

ALASKA COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD



Final Recommendations Report:
ARRIVING AT COORDINATION

August 31, 2017

<http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/cptab/>



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Alaska Community and Public Transportation Advisory Board (C&PTAB) was tasked in AS 44.42 to “make recommendations for the improved agency coordination and combining of services to achieve cost savings in the funding and delivery of community and public transit services.” Through the course of its work, the C&PTAB conducted a number of studies and produced a number of recommendations to achieve this purpose. Its most poignant recommendation is the Interagency Coordination Recommendation.

Implemented, the Interagency Coordination Recommendation will achieve the following objectives:

1. Establish a culture of coordination across all state agencies
2. Establish shared expectations and consistent coordination practices at a state and local level
3. Provide for consistent data and data sets that support informed decision-making to optimize funding while streamlining state agency reporting requirements.

To achieve these objectives, the Interagency Coordination Recommendation proposes the following:

1. All state agencies adopt the following shared definition of coordination:
 - Coordination is an ongoing strategy of committed funders, providers and stakeholders working together to improve both local and statewide transportation options through planning, shared resources, and consolidation of programs.



“In order for Alaskans to remain in their own communities, affordable transportation options are necessary to get to needed services, jobs and shopping.

The C&PTAB has worked to define and promote coordinated transportation, which offers operational and cost efficiencies as well as having State Departments realize actual transportation cost savings.

I hope the Administration, Commissioners and their staff take this report’s recommendations and carry on with the work which has been accomplished so Alaskans have better options for mobility within their communities and cost savings occur with the State.”

PATRICIA BRANSON, C&PTAB CHAIR
Representing Seniors
Mayor, City of Kodiak
Executive Director, Senior Citizens of Kodiak, Inc.

2. All state agencies use the same coordination requirements and template language in Requests for Proposals, transportation service contracts, certification processes, and grants that support transportation services for client populations.
3. Recipients of human service and public transportation funding from any state funding agency report a consistent set of data in a manner that can be efficiently sorted, aggregated and reported for all state funding agencies collectively. Necessary data elements include: local match amount and partner, actual transportation expenditures by service and provider, number of people served, cost per ride (including number of rides) or amount of purchased transportation services, and level of engagement in Local Coordination Planning efforts.

To facilitate effective implementation of the recommendation, the C&PTAB also produced a methodology for state agencies and providers to use to collect data and calculate costs. The tool is available on the C&PTAB website at: dot.alaska.gov/cptab.

Members of the C&PTAB, with representatives from the DOT&PF and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHSS), presented the Interagency Coordination Recommendation to the Chief and Deputy Chief of Staff in January 2017. At their request, the C&PTAB subsequently submitted the Recommendation to Governor Bill Walker in the form of a draft Directive.

The C&PTAB conducted additional bodies of work. It conducted an annual review of funding available for community and public transportation in Alaska and the challenges associated with that funding data. The C&PTAB conducted surveys and studies associated with accessible taxicab transportation in Alaska and produced white papers outlining findings and proposed options. The group generated a recommendation specifically to the DHSS to foster increased coordination across the various transportation programs housed in the Department. Each year the group produced an Annual Report and Strategic Plan.

The law establishing the C&PTAB sunset in December 2016. Members of the group maintain that implementation of the Interagency Coordination Recommendation achieves the coordinated intent of the group's tasks, provides the best opportunity to achieve costs savings for human service and public transportation across state agencies, and offers Alaskans better options for mobility within their communities and to services they need.

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Introduction

Members of the Alaska Community and Public Transportation Advisory Board (C&PTAB), working with stakeholders throughout the state, generated and proposed an Interagency Coordination Recommendation (Recommendation). This Recommendation realized the C&PTAB's legislated task to "make recommendations for the improved agency coordination and combining of services to achieve cost savings in the funding and delivery of community and public transit services." The Recommendation is in the office of the Commissioner of the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), awaiting further discussion with the Governor.

