO SERVICE
Fort Wainwright Fixed Route Shuttle	7:45am-6:45pm	NO SERVICE	NO SERVICE
Fort Wainwright On Demand	5:15am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm



Organization	Monday - Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Interior Alaska Bus Line	MWF Only: 7am-11am Tok-Fairbanks 12pm-4pm Fairbanks to Tok	NO SERVICE	NO SERVICE
King Cab	24/7	24/7	24/7
North Star Council on Aging	7:30am-1:00pm	NO SERVICE	NO SERVICE
Pioneer Home	Information not provided	Information not provided	Information not provided
Timber Creek Senior Living	Information not provided	Information not provided	Information not provided
UAF	7am-10pm	NO SERVICE	NO SERVICE



Existing Conditions



Fairbanks
Coordinated
Human Services
Transportation Plan

5. Transportation Needs and Gaps

The 2024 Coordinated Human Services Plan provides recommendations to improve services through better coordination among transit and transportation providers throughout the FNSB.

This chapter highlights a list of priority needs and gaps based on findings in the Existing Conditions Report, insight from the Project Management Team and Steering Committee, feedback from Public Workshop #1, and interviews with and data from human services and transportation providers

Needs and gaps are organized and discussed in seven broad categories:

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

Need 1: Formalized Transportation Coordination

While there are many examples of effective coordination among transportation providers, almost all other needs could be addressed more efficiently and effectively with more frequent and formal coordination.

Notable gaps in coordination include:

Lack of a centralized effort or leader to focus solely on addressing local transit and transportation needs.

Need 2: Expanded Services And Coverage

Coverage

- ★ The Existing Conditions report shows that MACS and Van Tran coverage area is accessible to the people who are most likely to use

and benefit from public transit and paratransit. But significant gaps exist that could be addressed by other providers and programs, both existing and yet to be.



- ★ Rural areas of the Borough have sizeable populations, but the sparseness makes them poor candidates for transit. Organizations farther from Fairbanks, like the Santa's Senior in North Pole and Salcha Senior Center also do not have vehicles of their own or money to purchase them.
- ★ For a community so dependent on large military installations to maintain its economy and population, there is surprisingly little connection between the service men and women and the civilian environment. The failed experiment of offering a MACS Transit Black Line and Gold Line to Eielson and FWW should inform the community that this was not an efficient use of the transit system. But there may still be opportunity for solutions through better coordination with other providers.
- ★ Feedback from bus riders and an evaluation of watershed maps highlighted an oddly centralized coverage gap at Phillips Field Road and the VA that unfortunately leaves a cluster of medical facilities, including most notably the VA clinic, inaccessible for many.
- ★ Van Tran service is not able to go beyond the ¾ miles minimum distance from the transit route. While this is due in part to needing drivers, additional resources necessary to expand Van Tran service beyond this minimum are a dedicated Van Tran supervisor, scheduling and dispatching software, and more vans or paratransit vehicles. And though USC Title 49 Sec 5311 funding would help fund a greater service area, the size of the FNSB make this additional population too costly to serve and keep track of.

Schedule

- ★ Reinstating Saturday service and beginning Sunday service were the most-requested improvements by a landslide. In the meantime, there are few other services that offer flexible weekend schedules or during early or late hours.

- ★ Only Taxi Cabs (expensive without a Medicaid voucher) and Volunteers (hard to secure a ride) have an open schedule that includes all ours and weekends.
- ★ Schedule, like coverage, is dependent on having funds for working vehicles. Some organizations, like FRA and Senior Center, struggle to keep up a high-mileage fleet due to the cost of replacing vehicles.

Service Types and Eligibility

- ★ Many established transportation services are only for client access or medical purposes, or for a specific population (seniors, persons with disabilities).
- ★ Those that are flexible and affordable maybe offer limited trips or only for certain population (AAHF, Seniors).
- ★ Most services are curb-to-curb and some are door-to-door. There is little "door-through-door," where a trained driver or care provider can help someone with the belongings and groceries into their home. If the senior population trend continues, this need will only increase.
- ★ Van Tran's eligibility application is notoriously onerous to complete, but federal requirements may prevent some simplifications. The frustrating application combined with a low probability of getting a ride that is not Priority Level A dampen motivation for would-be riders, and many opt for an alternate option.
- ★ Vehicle cost is a limiting factor for many organizations, especially ADA-accessible vehicles, resulting in relatively few vehicles with wheelchair lifts and less overall ADA-accessible service.



Need 3: Workforce Development, Recruitment & Retention

Capacity

- ★ Nearly every organization that directly provides transportation mentioned having trouble filling positions. Many added that human capacity (more so than funding or other issues) was often the limiting factor in whether they could provide a service.
- ★ As Baby-Boomers are retiring and leaving the workforce, demand for these services only increase as available pool of people to take care of the aging generation is fewer.
- ★ Organizations may be spending resources on Redundant problem-solving and hiring efforts that could be more efficiently addressed with a coordinated recruitment approach.
- ★ Van Tran's Trips by priority level show that only a small percentage of those eligible class B and C riders can get a ride, presumably because of driver shortages.
- ★ Transportation providers and spoke out about redundant trainings for drivers and personal care providers.

Need 4: Education & Awareness

Education and training for new riders

- ★ Staff of human services organizations (particularly those serving senior and persons seeking employment) of many kinds assist customers with finding and filing for aid programs. Many are duplicating efforts helping people sign up for Medicaid or Van Tran. There is a general lack of awareness in the community about these programs, who is eligible, and how to apply. Few people become transit-dependent and give up mobility freedom voluntarily: it may take ageing, inability to drive, or a lost job to force one to learn a new transportation system. A lack of a centralized or coordinated education and awareness program or resource allows this barrier to persist.

Education & Training for Community

- ★ Having rarely or never relied on transit, the public and elected leaders may not understand the essential benefits of well-funded and coordinated transit system. As public transportation is a cornerstone of the economy, education and advocacy for system investments is necessary to keep the community mobile and working.
- ★ New case managers or human services providers may need training in programs like Medicaid, Medicare, Van Tran eligibility, and about local transportation options to help clients access their services.

Need 5: Year-Round Walkability

Winter Maintenance

- ★ The 10-minute walkshed used in Chapter 4, while adjusted for traffic stress and accessi-

bility, does not account for Fairbanks winter conditions. According to several service providers, the added burden, discomfort,



and risk associated with getting to a bus stop through snow drifts in the cold and dark is practically unthinkable. This is especially true for many seniors and for persons with limited mobility.

- ★ Needed is an approach to addressing snow clearing more rapidly after weather events, and more strategically to prioritize corridors and stops based on highest need.

