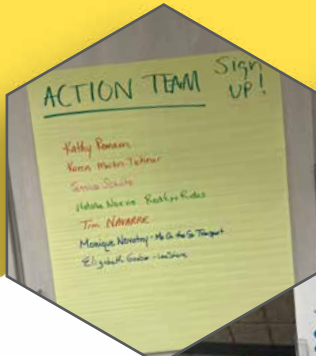




KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH TRANSPORTATION GAPS AND SOLUTIONS

2025



A COLLABORATION TO ADDRESS THE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS OF THE KENAI PENINSULA COMMUNITY.

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INTRODUCTION

On August 14, 2025, 49 community members convened to discuss transportation gaps and solutions within the Kenai Peninsula. Denali Daniels welcomed participants, and everyone had a brief opportunity to introduce themselves. Denali reviewed the agenda and invited Kenai Peninsula Borough Mayor Peter Micciche to provide opening comments.

Those who attended represented transportation service providers, community support organizations, Tribal entities, Borough government officials, and individuals representing themselves. This was a hybrid meeting, with participants attending in person and via Zoom. Participants collaborated on information about the current status and possible solutions to address the needs of the community regarding transportation.

This event was cohosted by the Kenai Peninsula Homelessness Coalition (KPHC) and the Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB), sponsored by the Bridges Community Resource Network, Inc., Central Area Rural Transit Services, Inc. (CARTS), and the Kenai Peninsula Community Foundation, facilitated by Denali Daniels + Associates.



PARTICIPANTS

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

Participants Name and Organization
Barrickman, Tawnya - The Lee Shore Center
Bass, Lisa - Statewide Independent Living Council of Alaska
Biskeborn, Heidi - Kenai Peninsula College Learning Center
Bunch, Julie - Peninsula Community Health Services Medical Center
Buzby, Rozel - Alaska Impact Alliance
Cameron, Cassidi - Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District
Cannava, Dana - Kenai Peninsula Borough Mayor's Office
Christian, Michael - Alaska Statewide Independent Living Council of Alaska (SILC)
Cochran, Taylor - AK Cab
Coreson, Caitlin - Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District
Cox, Tyson - Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc.
Cross, Sarah - Anchor Point Senior Center
Dillon, Tim - Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc.
Edwardson, Susie - Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Fielden, Becky - Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc.
Forester, Matthew - Epidemiology Specialist 2, Alaska Department of Health Homelessness Health Intervention & Prevention unit
Friedman, Becky - Peninsula Community Health Services Medical Center
Gensel, Kathy - Bridges Community Resource Network Inc. and Kenai Peninsula Homelessness Coalition
Godsoe, Elizabeth - The Lee Shore Center
Gottlob, Alecia - Cook Inlet Counseling
Karen, Martin Tichnor - Kenai Peninsula Homelessness Coalition
Kellum, Rachel - Kenai Public Health
Lautaret, Tanya - Office of Senator Murkowski

PARTICIPANTS

Thank you to all of the participants who contributed to this event both in-person and virtually. This important work would not be possible without you.

Participants Name and Organization, continued

Marks, Karin - Homer Economic Development Advisory Commission

McTrusty, Nicki - The Lee Shore Center

Mitchell, Courtney - Cook Inlet Counseling

Napoka, Desmeranda - Kenaitze / Salamatof Housing Dept

Navarre, Tim - Kenai Peninsula Homelessness Coalition, Kenai Peninsula Foundation

Norris, Natalie - Red Eye Rides

Novotny, Monique - Mo on the Go Transport

Otto, Julie - Ninilchik Senior Center

Parsons, Bradley - Peninsula Independent Living Centers

Persee, Astrea - Kenai Senior Center

Petty, Glenese - Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc.

Pittz, Beth - BUMPS, Ninilchik Traditional Council

Reinhart, Patrick - Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education

Rohr, Leslie - Love INC

Romain, Kathy - Kenai Senior Center

Roy, Laurie - 100% Communities

Safra, Nona - Statewide Independent Living Council, Alaska Commission on Aging Homer, ADA Advisory

Schultz, Jessica - Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc.

Sears, Emily - Kenai Public Health

Struffert, Abby - 100% Communities

Walker, John - Nikiski Senior Center

Warfle, Jason - State of Alaska Dept. of Labor - Job Center

Winston, Maggie - Peninsula Independent Living Center

Wiste, Gina - BUMPS, Ninilchik Traditional Council

DEDICATION

MAGGIE WINSTON,
Peninsula Independent
Living Center

Maggie Winston held a moment of silence to honor the life and work of Joyanna Geisler as a founder, leader, and lasting influence in the independent living and transportation community. Joyanna started the independent living program at Homer's Mental Health Center in 1986, which became the Independent Living Center in 1991. Joyanna was instrumental in launching Alaska's first transportation voucher program in Soldotna. This model has been replicated both in and out of state and recognized as a best practice for providing transportation to elders and people with disabilities in rural areas.

**A SPECIAL
DEDICATION TO
JOYANNA
GEISLER**



Although Joyanna stuffed her weeks with long work hours, she liked to read, garden, kayak, hike, backpack, pick berries, mountain bike, camp, play games, and connect with friends. Some of her most relaxing times were traveling in Peru, Rarotonga, Mexico, China, Roatan, and Costa Rica.