To support implementation of the Recommendation, the C&PTAB also produced a methodology for state agencies and providers to use to collect data and calculate costs, creating the opportunity for Alaska to collect consistent types of information and inform decision-making.

This report presents the Interagency Coordination Recommendation. It identifies the important role the methodology for calculating costs plays in that Recommendation. The report also presents other products of the C&PTAB.

Alaska Community and Public Transportation Advisory Board Purpose

The C&PTAB was established in AS 44.42 to plan, recommend and pursue "coordinated community and public transportation" in the State of Alaska in order to make the "most effective use" of the state's human service and public transit resources.

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

- Developing and implementing a Strategic Plan
- Providing an Annual Report and Funding Review
- Making "recommendations for the improved agency coordination and combining of services to achieve cost savings in the funding of community and public transit services."

While the law which established the C&PTAB sunset in December 2016, members of the group maintain that implementation of the Directive achieves the coordinated intent of the group's tasks, provides the best opportunity to achieve costs savings for human service and public transportation across state agencies, and offers Alaskans better options for mobility within their communities and to services they need.

Funding and Data – the Barrier to Coordination

Funding Data

One of C&PTAB's legislated tasks was to "conduct an annual review of available funding, including state, federal and local governments and private entities that administer or support services, using that information to develop recommendations and potential legislative and other changes to improve the effective use of funding" (AS 44.42).

The graph on page 8 identifies the funding information the C&PTAB has been able to collect about state, federal and local agencies and private entities that administer or support community and public transportation services as presented in the 2015 C&PTAB Annual Report. C&PTAB recognizes the graph is not comprehensive. Not all state agencies participate in this review. Those that do are reporting different fiscal years. It is possible that duplication exists among numbers; funding agencies and share clients served.

What it does show, however, is three Alaska state agencies spent approximately \$100M annually on human service and public transportation (DHSS, DOT&PF and Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DLWD)) during the reporting period. Other state agency and municipality expenditures on the same types of service to the same types of clients exceed \$26M. Another \$2.4M has been identified for similar services by various Alaska tribes.

"I strongly believe community and public transportation is an essential service for the residents of Alaska. In order to provide the best service for the dollars spent we must look to coordination and consolidation of both funds and service delivery."

JENNIFER BECKMANN
C&PTAB Member
Representing People of Low Income
Executive Director, Central Area Rural Transit System



Of this total, 60% comes from local match and state funds. The remainder comes to different programs in the state through different federal funding programs. More than half (\$79.5M) appears in Medical Medicaid, including Medicaid-supported air transportation. Another \$11M is expended in the Medicaid Wavier program. DOT&PF grantees expend \$9.2M.

These numbers do not include transportation funding in the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED), which, in addition to providing pupil transportation, also provides a school transportation program for homeless youth. Other state agencies, such as the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs (DMVA), have and manage human service transportation funding not reflected here.

The fact is, a confident accounting of the funding and expenditures on community and public transit across state agencies, local governments and private entities is not possible. In the current environment, each year C&PTAB members report the data they can gather related to community and public transportation funding. Each year, even those entities who do participate in the data gathering process struggle, some more and some less, through their different programs and systems to produce a total.

What the graph does indicate is how reporting even a few data elements in a consistent manner across agencies is a critical step to providing provide meaningful information to help agencies and policy-makers make informed decisions and ultimately quantify potential efficiencies generated by coordination. An ongoing commitment to collect such data is warranted.

C&PTAB History

The C&PTAB, established in 2012, followed up on and leveraged the work of its predecessor group, the Governor's Coordinated Transportation Task Force (2009-2012).