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

Growing Senior population

- ★ According the 2023 North Star Borough Senior Needs Transportation Report, the population of senior citizens is expected to grow substantially over the next decades.
- ★ With these population demographic changes, the community will need to address many new challenges, such as how to care for and house Alaska's pioneers and ensure our community can age healthfully.
- ★ Safe and comfortable and dependable access to transportation services will be essential for quality life at advanced ages. Transportation access will need to have more influence on personal housing choices and in land use planning and development.
- ★ In the Alaska Commission on Aging Fairbanks North Star Borough 2018 Provider Survey Results Key Findings, "transportation" was listed second among the "Most important services missing/insufficient in the continuum." The same report listed "afternoon transport, better coordination between transport providers, accessible taxis, need to use better vans."
- ★ Transit and coordinated human services transportation will need to be considered in any strategies or plans that attempt to address this change.

Need 7: Data Collection & Management

Redundant efforts

- ★ A common area of effort duplication among service providers appears to be in collecting and managing data about transportation services, resources and needs.
- ★ Transportation providers need consistent methods to manage and share information in order to effectively share resources and report to grantors and partners.
- ★ Address redundant and time-intensive methods of scheduling and dispatching.





6. Vision, Goals & Objectives

A vision for a coordinated transportation system laid the foundation for the plan, guided the goals and objectives, and provide a tool for prioritizing actions and investments. Several meetings with the internal project management team, FNSB Transportation staff, the Steering Committee, and feedback from Public Workshop #1 were instrumental in crafting and refining the vision statement and goals and objectives for the coordinated transportation system.

🕒 Vision Statement

Anyone in the Borough, from most to least advantaged, including elderly, children, families, 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 equitable transportation options to elevate their independence, freedom, and opportunities for a cohesive and enriching public life.

🕒 Goals and Objectives

Goal 1

Expand Communication, Education, and Awareness

Objective 1A

Effectively market transportation resources in the Borough.

Objective 1B

Support access to community services through education and awareness (host meetings, webinars, info distribution materials, etc.)

Objective 1C

Develop education materials and deliver consistent information about all mobility options, including transit services, providers, and partners.

Goal 2

Strengthen provider resources and ensure consistent and reliable funding for services and programs.

Objective 2A

Increase resources for local match.

Objective 2B

Develop a system to identify and promote funding opportunities for regional providers and programs.

Objective 2C

Explore transit pass partnership with Medicaid.



Goal 3

Collect data consistently and coordinate information sharing to enhance transit equity and service delivery.

Objective 3A

Combine and coordinate efforts to analyze travel patterns and regional demographics to better understand gaps in service areas.

Objective 3B

Reduce barriers to transit ridership including fare burdens on the population that needs transit mobility options the most including youth, college students, low income, minority, disabled, service members, and seniors.

Objective 3C

Ensure impacted communities are involved in transit decisions by bringing engagement opportunities to them.

Goal 4

Expand service availability through ongoing coordination, collaboration, and partnerships.

Objective 4A

Communicate Van Tran service availability and eligibility to partners.

Objective 4B

Improve medical transportation through tools such as transit passes and building relationships with providers and agency programs.

Objective 4C

Identify and leverage partnerships to expand geographic reach and improve service availability in rural areas.

Goal 5

Plan and coordinate safe, affordable, and accessible services for Borough residents.

Objective 5A

Develop and support Borough-wide technology measures for customers and providers.

Objective 5B

Ensure scheduling methods and software are accessible.

Objective 5C

Educate and empower riders to schedule their own trips.

Objective 5D

Upgrade facilities, bus stops, and transfer stations.

Objective 5E

Address winter maintenance to reduce mobility challenges from snow and ice.

Objective 5F

Simplify fares and scheduling for older adults and individuals with disabilities.





7. Recommendations & Implementation Strategies for Coordinated Transportation

Recommendations for the 2024 Transportation Plan

The following sections outline recommendations that human services, transportation providers (including MACS Transit & Van Tran, non-profits, and commercial providers), FAST Planning, and partner agencies can pursue to address the needs through coordinated efforts.

Strategies are organized to address each of the seven Priority Needs areas for coordinated transportation outlined in the Transportation Needs and Gaps Needs chapter.

Recommendations come from a variety of sources throughout the project which include adopted plans, the rider survey, the existing conditions report, the operator survey, the needs analysis, steering committee feedback, and data from and interviews with local human service and transportation providers.

Priority Need #1: Formalized Transportation Coordination

Strategy A

Establish a Borough-wide Mobility Coordination Committee (MCC)

Awareness of other organizations and their resources, issues experienced, and strategies to address transportation needs of their clientele is essential for coordinating services. Coordination and capacity building through regular meeting and sharing ideas is lacking across the broader group of transportation providers. Regular communication among providers is a necessary first step for nearly all other strategies and recommendations. Staff come and go often, available resources change, and organizations emerge and bust. A MCC is an im-

portant means to preserve institutional knowledge, maintain and grow the thread of coordination spun during this plan, and carry progress through the next planning effort.

The makeup of such a committee will include specific non-profits, agencies, and private operators that have a role in coordinating transportation, each with their own missions, budgets, and bottom lines. Motivating continued participation will be important and challenging. For these reasons, it will be imperative to ensure that, however the group is organized and led, all participating members who are offering their time clearly stand to benefit in time and financial savings and service improvements for their customers. Having specific, prioritized, and unifying goals that benefit all parties and their customers



and beneficiaries will keep a group focused and more likely to see success and build momentum. It is recommended that, if possible, past members of prior iterations of this proposed committee — the Fairbanks Transportation Partnership Group (FTPG; responsible for the 2015 CHSTP update) and/or

the Fairbanks Mobility Coalition — be members of the MCC. If formally organized, such a group can become a pass-through for FTA 5310 grants.