She is survived by her father, Jack of Powell, WY; her brother, Jim (Carrol) Geisler of Ilfeld, NM; numerous relatives; her dear canine Maya; and her Alaska family of beloved friends.

As one ILC consumer shared "the world is less for her leaving." To plant trees in memory, please visit the Sympathy Store. To read full obituary click the Peninsula Clarion link.

Published by Peninsula Clarion on 4/24/25

PRESENTATIONS

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



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JESSICA SCHULTZ,
Central Area Rural Transit
System, Inc. (CARTS)

In an overview of CARTS, Jessica emphasized its public transportation services without income or disability requirements. She highlighted the expansion of services, including new accessible vehicles and increased ridership. Jessica discussed the funding challenges, the importance of local match funding, partnerships with other organizations, including Alaska Cab, and internal upgrades within CARTS.

SUSIE EDWARDSON,
Department of
Transportation & Public
Facilities

While sharing about the funding and application process for transportation grants, Susie explained the different types of grants available, including 5311, 5310, and 5339. The application process includes an Intent to Apply and required forms. Participants to reach out with questions and provided contact information for further assistance.

MONIQUE NOVOTNY,
Mo on the Go Transport

Monique highlighted the services offered by Mo on the Go, including non-emergency medical transportation. Monique shared her background in transportation and healthcare and discussed the challenges of starting a new transportation business, Medicaid approval and reimbursement.

NATALIE NORRIS,
Red Eye Rides

In an overview of Red Eye Rides, Natalie emphasized its mission to provide accessible, dependable, and community-focused transportation. She shares the growth of the business and the expansion of services across the Kenai Peninsula, noting the challenges of securing state funding and the importance of the Medicaid voucher program.

**CAITLIN CORESON,
Kenai Peninsula Economic
Development District**

Caitlin displayed GIS mapping for transportation services and the importance of identifying underserved communities. There has been integration of GIS with other data sources, including population density and income levels. Caitlin highlighted the potential for collaboration and partnerships to improve transportation access, noting the ongoing development of GIS maps for child care centers and other vital services.

**KATHY ROMAIN,
Senior Centers**

Anchor Point, Cooper Landing, Homer, Kenai Nikiski, Ninilchik, Seward, Soldotna, Senior centers on the Kenai Peninsula specialize in serving seniors, and each center has its own protocols, funding sources, and service areas. Senior centers fill important gaps for older adults who may not qualify for Medicaid or cannot afford other transportation options like cabs or public transit. Senior centers know their clients personally, providing meals and activities in addition to flexible, on-demand rides. Extra support can include accompanying seniors into doctors' offices, staying with them during appointments, or helping pick up medications.

**ABBY STRUFFERT,
100% Communities Alaska**

Abby provided an overview of the 100% Communities initiative and its goal to improve access to vital services. Abby briefly explained the history of the 100% initiative, including the loss of a child in New Mexico that inspired its creation. The structure of the initiative here on the Kenai Peninsula follows the national framework and includes action teams and bi-monthly meetings. Abby highlighted the progress made, including the launch of the second community access assessment and the development of the 907 Navigation app.

**KATHY GENSEL,
Transportation Planning
Group**

Kathy Gensel, secretary of the Kenai Peninsula Homelessness Coalition and a Housing Team Lead for 100% Communities explained the need for Team Leads for the 100% Communities Transportation Action Team. This small volunteer group would coordinate transportation efforts with the Gaps + Solutions group, 100% communities, and any others on the Kenai Peninsula. The transportation action team will serve as a coordinating group to bring together transportation providers and stakeholders on the Kenai Peninsula.

PRIORITIES WORKSHOP

12-Month Action Plans: The full group then pivoted into development of 12 month actions plans. In small groups and online, participants answered the question of what they wanted to accomplish in three, six, nine and twelve months. The group activity is reflected in the follow tables. Workshop activities are not edited.

Group	3 Months	6 Months	9 Months	12 Months	Who?
Tim D., Tyson, Jessica S., Dana C., Taylor, Becky	Inventory of all services and vehicles	Publicly accessible database Referral list for providers	Analyze data, identify serviced providers with greatest need Outreach	Provider coordination and referral system Outreach	ALL - 100% communities collaboration with providers
Maggie W., Elizabeth G., Tawnya L., Nicki M., Patrick R., Michael C., Lisa B.	Load Transport Services into 907 APP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing 907 app more (user friendly) Be sure to include Kenaitze Move all transportation including disabled transport to the general tab 	Commercial Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate when there are more funds Education for organization Email list + meetings AADD - News Letter (<i>also for 3-month timeline</i>) Alaska mobility coalition (get more info from Abby) Funding opportunities tab 		Education on transportation needs (Kids ride alone 7 days per week) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public education - Kenaitze route {wheelchair accessible} Service to K-Beach + Sterling Pick up at Lee Shore (more stops) CARTS 7/day/week (5311 recipient) Lee Shore discount or voucher (ILC) connect with ILC + for distant transport to Anchorage. Youth transport - school/work/activities (CARTS Rides, youth mentoring) Trust Grant for TLC participants transport Start Planning - Southern Peninsula public transport (Emily Sears) 	ALL Organizations Abby? PSA Peter Kim Champney