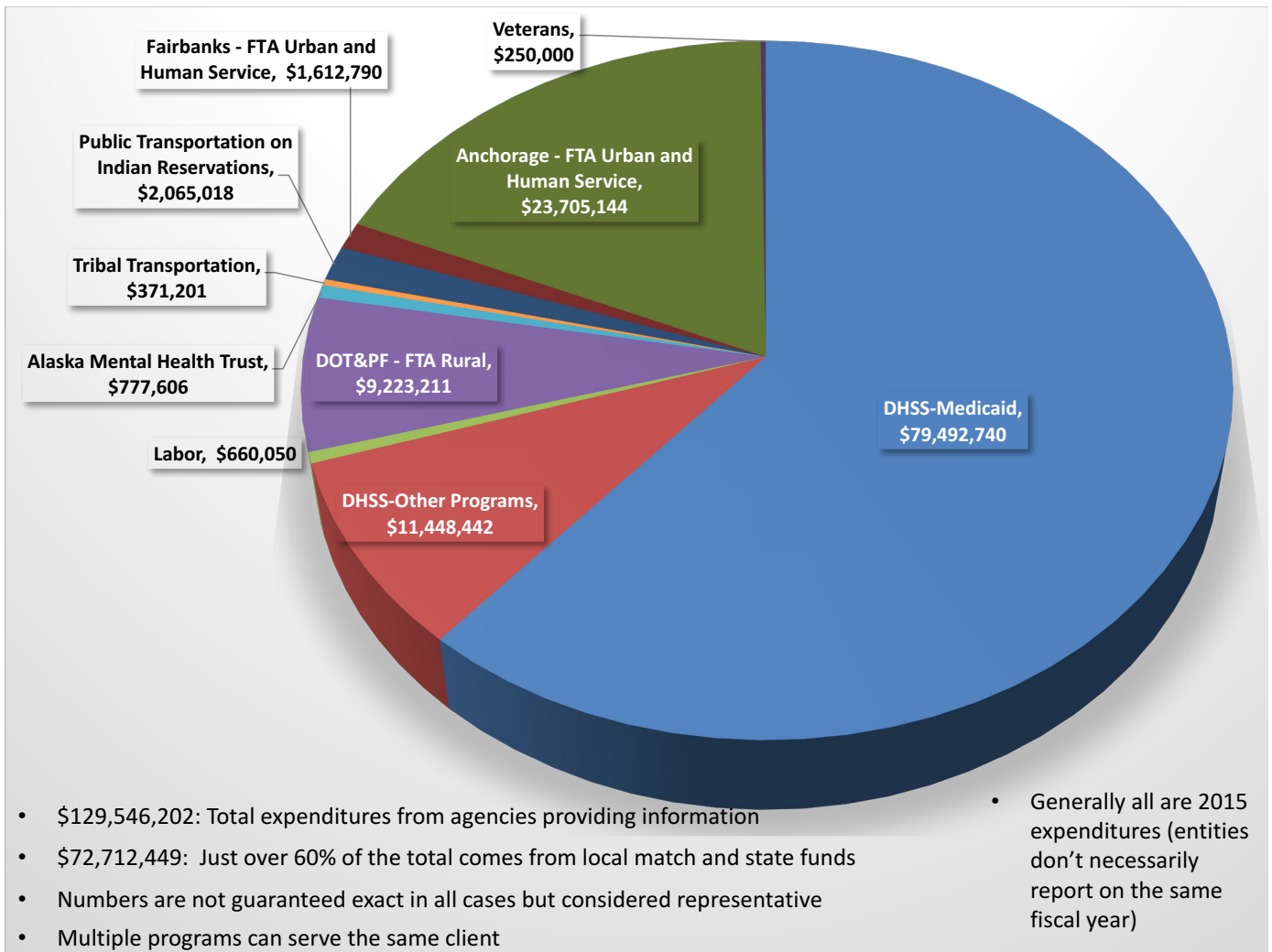
During this time, C&PTAB conducted and responded to a statewide human service and public transportation needs assessment, made numerous recommendations (Alternative Fuels, Long Range Transportation Plan, Department of Health and Social Services internal program coordination), conducted surveys and wrote reports (Medical Transportation, Accessible Taxicabs), and explored many opportunities to enhance transportation options for Alaskans.