Options for organizing and their relative advantages and challenges include:

Table 12: Options for Organization

Organization Option	Advantages	Challenges
No formal organization	Flexibility and low investment are the primary advantages. May be best during interim startup phase to determine focus, roles, commitment levels, and future.	Less structure, possibly less motivation to participate, fewer access to funding resources, less indicative of a unified voice and therefore advocacy hold less weight. Not recommended as a long-term solution.
Form as a separate 501c3 or similar non-profit	Formally organized, represents a unified voice and holds more weight. Can access more funding programs than if unorganized. Can eventually have a dedicated staff (See strategy 1.B.). Can set own policies and bylaws. Can determine own membership. Can accept 5311 funds where FAST Planning MPO cannot.	More administrative responsibility and costs,
Form under an existing organization. Leaders to consider: FRA, Access Alaska, Tanana Chiefs Conference, or FNA.	Utilize existing resources and organizational capacity. Can eventually hire staff (See strategy 1.B.). May be eligible as a pass-through entity for 5310 and 5311 funds. Leadership considerations: FRA has a large vehicle fleet, a fleet manager, previous experience coordinating with the FNSB, and serves multiple populations in need. Access Alaska helped lead the previous “Fairbanks Mobility Coalition” and hosted the Transit Navigator position (both defunct prior to 2020). Tanana Chiefs Conference and FNA may be eligible to receive more resources through the 5311 rural and Tribal Transit programs.	Burden falls on one entity. Parent organization may have less incentive to support operations that don’t directly benefit its constituents.
Form as a FNSB Advisory Commission	Closest coordination with FNSB Transportation and transit services. Capitalize on FNSB staff resources. Can establish membership constitution in code. May influence creation of Mobility Management Program under FNSB (see strategy 1.B.).	Narrow jurisdiction. Less flexibility. Passive role advises the FNSB Mayor only: recommendations must be politically approved. Subject to Open Meetings act. Would require Assembly to codify the commission.
Form as an advisory committee under FAST Planning	Capitalize on staff resources, knowledge of funding programs and planning engagement, and connections to agencies. Can designate committee seats for specific types of organizations. May influence creation of Mobility Management Program and staff under FAST (see strategy 1.B.).	Narrow jurisdiction (MPO). Less flexibility. May not be eligible as a pass-through entity for 5311 funds for rural areas of the Borough.



Strategy B

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

The Mobility Management Program carries forward the primary recommendation from the 2011 Mobility Management Plan and 2015 CHSTP. Staff positions are meant to implement the 2023 Transit Plan recommendation to establish a Transportation Coordinator position.

A common reason for lack of coordination is a lack of capacity, specifically to dedicate time away from each organization's primary services. Coordination capacity can improve by investing in staff positions dedicated to executing the coordinated plan's recommendations, including bringing in more resources. Such a position can be funded in full or partially through grant programs to which they apply. A team of two is recommended which could include one executive coordinator role (Mobility Manager or Transportation Coordinator) and one educational and outreach role (Transportation Navigator or Trave Trainer). The previous FTPG leveraged their resources to fund an AmeriCorps VISTA Volunteer position to support coordination, a model that could work well again.

Under what organizational umbrella these positions exist poses similar considerations as for the MCC. A Mobility Management Program and its staff should work closely with the MCC, but would not necessarily need to be governed, managed, or employed by them. More so than for the MCC, it is critical that the positions are employed under a stable organization.

Strategy C

Formalize partnerships to leverage funding opportunities

A mutually beneficial focus of coordinating will be to identify and educate providers on funding streams, understand common expenses that could be shared, and building relationships to form agreements.

A hybrid Joint-Use/Brokerage agreement for transportation provision and scheduling, described in detail in the 2015 CHSTP, maintains the same advantages as before. Ideally the scheduling will become a responsibility of a new Mobility Manager position (Strategy 1B) rather than place more responsibility on existing FNSB Transportation dispatchers. The short-term actions of transportation providers preparing for agreements should be to 1) identify potential agreement participants and customers, 2) establish common service rate structure, 3) standardize reporting methods (National Transportation Database model is recommended), 4) establish and agree to shared performance measures, 5) determine method and frequency of monitoring and evaluating performance.

Priority Need #2: Expanded Services and Coverage

Strategy A

Grow and expand a coordinated Volunteer Driver Network.

Aging At Home Fairbanks (AAHF) has established a successful volunteer driver program for senior citizen members but is limited by staff capacity to coordinate rides, membership dues, volunteer driver numbers, and reliance on personal vehicles. The first step to expanding this program, currently based mostly in Fairbanks, is to connect with Santa's Seniors in North Pole and the Salcha Senior Center in Salcha to increase membership and volunteer base. A Mobility Manager position can add capacity and reduce redundant efforts by centralizing scheduling. The goal will be to grow the volunteer program beyond AAHF to increase overall rides and be able to serve more than just seniors. Another step will be to find funding to procure vehicles for properly trained and registered volunteer drivers to use.



Strategy B

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

Carpool, Vanpool, and other Rideshare programs have been successful at connecting rural commuters to the fixed route system. They can start at small scales, build off a successful volunteer driver program, and partner with businesses or non-profits for access to vehicles and training. Better coordination can lead to opportunities for qualified human services transportation providers to access pass-through funding for vehicle needs. For example, FAST Planning could act as a pass through for an organization like FRA or the Senior Center to purchase or rent vehicles to start a rideshare or vanpool program to fulfill a particular commuting need. Vans with electric wheelchair lifts are a need in the community's collective fleet, but are cost prohibitive for many organizations, including taxi cabs. Affording this important resource may only be feasible through federal grant programs or by sharing among other providers to increase its productivity.

The MCC should investigate opportunities to develop fixed route shuttle programs, partnering with agencies or companies whose employees or constituents are commuting on regular route at regular times. For example, FRA shuttles their employees to Fort Wainwright and Eielson Air Force Base for contract labor. Rather than return to Fairbanks with empty vans, FRA could take commuting service men/women to Fairbanks.

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.

Lyft and Uber are growing their NEMT services (Lyft Healthcare, Uber Health) nationwide. Coordinating with these companies and local drivers and building off their established technology

and institutional frameworks in other states can improve on-demand service capacity. Instituting technology that simplifies scheduling between transit and TNCs or other coordinated services will be important to reduce the coordination burden on riders and providers.

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.

The COVID-19 pandemic era of baby-boomer mass retirement and resulting workforce shortages have affected nearly every industry. Workforce shortages among drivers and personal care providers is the primary limiter to most organizations' abilities to provide rides and addressing this should be an immediate focus of MCC. A combined, coordinated, and cooperative (rather than competitive) effort to recruit and retain drivers and personal care providers is necessary to fill this gap. Investing in funding formal, professional marketing campaign and recruitment strategy is recommended and necessary to maximize the community's current investment in the transit system. This should include outreach to younger generations to understand their desires and increase awareness around and attractiveness of the positions. Coordination with the University of Alaska system and the Teamsters Union to increase educational opportunities and vocational training in Fairbanks is recommended.



Priority Need #4: Education and Awareness

Strategy A

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

To increase the number of choice riders and improve awareness for those who are or will become transit-dependent, the plan recommends an investment in advertising the benefits of using transit and normalize using transit. Educating about the economic benefits and necessity of having transit and coordinated transportation can help generate support among community and political leaders. The DOTP&F May 2022 publication “The Economic Value of Public Transit in Alaska” is a resource that should be used and continually updated.

Strategy B

Design and develop a Travel Training and Outreach Program.

