

Public Transportation 2003

Tell us what you think.

As we look to the future, we need your help. The Public Transportation Department is updating the 5-year plan for growth and changes to our services. Look through this information and let us know where you think we should be going. We have identified some major work areas based upon public meetings over the past year and we would like your input.

Public Hearings

Thursday, November 4, 1999 - 5-7 p.m.
11901 Business Blvd., Suite 203
Eagle River

Monday, November 8, 1999 - 5-7 p.m.
Anchorage Museum of History & Art
121 W 7th Avenue

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Message From the Director



Bob Kniel
Public Transportation
Director

Every weekday more than 11,000 passengers board the People Mover bus system. In addition, over 600 people use our paratransit service for seniors and people with disabilities. Another 1,250 participate in carpools and vanpools on a daily basis.

Imagine if those trips were added to our roadway congestion and parking lots. More importantly, what if 6,000 people couldn't get to their job or medical appointments.

People Mover is a basic service that raises our community quality of life. It stimulates economic development by providing access to jobs and shopping, improves our health through greater access to medical and recreational facilities, and interconnects our community into one large family.

During this past year we have installed improvements at 70 bus stops and completed our fleet upgrade to be one of the first fully accessible bus fleets in the entire nation. We are working with over 100 individuals and groups who help keep our new bus stops looking great through our Adopt-A-Stop program. Our Web site (<http://www.peoplemover.org>) has one of the first interactive bus schedule systems in the nation. If you type in where you are and where you want to go, you can get a printed schedule of the routes to get you to your appointment on time.

All of this work and effort comes from our dedicated employees and your support for our system.

Please take some time to review the information provided. I think we're moving in the right direction. What do you think?

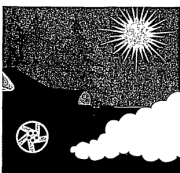
Anchorage Works to Improve Air Quality

Federal Funds Target People Mover Bus Service

Each winter Anchorage faces air quality problems due to carbon monoxide (CO) from automobile emissions. The personal vehicle produces over 80% of these CO emissions. Based upon the recommendations from the Citizens Air Quality Advisory Committee and the Anchorage Congestion Management Program, Anchorage has implemented a multi-faceted program to address reductions in CO. Along with improved vehicle testing and encouraging engine plug-ins, the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Study Policy Committee is using Federal Congestion and Air Quality Management funding to provide free People Mover bus service. The buses will be free during the worst CO

months of November, December, and January. This special demonstration project funding replaces the fares normally collected during those months. Since each bus replaces about 40 cars on the road, increased bus ridership results in reduced congestion, and improved air quality for all in Anchorage.

"Having free People Mover service during the winter makes sense," reports Jay Hermanson, Director of Air and Asthma Programs for the American Lung Association of Alaska and a member of the Citizens Air Quality Advisory Committee. "Poor air quality contributes to lung disease and health problems. Free bus service will help to reduce carbon monoxide and other pollutants while improving health, mobility and congestion."



Care about air!

Free bus service programs used in other cities have resulted in sustained riders, even after people start paying for their trips. Most cities experience a ridership increase of 25-40%. If our ridership increases only 25% after January, we'll see 2,700 fewer trips by car, the equivalent of 26 floors of parking at the 6th Avenue and G Street parking garage.

Federal funds target existing bus routes to:

- Improve air quality
- Reduce congestion
- Increase riders

Public Transportation Releases 5-Year Plan

What is People Mover?

Public transportation touches many areas of our lives on a daily basis. Every day, People Mover drivers greet 11,000 people boarding the bus. Public transportation benefits air quality, congestion management, economic development, public mobility, welfare reform, energy conservation and extends the life of our roadway system. Seniors, youth, and others who cannot drive can participate



in the community. More than 1,100 people daily carpool to work and 150 people are riding together in our 12 vanpools to and from work. The daily reduction of cars due to carpooling and vanpooling is equivalent to the capacity of the downtown parking garage.



AnchorRIDES is a transportation system for senior citizens and people with disabilities who cannot use the People Mover system. Many local agencies with programs for senior citizens and training centers for mentally challenged individuals receive many of the 600 daily trips provided on AnchorRIDES.

Within the last fifteen years, Anchorage's population has increased 25%, but People Mover hours of service have decreased 31% resulting in a ridership

decrease of 21%. We have become more efficient with passengers per hour increasing 14% and revenue recovery increasing 83%. Ten years ago, 60% of People Mover riders rode the bus by choice and 40% rode it out of need. Now, 40% of the people ride by choice and 60% ride out of need.

Is it feasible to use the public bus system for mobility through the city? Where does public transportation fit into the fabric of our city? How can the public transportation system meet the needs of Anchorage residents? These are some of the questions municipal staff asked target groups of riders: youth, women, commuters, Eagle River residents, senior citizens, people with disabilities, and

tourists in preparing our system action plan, the 1999-2003 Public Transportation Development Plan (PTDP).

Our Mission:

It is the mission of the Anchorage public transportation team to enhance the overall quality of life in our community by providing safe, reliable and efficient transportation in a fiscally and environmentally responsible manner that incorporates an active public review process.



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What Do People Want?

The majority of the comments received from the public involved the need for additional services. People Mover services have not kept pace with the growth in population, consequently, there are areas of town with no fixed route bus service. Many areas receive bus service five days a week but weekend services are not provided. Late evening public transportation to the Universities and employment centers is virtually non-existent. Changes in the federal Welfare to Work system include a major need to provide transportation as a basic component of this program. Winter air quality standards are regularly exceeded due to automobile emissions. So what should we do?

The 1999-2003 PTDP provides a formalized and approved direction for growth of Anchorage's Public Transportation system (People Mover, AnchorRIDES, Share-A-Ride). When issues of the need for public transportation are addressed, where the next service improvements should occur. This document combines efficiency measures (more riders on the existing service) along with modest service expansion (new services in needed areas), and attention to our image.