C&PTAB work was informed by outreach to Alaska communities and vetted at each of the past Alaska Community Transit conferences.

Every year, the C&PTAB produced an Annual Report, Funding Review, and Strategic Plan. Its featured product – the Interagency Coordination Recommendation (also referred to as the "Directive" – first appeared in the 2015 C&PTAB Annual Report, Funding Review, and Recommendations for Action: 2016 (p. 18).

The Interagency Coordination Recommendation appeared again in the December 30, 2016 C&PTAB Annual Recommendations Report and Funding Review, and was presented to the Governor's Office in January 2017. It is supported by a cost calculation methodology also generated by the group to facilitate the collective collection of consistent data across human service and public transportation providers.

The law establishing the C&PTAB sunset in December 2016. See <http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/cptab/> for all the work produced by the group.



C&TPAB Annual Funding Review, 2015

Other Data

DOT&PF, DHSS and DLWD funding specifically support seniors and people with developmental disabilities and people with low income. However, each agency or program has its separate application, administrative, reporting and data collection processes and data elements.



"Accessible transportation is the vital link necessary to ensure everyone has an opportunity to live a full, healthy and engaged life."

HEIDI FROST
C&PTAB Member
Representing People with Disabilities
Executive Director, Statewide Independent Living Council

Just as a quality accounting of the funding is not available within our current structure, nor is there any shared data set to accurately quantify how that funding is being used (amount of local match, actual transportation expenditures by service and provider, the number of people served, the number of rides provided, the cost of the ride or the amount of purchased transportation services).

DOT&PF staff provide exceptional support

The C&PTAB was tirelessly and enthusiastically supported by the following DOT&PF staff. C&PTAB expresses its wholehearted appreciation to these two remarkable individuals:

- Eric Taylor, Statewide Program Coordinator
- Debbi Howard, Alaska Transit Coordinator

Through a C&PTAB needs assessment conducted in 2012, an estimated 1 in 9 Alaskans have special transportation needs.ⁱ Additionally, Alaska's senior population is anticipated to grow by 68 percent between 2014 and 2024.ⁱⁱ

Alaska works to meet these needs through the variety of transportation funding available through numerous state and federal programs. Different state agencies or even different programs within one agency may use the same transportation provider to deliver their respective services. Sometimes they serve the same person. Each of those programs may have different and duplicative application requirements, reporting requirements, rates, and more. In this environment, duplicative efforts exist across state agencies and within provider agencies.

Clearly, a consistent set of data can inform how effectively funds are being used, and can position Alaska to meet the growing needs of its population. C&PTAB's Recommendation addresses this challenge.



"It was wonderful working with all the talented members of the C&PTAB who are dedicated to improving mobility through efficiencies and changes that will provide better services to all communities."

GLENN MILLER
C&PTAB Member Representing Municipalities
Transportation Director, Fairbanks North Star Borough

Interagency Coordination – the Path to Efficiency

Interagency Coordination Recommendation

After several years of developing and vetting with state agencies and stakeholders statewide, the C&PTAB presented the Interagency Coordination Recommendation in its 2015 and again in its 2016 Annual Reports. The Recommendation features the following three components:

1. To achieve a culture of coordination across all state agencies, it is recommended all state agencies adopt the following shared definition of coordination:

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

2. To establish shared expectations and consistent coordination practices at a state and local level, it is recommended all state agencies use the same coordination requirements and template language in Requests for Proposals, transportation service contracts, certification processes, and grants that support transportation services for client populations.
3. In order to achieve the following outcomes:
 - A. Consistent data and data sets regarding the use of human service and public transportation funding across state agencies
 - B. Streamlined reporting requirements to capture essential information and minimize the reporting, on providers
 - C. Make informed decisions with appropriate information about how to optimize funding and quantify funding needs

C&PTAB recommends the state require recipients of human service and public transportation funding from any state funding agency to report a consistent set of data in a manner that can be efficiently sorted, aggregated and reported for all state funding agencies collectively.