The need for a centralized source of information about navigating transit and transportation options, as well as a mobile, “we come to you” outreach resource is recommended. Interviews with human services providers noted the preference for many clients for travel training to be delivered to their residential or community spaces. This can be delivered directly to potential riders and indirectly through case managers and service coordinators. This is an appropriate responsibility of a Transportation Navigator or similar position.

Priority Need #5: Year-Round Walkability

Strategy A

Improve transit accessibility at the corridor level.

This strategy parallels those in the 2023 Transit Plan Update where coordination can assist with accessibility. The MCC and partners should advocate for prioritizing snow removal along core bus routes and access routes to them. Partners can

also spearhead an “adopt-a-sidewalk” program to encourage business and volunteer maintenance of sidewalks to high-use bus stops,

Strategy B

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

Advocate for prioritizing projects that improve accessibility and walkability near human/social service provider locations and closest stops. Work with DOTP&F and FAST Planning, and FNSB on scoring criteria for grant program applications and infrastructure projects. Review criteria for Transportation Alternatives Program projects, Transportation Improvement Programs, and Capital Improvement Programs.

Priority Need #6: Responding to Changing 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.

Continue to engage seniors, persons with disabilities, and low-income households in local planning to ensure local development considers community transportation needs and access to the transit system. A role of the MCC should be to learn about and stay involved in regular local planning efforts including Transportation Improvement Programs and Capital Improvement Programs, Regional Long Range Transportation Planning, Metropolitan Transportation Planning, FNSB Regional Comprehensive Plan and other areawide and land use plans, Community Economic Development Plans, and zoning changes.

Strategy B

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



Discourage expanding transit service to “chase” new high-density development outside the current network or adding coverage in rural areas that would yield low ridership. Instead, encourage dense land uses and transit-supportive road and pedestrian improvements along existing transit corridors and the most frequent and productive routes.

Strategy C

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

Local demographic changes, particularly the growing senior population, are highlighting the Fairbanks area’s deficiencies in planning for essential resources. The MCC and partners should advocate for the community’s investment in generating a Housing Action Plan or similar, a Healthy Aging Plan or similar, and a Coordinated Housing/Supportive Services Plan or similar. These community functions affect and are affected by transit and transportation services.

Within the FNSB is the FAST Planning Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) that covers transportation planning for the cities of Fairbanks and North Pole and some extensions. Beyond those jurisdictional boundaries and surrounding this metropolitan core are many rural communities such as Ester, Two Rivers and Pleasant Valley, Salcha, and Goldstream do not benefit from FAST Planning’s resources and abilities to fund transportation projects. A Rural Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO), if established, could organize coordination efforts and bring in new funding sources (FTA 5311) for transit and transportation improvements for these communities. The MCC and partners should encourage FAST, FNSB and DOTP&F to strongly consider developing a RTPO for the rural FNSB as a means of funding and facilitating this plan’s strategies to meet the many needs of rural residents.

Priority Need #7 Data Collection & Management

Strategy A

Establish a Data Collection and Management Plan.

Redundant efforts can be streamlined by establishing and promote consistent collection and reporting methods for resource and ride data. MCC partners can create a shared, centralized database and assist in the annual collection of provider and community transportation data. The database could be managed by the Mobility Coordinator or their parent organization.

Strategy B

Collect information about need.

The recent Senior Transportation Needs Assessment is an excellent example of the benefits of researching and documenting the needs of transportation-dependent persons. This effort should be repeated, perhaps semi-annually or every 5 years, and similar assessments should be conducted for other transportation-dependent populations.

The American Community Survey is a useful tool to monitor population demographic trends at the census block level. However, a few of the FNSB census blocks are extremely large, adding to the challenge of determining the specific needs of a sub-community or neighborhood. Efforts to understand transportation needs at a more granular level may be necessary to understand where transportation-dependent individuals reside and their travel patterns.

Strategy C

Collect information about available resources.

A challenge of this and every CHST planning effort is attempting to inventory available transportation resources such as vehicles quantities and conditions, finances, facilities, and staff. As this information is subject to frequent change, a shared



database among MCC members and partners is recommended.

Strategy D

Collect evaluative information about perceptions/satisfaction

Regular assessments are necessary for monitoring progress. Various entities have helpful assessments that can and should be applied to the Fairbanks

community. These include the FTA's "Framework for Action" Coordinated Transportation System Self-Assessment Tool, the National Center for Mobility Management's Community Self-Assessment Tools (multiple), and the American Association of Retired Persons Age-Friendly Community Assessments. These and other assessments can be performed at the city and Borough levels.

Prioritized Strategies and Plan Implementation

Formalized Transportation Coordination

Table 13a: Priority Need #1 Formalized Transportation Coordination

Coordinated Strategies	Implementation Actions	Priority or Timeframe	Responsible Entity
A. Establish a Borough-wide Mobility Coordination Committee (MCC)	<p>Host initial meeting to discuss membership and charter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish membership consisting of human services and transportation providers Determine lead agency or individual Establish charter (bylaws, articles of incorporation, purpose, etc.) Set next meeting <p>Forge partnerships with agencies providing and supporting transportation and human services:</p> <p>Establish a unified voice to advise on, advocate for and prioritize policies, projects and programs affecting transportation opportunities:</p>	<p>IMMEDIATE</p> <p>6 to 12 Months</p>	<p>FAST Planning, FNSB, FRA, NSCA</p>
B. Establish Borough-wide Mobility Management Program: Fairbanks Area Mobility Management (FAMM)	<p>Create a Mobility Manager or Human Services Transportation Coordinator Position.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure funding Develop a job description Hire and train <p>Create a Transportation Navigator/Travel Trainer position</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure funding Develop a job description Hire and train <p>Develop a plan for future of Mobility Management program or organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish roles and responsibilities of partner organization 	<p>SHORT-TERM</p> <p>1 to 3 years</p>	<p>MCC, FAST, FNSB</p>
C. Formalize partnerships to leverage funding opportunities.	<p>Form brokerage agreements between providers.</p> <p>Identify pass-through funding streams between DOT, FNSB, FAST and human services transportation providers.</p> <p>Collectively approach common costs, such as training, maintenance, and insurance to reduce rates and operational or administrative expenses.</p>	<p>LONG-TERM/ONGOING</p> <p>1-5 years</p>	<p>Lead: FAST, MCC</p> <p>Partners: FNSB, DOT</p>