PRIORITIES WORKSHOP CONTINUED

Group	3 Months	6 Months	9 Months	12 Months	Who?
Karin Marks, Monique N., Abby Struffert, Glenese P., Tim N.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to establish consistent communication between transportation providers, programs, + services (Action team + co-leads) • Confirm whether Kenaitze has already done this? • Apply for funding that will support a coordinated effort • Partner with KPEDD to identify gaps with GIS system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin taking inventory of providers + how they fit into building + supporting a coordinated schedule + route • Funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch a coordinated schedule/route to public - through 907 navigation + other online platforms • Funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collecting feedback that will drive change + improvements to the coordinated transit system from riders, providers, and agencies • Funding • Workforce Support - transportation to work • Continuing an annual gathering to address gaps + <u>solutions</u> • Establish a scheduled transit system that is collaborative for all transportation providers + services • Establish a sorting/filtering platform that could be built into 907 navigation + other platforms to narrow down providers + services into transportation based on the need + eligibility criteria • Funding for a coordinator 	

PRIORITIES WORKSHOP CONTINUED

Group	3 Months	6 Months	9 Months	12 Months	Who?
Beth P., Gina W., Jason W.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend Borough + city meetings Re-emphasize transportation needs Have all community leadership present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend Borough + city meetings Re-emphasize transportation needs Have all community leadership present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue collaboration with transportation providers Present concepts + ideas for routes and stops/hubs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue collaboration with transportation providers Present concepts + ideas for routes and stops/hubs Transportation to colleges (affordable + convenient) Intercity bus service Transportation to Job Center 	KPB Transportation agencies
Becky, Kathy R., Kathy G., Heather, John W.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form and maintain an action team Comprised of the area transportation Providers (100% communities) Promote 907 Navigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather a list of stops from ALL transport providers Continue to identify and pull in additional transportation providers who were missed Explore expansion into underserved areas + gaps Continue promoting 907 Navigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Synthesize complete list of stops with existing KPEDD GIS maps 907 Navigation "How do I get there?" that connects local resources to local transportation provider/agency coordination /location services? Continue promoting 907 Navigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upload KPEDD GIS Maps/ Stop list to 907 Navigation Action team continues to evaluate program for gaps and opportunities to expand service offerings Action Team setup Publicly accessible & user-friendly List of stops for all providers Expansion in Nikiski Agency Coordination 907 Navigation - promote in comm. 	Alecia
Alecia, Emily, Rachel, Natalie, Julie, Courtney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine criteria for qualifying Who will hold the money? Identify structure + process Identify partners Donation pool Promotion-information out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data gathering Develop survey for riders Applying for funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify gaps Reassess Spread the info-Share with other communities Fund or program for the people who fall in the gaps (Julie) Moveability audits + pop ups "Bank" of donated rides for others "Drive it Forward" (Natalie Norris) 	Transportation providers 100% communities state Julie Becky, Julie, Emily Rachel, Courtney

CLOSING COMMENTS

These steps are designed to build a more coordinated, accessible, and sustainable transportation system for the community.

Next Steps: The group agreed on several key next steps to advance transportation coordination and access on the Kenai Peninsula, acknowledging that many of these goals have been long held by the community. One overarching sentiment was that the community wants to be effective with its resources and not duplicate or silo efforts toward accessible transportation.

Form and Maintain a Transportation Action Team

- Recruit members and identify leads or co-leads for the team.
- Hold regular meetings to coordinate efforts and share information. (in-progress)

Inventory Transportation Providers and Services

- Collect detailed information on all transportation providers, vehicles, and services in the region.
- Identify gaps and outlier services that may not be widely known. (in-progress)

Create and Maintain a Publicly Accessible Resource List

- Develop a user-friendly, up-to-date list of transportation providers, service areas, and stops.
- Integrate this information into the 907 Navigation app and GIS mapping tools. (in-progress)

Improve Coordination and Referral Systems

- Establish systems so that any provider can refer clients to the appropriate transportation resource (“no wrong door” approach).
- Promote collaboration among agencies and organizations.

Promote and Educate About Available Services

- Increase outreach to ensure the public and agencies are aware of existing transportation options.
- Use tools like the 907 Navigation app and public service announcements.

Pursue Funding Opportunities

- Identify and apply for grants and other funding sources to support transportation initiatives, technology integration, and potential new services.

Organize Annual or Regular Meetings

- Continue to hold annual convenings and regular action team meetings to review progress, set new priorities, and maintain momentum. There was an interest in the next annual meeting being held in Spring 2026.

Support the Development of a Transportation Coordinator Position

- Explore options for funding and housing a dedicated transportation coordinator for the region.

Continue Data Collection and Evaluation

- Gather and analyze data (including from community surveys) to inform priorities and measure progress.



Prepared by Denali Daniels + Associates
September 2025