“Although the Alaska Community and Public Transportation Advisory Board has now sunset, many Alaskans continue to face transportation challenges. Public transportation is essential for people to get to their jobs, school, attend medical appointments, and facilitate commerce.

Many communities would benefit from improved transportation; thus, I encourage further collaborative efforts. It has been an honor to serve on the C&PTAB with other transportation advocates.”

KATHERINE ELDEMAR
Commissioner Designee
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
Director, Division of Community and Regional Affairs



Necessary data elements include:

- Local match amount and partner
- Actual transportation expenditures by service and provider
- Number of people served
- Cost per ride (including number of rides) or amount of purchased transportation services
- Level of engagement in Local Coordination Planning efforts

To date, the only state agency requiring participation in the development and implementation of a local coordination transportation plan is the DOT&PF because the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires the same for federal human transit funding. Should other state funding sources maintain the same coordination requirement, local provider engagement in existing processes is a direct step toward increasing the coordination culture. Where those plans do not exist, other solutions will need to be addressed in the implementation phase. Regardless, the Recommendation perpetuates a coordination culture from the most general – adopting a shared definition – to the most specific – some consistent reporting requirements – that are essential to informing how effectively and efficiently the Alaska dollar is used.

The Interagency Coordination Recommendation is included on page 19 as a one-page stand-alone to this report.

"I have been impressed with the passion and commitment that C&PTAB members have shown on the issues we have dealt with. It gives me hope that some will continue to put themselves out in front and work to improve the public and community transportation services available in our State.

There continues to be a great need for safe, reliable, and efficient transportation options in Alaska. As the fiscal climate has deteriorated, it has become even more important that the scarce financial resources available are put to the best use.

I urge you all to continue your advocacy for improved transportation services and meaningful coordination."

MIKE VIGUE
Commissioner Designee
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Director, Program Development



Consistent Methodology for Calculating Costs

After a year-long plus process of study, outreach to state agencies and human service providers, the C&PTAB produced a methodology to calculate the cost per ride applicable to all systems. DOT&PF grantees used the methodology to report 2017 transit expenses. It compliments Federal Transit Data Base inputs required of municipalities for transit systems. DLWD has a copy of the tool and is exploring the agency's opportunities to use it. While well received, implementation in other systems, and specifically, those within DHSS and across human service providers, requires changes to grant application and reporting requirements.

Should the Interagency Coordination Recommendation be formalized, the methodology will be an immediate and important tool to helping establish some consistency across all reporting efforts. Electronic copies of the methodology are available at the C&PTAB website at dot.alaska.gov/cptab.

C&PTAB Products – Supporting a Coordinated Environment

In addition to Strategic Plans, Annual Reports and Funding Reviews, the C&PTAB released a number of products to inform the development of a more coordinated, accessible and efficient use of community and public transit funds in Alaska. Some were designed for informational purpose; others were presented as recommendations. The following table lists that body of work:

Product	Delivery
Shared Definition for Coordination	Established in 2013; basis of the Interagency Coordination Recommendation
Interagency Working Group	2014
Alternative Fuels Analysis and Recommendation	2014
Long Range Transportation Plan Recommendation	2014
Medical Transportation Report	2014, featuring 3 recommendations
Accessible Taxicab White Paper	2014, updated annually thereafter
Accessible Taxicab User Survey	2015
Shared Methodology for Calculating Costs	2014
Program Coordination Recommendation to DHSS	2015
Interagency Coordination Recommendation	2015, and presented again in 2016

C&PTAB Products 2013-2016

Annual reports and products generated by the Governor's Coordinated Transportation Task Force (CTTF, 2009-2012), a predecessor to the C&PTAB (the C&PTAB was a recommendation of the CTTF), did much to inform the group's work. C&PTAB specifically relied on the Needs Assessment completed as part of the CTTF's study of the need for coordinated transportation.