Expanded Services and Coverage

Table 13b: Priority Need #2 Expanded Services and Coverage

Coordinated Strategies	Implementation Actions	Priority or Timeframe	Responsible Entity
A. Grow and expand a coordinated Volunteer Driver Network.	<p>Expand Aging at Home Fairbanks membership and volunteer pool to the North Pole and Salcha Areas by engaging with the Santa's Seniors and Salcha Seniors organizations.</p> <p>Centralize volunteer scheduling.</p> <p>Standardize driver requirements.</p> <p>Provide incentives for volunteering such as mileage reimbursements.</p>	<p>SHORT-TERM</p> <p>1 to 3 years</p>	<p>Lead: MCC, FAMM</p> <p>Partners: FAST, FNSB, AAHF, NSCA</p>
B. Investigate and evaluate partnerships and models to increase connections between rural areas and the transit network.	<p>Evaluate feasibility of Community Ride Share/ Van Pool program.</p> <p>Investigate demand for and options to improve connections between FWW/Eielson and the transit system.</p>	<p>LONG-TERM/ ONGOING</p> <p>1-5 years</p>	<p>Lead: MCC, FAMM</p> <p>Partners: FAST, DOD, DOT</p>
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.	<p>Establish single-fare and scheduling system for multi-segment trips.</p> <p>Encourage partnership between Fairbanks Uber/Lyft drivers and AK DOH Medicaid & Medicare programs.</p> <p>Incentivize TNC participation in NEMT provision.</p>	<p>MID-TERM</p> <p>2-4 years</p>	<p>Lead: FNSB</p> <p>Partners: MCC, FAMM, TNCs</p>



Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention

Table 13c: Priority Need #3 Workforce Development, Recruitment & Retention

Coordinated Strategies	Implementation Actions	Priority or Timeframe	Responsible Entity
A. Partner across organizations and agencies for a cohesive, cooperative, coordinated outreach campaign to recruit drivers and personal care service staff.	Hire marketing firm to generate a marketing plan to communicate the benefits of becoming a driver or personal caretaker. Establish hiring incentives and benefits across all providers.	IMMEDIATE 6 to 12 Months	Lead: MCC, FAMM Partners: FNSB, AKDOH, AKDOT
B. Share driver training resources.	Create a shared training calendar. Increase Passenger Assistance Training opportunities. Achieve driver and organizational compliance with FTA policies and procedures to be eligible to receive pass-through funding.	SHORT-TERM 1 to 3 years	Lead: MCC, FAMM Partners: FNSB
C. Partner with UAF to grow educational/vocational programs to grow workforce necessary to take care of aging population.	Advocate for resources to grow vocational programs to prepare students for employment opportunities that serve the growing senior and disabled populations. Find funding for a position to hire interim professors to teach currently unavailable classes. Partner with other universities to provide distance-learning for UAF credits through UAF tuition.	MID-TERM 2-4 years	Lead: UAF Partners: FEDC, FHP

Education and Awareness

Table 13d: Priority Need #4 Workforce Development, Recruitment & Retention

Coordinated Strategies	Implementation Actions	Priority or Timeframe	Responsible Entity
A. Establish a formal marketing campaign to educate about transportation resources and encourage use of public transportation.	Engage local government leaders by communicating return-on-investment information and the economic value of public transit in Fairbanks and Alaska. Hire marketing firm to develop media and outreach campaign.	SHORT-TERM 1 to 3 years	Lead: MCC, FAMM
B. Design and develop a Travel Training and Outreach Program.	Include consistent online resources, info about all mobility options (public, private, and non-profit), and utilize all available media (e.g. leave-behind print materials). Ease application processes: Van Tran, Medicaid, Medicare, etc.	MID-TERM 2-4 years	Lead: MCC, FAMM



Year-Round Walkability

Table 13e: Priority Need #5 Year-Round Walkability

Coordinated Strategies	Implementation Actions	Priority or Timeframe	Responsible Entity
A. Improve transit accessibility at the corridor level.	Improve winter maintenance, prioritizing high-need stops along the transit corridor and stops near human services.	LONG-TERM/ONGOING 1-5 years	Lead: FAST
B. Incorporate access to human services providers as a criteria for prioritizing pedestrian access projects.	Advocate for prioritizing projects that improve accessibility and walkability near human/social service provider locations and closest stops.	IMMEDIATE 6 to 12 Months	Lead: FAST, DOT

Respond to Changing Demographics and Transportation Patterns and Needs

Table 13f: Priority Need #6 Respond to Changing Demographics and Transportation Patterns and Needs

Coordinated Strategies	Implementation Actions	Priority or Timeframe	Responsible Entity
A. Ensure the transportation needs of seniors, disabled, and low-income community members are considered in ongoing, relevant planning processes.	Participate in ongoing planning processes to ensure local development considers community transportation needs and access to the transit system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> STIP, TIP, Areawide and Land Use Plans, Zoning changes, CEDS, Regional LRTP, MTP, Regional Comp Plan... Engage seniors, persons with disabilities, and low-income households in local planning.	IMMEDIATE 6 to 13 Months	Lead: MCC
B. Support current investment in transit system with appropriate land use and development planning.	Encourage dense land uses along existing transit corridors and most frequent and productive routes. Discourage transit service changes that “chase” new high-density development outside the current network.	LONG-TERM/ONGOING 1-5 years	Lead: MCC, FNSB
C. Complete the following planning processes and highlight the role of transportation in community development	Housing Action Plan or Housing Development Plan Aging in Place, Healthy Aging, Action Plan on Aging or similar plan Coordinated Housing and Supportive Services planning Fund and establish a Rural Transportation Planning Organization	MID-TERM 2-4 years	Leads: FNSB, FEDC, NSCA



Data Collection and Management

Table 13g: Priority Need #7 Data Collection and Management

Coordinated Strategies	Implementation Actions	Priority or Timeframe	Responsible Entity
A. Establish a Data Collection and Management Plan.	<p>Establish and promote consistent collection and reporting methods.</p> <p>Create a shared, centralized database and assist in the annual collection of provider and community transportation data.</p>	IMMEDIATE 6 to 12 Months	<p>Lead: MCC, FAMM</p> <p>Partners: FAST, FNSB</p>
B. Collect information about need.	<p>Monitor population demographic trends at the census block and more granular levels to understand where transportation-dependent individuals reside.</p> <p>Study travel patterns of transportation-dependent individuals.</p> <p>Continue Senior Needs Assessment and needs assessments for other transportation-dependent populations.</p>	LONG-TERM/ONGOING 1-5 years	<p>Lead: FAMM</p> <p>Partners: NSCA, FNSB</p>
C. Collect information about available resources.	<p>Vehicles</p> <p>Finances</p> <p>Facilities</p> <p>Staff</p> <p>Independent, assisted living Unit inventory (# beds, waitlists, etc.)</p>	SHORT-TERM 1 to 3 years	<p>Lead: FAMM, MCC</p> <p>Partners: FAST, FRA</p>
D. Collect evaluative information about perceptions/satisfaction	<p>Perform Community Coordination Assessment.</p> <p>Perform regular AARP Age-friendly community assessments at City and Borough levels.</p>	MID-TERM 2-4 years	<p>Lead: FAMM, NSCA</p>



○ Potential Funding Sources for Implementation

Several federal grant programs are available for eligible communities and organizations to receive funds for transit and transportation programs, including coordination, and infrastructure to improve access to transit. The table below lists key programs, eligibility requirements, and how they are applied to a coordinated community transportation system.