DHSS is in the midst of implementing the C&PTAB Program Coordination Recommendation specific to DHSS. To that end, DHSS is working on the following actions:

- Aligning non-medical transportation provider certification processes
- Using the same rate methodology for non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) across all other Medicaid programs that utilize transportation services
- Using the same definitions and procedures for NEMT (for example, use the same definition and distance limits for short-distance ground travel) across Medicaid programs
- Requiring provider agreements and transportation contracts for NEMT and other transportation needs to include coordinated transportation language found in the Interagency Coordination Recommendation
- Encouraging participation and education to use public transportation, where available

C&PTAB thanks members – past and present

In addition to those members quoted on these pages, C&PTAB members also responsible for its last years' work include:

- Lisa Aquino, Public at Large
- Kelda Barstad, Department of Health and Social Services
- Lucas Lind, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
- William Ware, Tribes
- Robert Wright, Public At Large

Others who participated in the C&PTAB mission in years past to whom much credit is also deserved include:

- Julianne Baltar, Tribes
- Susan Bell, Denali Commission, DCCED
- Lawrence Blood, Denali Commission, DCCED
- Larry Bredeman, Tribes
- Doug Bridges, Public Non-Profit
- Hugh Dymont, Public Schools
- Camille Ferguson, Public At Large and Tribes
- Bill Herman, Alaska Mental Health Trust
- Nita Madsen, Denali Commission/DCCED
- Duane Mayes, DHSS
- Jeffrey Ottesen, DOT&PF
- Sharon Scott, Public At Large
- James Starzec, Public At Large
- Cheryl Walsh, DLWD
- Carol Wren, Tribes



"The availability of reliable, affordable, and accessible transportation is key to fully inclusive and healthy communities. It has been an honor to work with the C&PTAB toward this worthy goal."

JOAN O'KEEFE
C&PTAB Member
Representing Non-Profit Organizations
Executive Director, Southeast Alaska Independent Living

- Continuing the practice of issuing a bus pass for multiple NEMT appointments when the bus is the transportation method

Moving Forward

The needs of those who rely on human service and public transportation in Alaska are not going to change. The breadth of that need among Alaskans is only going to grow, and the cost of that service, particularly in an environment where multiple funding programs for similar services are managed in silos, is going to increase. The fact is, the more effectively those collective funds are managed, the more effectively and efficiently Alaskans' transportation needs can be met.

After several years of study, outreach and collaboration, C&PTAB members maintain the Interagency Coordination Recommendation is the pathway to effective and meaningful coordination of human service and public transportation in Alaska. C&PTAB relies on its state agency members to continue to work toward achieving the coordinated structure developed and proposed by the group.

The Commissioner of the DOT&PF now holds the Interagency Coordination Recommendation. The C&PTAB is assured it is his intent to carry on the coordination leadership by bringing it forward to the Governor's Office again for proposed implementation.



"Over the years the C&PTAB did the difficult work of trying to sort out the complexities of Alaska's community and public transit services to identify efficiencies. This was an enormous task given our state's myriad of transit providers, the insatiable transit needs of communities big and small, rural and urban, the assortment of funding sources and the non-standardized methods of collecting data.

Many thanks are extended to C&PTAB board members who generously contributed countless hours to the effort and Marsha Bracke for her facilitation and perseverance. It is my hope that the Department of Transportation will successfully implement C&PTAB's final recommendations and continue the effort of improving transit services for all Alaskans."

JOHN CANNON
Commissioner Designee
Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

ⁱ State of Alaska Governor's Coordinated Transportation Task Force Administrative Order 254 Report: February 24, 2012. P.19 & Attachment C Needs Assessment. <http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/cptab/docs/CTTFfinalreport022412.pdf>

ⁱⁱ<http://www.ktuu.com/content/news/Alaskas-senior-population-projected-to-boom-creating-thousands-of-health-care-jobs-398745671.html>. For a close analysis of changes in the population, and particularly the growth in the senior population, go to: <http://laborstats.alaska.gov/trends/jun14art1.pdf>

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INTERAGENCY COORDINATION RECOMMENDATION

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

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