Accelerating Innovative Mobility (AIM)

Program Goals

- ★ Identify, test, and prove out new approaches, technologies and service models.
- ★ Promote the most promising mobility innovations that can be implemented more broadly through FTA's capital programs.
- ★ Establish a national network of transit stakeholders that are incorporating innovative approaches and business models to improve mobility.

The federal share of project costs under this program is limited to 80 percent. Proposers may seek a lower federal contribution. The applicant must provide the local share of the net project cost in cash, or in-kind, and must document in its application the source of the local match. (<https://www.transit.dot.gov/AIM>)

Eligibility

Eligible activities include all activities leading to the development and/or testing of new approaches and tools for improving mobility.

Projects that develop novel operational concepts and/or demonstrate innovations that improve mobility and enhance the rider experience, focused on innovative service delivery models, creative financing, novel partnerships, and integrated payment solutions, or other innovative solutions.

Eligible activities may include all activities leading to uncovering the next iteration of promising technologies, practices and strategies that accelerate innovations in mobility for transit, including, but not limited to, technology scanning and feasibility

analysis, engagement and outreach, planning, acquiring essential equipment or services, project implementation, modeling forecast of climate and equity impacts of proposed novel concepts, and evaluating project results.

Projects that develop software to facilitate demand-response public transportation that dispatches transit vehicles through riders' mobile devices or other advanced means.

Eligible activities may include establishing user needs; defining system requirements; development, validation, and verification of the software; modeling and simulation; and/or pilot implementation, with a software solution.

Application

Application opportunities are posted in the form of a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) (<https://www.transit.dot.gov/notices-funding/fiscal-year-2024-enhancing-mobility-innovation-notice-funding>)

The NOFO makes \$1,936,000 available under the Public Transportation Innovation Program. Project proposals are due August 30, 2024.

Capital Investment Grants (CIG) – 5309

(<https://www.transit.dot.gov/capital-investment-grants-5309>)

Discretionary grant program funds transit capital investments, including heavy rail, commuter rail, light rail, streetcars and bus rapid transit. Fiscal years 2022-26 each have \$3 billion in authorized funding subject to appropriation, with additional \$1.6 billion per year in advanced appropriations.



<https://www.transportation.gov/rural/grant-toolkit/capital-investment-grants>

Eligibility

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST) requires projects fall under 1 of 3 categories:

New Starts and Small Starts: Design and construction of new fixed-guideways or extensions to fixed guideways (projects that operate on a separate right-of-way exclusively for public transportation, or that include a rail or a catenary system).

Small Starts: Design and construction of corridor-based bus rapid transit projects operating in mixed traffic that represent a substantial investment in the corridor and emulate the features of rail.

Core Capacity: Design and construction of a corridor-based investment in an existing fixed guideway system that improves capacity not less than 10 percent in a corridor that is at capacity today or will be in 10 years. The project may not include elements designed to maintain a state of good repair.

Joint intercity rail/public transportation project: Design and construction elements attributable to the public transportation portion of the total project cost based on projected use of the new segment or expanded capacity of the project corridor, not including elements designed to achieve a state of good repair.

Application

Federal transit law requires transit agencies seeking CIG funding to complete a series of steps over several years. New Starts and Core Capacity projects require completion of two phases in advance of receipt of a construction grant agreement.

Project Development and Engineering. Small Starts projects require completion of one phase in advance of receipt of a construction grant agreement.

Project Development. Projects must also be rated by FTA at various points in the process according to statutory criteria evaluating project justification and local financial commitment.

Enhancing Mobility Innovation

Promotes technology projects that center the passenger experience and encourage people to get on board, such as integrated fare payment systems and user-friendly software for demand-response public transportation. The federal share of project costs under this program is limited to 80%.

<https://www.transit.dot.gov/research-innovation/enhancing-mobility-innovation>

Eligibility

Eligible projects fit under one of two topical areas:

1. Develop novel operational concepts and/or demonstrate innovations that improve mobility and enhance the rider experience, focused on innovative service delivery models, creative financing, novel partnerships, and integrated payment solutions, or other innovative solutions.

This includes all activities leading to uncovering the next iteration of promising technologies, practices and strategies that accelerate innovations in mobility for transit, including, but not limited to, technology scanning and feasibility analysis, stakeholder engagement and outreach, planning, acquiring essential equipment or services, project implementation, modeling forecast of climate and equity impacts of proposed novel concepts and evaluating project results.

2. Develops software to facilitate demand-response public transportation that dispatches transit vehicles through riders' mobile devices or other means.

Eligible activities may include:



- ★ establishing user needs
- ★ defining system requirements
- ★ development, validation and verification of the software
- ★ modeling and simulation
- ★ pilot implementation, with a software solution

Application

Enhancing Mobility Innovation (<https://www.transit.dot.gov/research-innovation/enhancing-mobility-innovation>) Promotes technology projects that center the passenger experience and encourage people to get on board, such as integrated fare payment systems and user-friendly software for demand-response public transportation. The federal share of project costs under this program is limited to 80%.

Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Program

To assist in the financing of buses and bus facilities capital projects, including replacing, rehabilitating, purchasing or leasing buses or related equipment, and rehabilitating, purchasing, constructing or leasing bus-related facilities.

(<https://www.transit.dot.gov/bus-program>)

Eligibility

Eligible Activities: Capital projects to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses, vans, and related equipment, and to construct bus-related facilities, including technological changes or innovations to modify low or no emission vehicles or facilities. Additionally, 0.5% of a request may be for workforce development training, and an additional 0.5% may be for training at the [National Transit Institute](#). Applicants proposing any project related to zero-emission vehicles must also spend 5% of their award on workforce development and training as outlined in their [Zero-Emission Transition Plan](#), unless the applicant certifies that their financial need is less.

Application

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) posts all competitive grant and cooperative agreement opportunities on Grants.gov, the comprehensive government-wide website for announcing competitive grant opportunities. Grants.gov is the single, secure Federal website unifying 1,000 grant programs from 26 Federal grant-making agencies.

FTA's Transit Award Management System (TrAMS) is FTA's system for awarding and managing grants and cooperative agreements. To access the system, you need to be employed by an organization that has been established in TrAMS to receive funding from FTA and have a user account established in TrAMS by FTA headquarters or one of FTA's regional offices.

TrAMS is scheduled to close for FTAs 2024 fiscal year-end financial reconciliation at 8 pm (EDT) on Monday, September 23, 2024.

(<https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/applying/applying-fta-funding>)

Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility Grants (ICAM)

(<https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/grant-programs/access-and-mobility-partnership-grants>)

To support innovative projects for the transportation disadvantaged that will improve the coordination of transportation services and non-emergency medical transportation services.

Eligibility

Eligible Activities: The ICAM Pilot Program awards funds competitively to finance innovative capital projects for the transportation disadvantaged that improve the coordination of non-emergency medical transportation services.

Application

There is no minimum or maximum grant award amount; however, FTA intends to fund as many



meritorious projects as possible. Due to funding limitations, projects selected for funding may receive less than the amount requested. In those cases, applicants must be able to demonstrate that the proposed projects are still viable and can be completed with the amount awarded.

(<https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/applying/applying-fta-funding>)

Integrated Mobility Innovation (IMI)

Program goals are

- ★ Enhance transit industry preparedness for IMI.
- ★ Assist the transit industry to develop the ability to integrate IMI practices with existing public transit service.
- ★ Validate the technical and institutional feasibility of IMI business models, and document IMI best practices that may emerge from the demonstrations.
- ★ Measure the impacts of IMI on travelers and transportation systems.
- ★ Examine relevant public sector and Federal requirements, regulations, and policies that may support or hamper the public transit sector's adoption of IM (<https://www.transit.dot.gov/IMI>).

Eligibility

Eligible Activities fall under three research focus areas: Planning and developing business models, obtaining equipment and service, acquiring, or developing software and hardware interfaces to implement the project, operating the demonstration, and providing data to support performance measurement and evaluation.

Application

In 2020, \$20.3 million in funding was granted to 25 projects in 23 states (press release link) FTA last announced a Notice of Funding Opportunity due December 6, 2021 (link)

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

Provides funding and procedural requirements for multimodal transportation planning in metropolitan areas and states. Planning needs to be cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive, resulting in long range plans and short-range programs reflecting transportation investment priorities.

Eligibility

Eligible planning activities: The development of transportation plans and programs; the planning, engineering, designing and evaluation of a public transportation project; and technical studies relating to public transportation planning to increase mobility through expanded access to reliable public transportation in areas with a lower population density or a lower average income than surrounding areas. The proposed planning activity must be included in the current Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) or the Statewide Planning Work Program as appropriate.

Application

This toolkit provides information about developing grant applications for planning grants with increased Federal support. FTA is increasing support for planning activities that help communities with lower population densities or lower average incomes expand access to public transportation. The toolkit explains eligibility, allowable activities and provides examples of potential projects.

(<https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/transportation-planning/fta-toolkit-applying-increased-federal-share>)

Capital Investment Grants (CIG)

Fourteen large transit projects in 11 states receive nearly \$4 billion in federal support for construction as part of the Biden-Harris Administration's Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Budget Request to Congress.



<https://www.transit.dot.gov/about/news/biden-harris-administration-announces-nearly-4-billion-support-14-major-transit>

Eligibility

New Starts and Small Starts: Design and construction of new fixed-guideways or extensions to fixed guideways (projects that operate on a separate right-of-way exclusively for public transportation, or that include a rail or a catenary system).

Small Starts: Design and construction of corridor-based bus rapid transit projects operating in mixed traffic that represent a substantial investment in the corridor and emulate the features of rail.

Core Capacity: Design and construction of a corridor-based investment in an existing fixed guideway system that improves capacity not less than 10 percent in a corridor that is at capacity today or will be in 10 years. The project may not include elements designed to maintain a state of good repair.

Joint intercity rail/public transportation project: Design and construction elements attributable to the public transportation portion of the total project cost based on projected use of the new segment or expanded capacity of the project corridor, not including elements designed to achieve a state of good repair.

Application

<https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grant-programs/capital-investments/how-apply>

Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities

The program aims to improve mobility for older adults and people with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation service and expanding transportation mobility options. This program supports transportation services planned, designed, and carried out to meet the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities

in all areas – large urbanized (over 200,000), small urbanized (50,000-200,000), and rural (under 50,000). The funding can be used for “traditional” or “nontraditional” projects. “Traditional” projects are capital projects as defined in 49 U.S.C. 5302(3). “Nontraditional” projects are capital and/or operating projects that go beyond the scope of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit services or public transportation alternatives designed to assist older adults and people with disabilities.

[Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities - Section 5310 | FTA \(dot.gov\)](#)

Eligibility

States, local government authorities, and designated recipients are direct recipients; Eligible subrecipients include private nonprofit organizations, states or local government authorities, and operators of public transportation. Operators of public transportation are entities that provide regular continuing shared-ride surface transportation services that are open to the general public or open to a segment of the general public defined by age, disability, or low-income. Operators of public transportation are eligible as subrecipients for nontraditional Section 5310 projects.

Application

This program provides formula funding to states and designated recipients to meet the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs

Formula Grants for Rural Areas (5311)

The program provides capital, planning, and operating assistance to states to support public transportation in rural areas with populations of less than 50,000, where many residents often rely on public transit to reach their destinations. The program also provides funding for state and



national training and technical assistance through the Rural Transportation Assistance Program.

Eligibility

Eligible recipients include states and federally recognized Indian Tribes. Subrecipients may include state or local government authorities, nonprofit organizations, and operators of public transportation or intercity bus service.

Eligible activities include planning, capital, operating, job access and reverse commute projects, and the acquisition of public transportation services.

Application

The federal share is 80 percent for capital projects, 50 percent for operating assistance, and 80 percent for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) non-fixed route paratransit service. Section 5311 funds are available to the States during the fiscal year of apportionment plus two additional years (total of three years). Funds are apportioned to States based on a legislative formula that includes land area, population, revenue vehicle miles, and low-income individuals in rural areas.





8. Looking Ahead and Conclusions

The planning process highlighted that, while many transportation services are available, there is still opportunity to improve coordination due to staff capacities, organization turnover, and lack of awareness of potential funding and capacity-building resources. Continued coordination among long-term partners and invitation of new partners can produce a more efficient and effective network of transportation option for human services.

It is recommended to review and update every five years to respond to community and resource changes and inform the ongoing transportation planning processes FAST Planning and AKDOT. Funding sources, projects, and priorities may be updated and should be informed by continued public feedback. Assuming commitment from part-

ners and adequate resources, successful implementation of this plan’s recommended strategies and action items will meet objectives and achieve goals for the community’s coordinated transportation system. The following tables connect each category of need, implementation strategies, and goals that can be achieved upon implementation.

Recommended Strategies to Achieve Transportation Goals

1. Formalized Transportation Coordination

Table 14a: Priority Need #1 Formalized Transportation Coordination

Coordinated Strategies	Implementation Actions	Priority or Timeframe
A. Establish a Borough-wide Mobility Coordination Committee (MCC)	Host initial meeting to discuss membership and charter Forge partnerships with agencies providing and supporting transportation and human services Establish a unified voice to advise on, advocate for and prioritize policies, projects and programs affecting transportation opportunities	2A, 2B
B. Establish Borough-wide Mobility Management Program: Fairbanks Area Mobility Management (FAMM)	Create a Mobility Manager or Human Services Transportation Coordinator Position Create a Transportation Navigator/Travel Trainer position Develop a plan for future of Mobility Management program or organization	1A, 1B, 1C, 5A, 5F
C. Formalize partnerships to leverage funding opportunities.	Form brokerage agreements between providers Identify pass-through funding streams between DOT, FNSB, FAST and human services transportation providers. Collectively approach common costs, such as training, maintenance, and insurance to reduce rates and operational or administrative expenses	2A, 2B



Expanded Services and Coverage

Table 14b: Priority Need #2 Expanded Services and Coverage

Coordinated Strategies	Implementation Actions	Priority or Timeframe
A. Grow and expand a coordinated Volunteer Driver Network.	<p>Expand Aging at Home Fairbanks membership and volunteer pool to the North Pole and Salcha Areas by engaging with the Santa's Seniors and Salcha Seniors organizations.</p> <p>Centralize volunteer scheduling.</p> <p>Standardize driver requirements.</p> <p>Provide incentives for volunteering such as mileage reimbursements.</p>	4C, 5B, 5F
B. Investigate and evaluate partnerships and models to increase connections between rural areas and the transit network.	<p>Evaluate feasibility of Community Ride Share/Van Pool program.</p> <p>Investigate demand for and options to improve connections between FWW/Eielson and the transit system.</p>	4C
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.	<p>Establish single-fare and scheduling system for multi-segment trips.</p> <p>Encourage partnership between Fairbanks Uber/Lyft drivers and AK DOH Medicaid & Medicare programs.</p> <p>Incentivize TNC participation in NEMT provision.</p>	2C, 4C, 5B, 5F

Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention

Table 14c: Priority Need #3 Workforce Development, Recruitment & Retention

Coordinated Strategies	Implementation Actions	Priority or Timeframe
A. Partner across organizations and agencies for a cohesive, cooperative, coordinated outreach campaign to recruit drivers and personal care service staff.	<p>Hire marketing firm to generate a marketing plan to communicate the benefits of becoming a driver or personal caretaker.</p> <p>Establish hiring incentives and benefits across all providers.</p>	1A, 1C
B. Share driver training resources.	<p>Create a shared training calendar.</p> <p>Increase Passenger Assistance Training opportunities.</p> <p>Achieve driver and organizational compliance with FTA policies and procedures to be eligible to receive pass-through funding.</p>	1A, 1C
C. Partner with UAF to grow educational/vocational programs to grow workforce necessary to take care of aging population.	<p>Advocate for resources to grow vocational programs to prepare students for employment opportunities that serve the growing senior and disabled populations.</p> <p>Find funding for a position to hire interim professors to teach currently unavailable classes.</p> <p>Partner with other universities to provide distance-learning for UAF credits through UAF tuition.</p>	2B



Education and Awareness

Table 14d: Priority Need #4 Workforce Development, Recruitment & Retention

Coordinated Strategies	Implementation Actions	Priority or Timeframe
A. Establish a formal marketing campaign to educate about transportation resources and encourage use of public transportation.	Engage local government leaders by communicating return-on-investment information and the economic value of public transit in Fairbanks and Alaska. Hire marketing firm to develop media and outreach campaign.	4A, 4B
B. Design and develop a Travel Training and Outreach Program.	Include consistent online resources, info about all mobility options (public, private, and non-profit), and utilize all available media (e.g. leave-behind print materials). Ease application processes: Van Tran, Medicaid, Medicare, etc.	4A, 4B, 5C

Year-Round Walkability

Table 14e: Priority Need #5 Year-Round Walkability

Coordinated Strategies	Implementation Actions	Priority or Timeframe
A. Improve transit accessibility at the corridor level.	Improve winter maintenance, prioritizing high-need stops along the transit corridor and stops near human services.	5E
B. Incorporate access to human services providers as a criteria for prioritizing pedestrian access projects.	Advocate for prioritizing projects that improve accessibility and walkability near human/social service provider locations and closest stops.	5D, 5E

Respond to Pending Changes in Demographics and Transportation Patterns and Needs

Table 14f: Priority Need #6 Respond to pending changes in demographics and transportation patterns and needs

Coordinated Strategies	Implementation Actions	Priority or Timeframe
A. Ensure the transportation needs of seniors, disabled, and low-income community members are considered in ongoing, relevant planning processes.	Participate in ongoing planning processes to ensure local development considers community transportation needs and access to the transit system: Engage seniors, persons with disabilities, and low-income households in local planning.	3B, 3C
B. Support current investment in transit system with appropriate land use and development planning.	Encourage dense land uses along existing transit corridors and most frequent and productive routes. Discourage transit service changes that “chase” new high-density development outside the current network.	1B, 3C
C. Complete the following planning processes and highlight the role of transportation in community development	Housing Action Plan or Housing Development Plan Aging in Place, Healthy Aging, Action Plan on Aging or similar plan Coordinated Housing and Supportive Services planning Fund and establish a Rural Transportation Planning Organization	3C



Data Collection and Management

Table 14g: Data Collection and Management

Coordinated Strategies	Implementation Actions	Priority or Timeframe
A. Establish a Data Collection and Management Plan.	Establish and promote consistent collection and reporting methods. Create a shared, centralized database and assist in the annual collection of provider and community transportation data.	3A
B. Collect information about need.	Monitor population demographic trends at the census block and more granular levels to understand where transportation-dependent individuals reside. Study travel patterns of transportation-dependent individuals. Continue Senior Needs Assessment and needs assessments for other transportation-dependent populations.	3A
C. Collect information about available resources.	Vehicles Finances Facilities Staff Independent, assisted living Unit inventory (# beds, waitlists, etc.)	3A
D. Collect evaluative information about perceptions/satisfaction	Perform Community Coordination Assessment. Perform regular AARP Age-friendly community assessments at City and Borough levels.	NA

Annual Reporting on The Coordinated Plan

The Coordinated Human Services Plan should be updated at least every 5 years. It is recommended

to report on annually on progress toward implementing plan strategies and actions.

Lead Agencies for Implementation

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:

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



Appendices

Appendix A: Public Involvement Record

Appendix B: Existing Conditions Report

Appendix C: Needs Analysis Report

Appendix D: Transit Rider and Staff Survey Reports

