

# Come join talks about transportation in Anchorage/Mat-Su

From Here to the Future: Transforming Anchorage/Mat-Su  
Transportation

Transportation options affect every Anchorage and Mat-Su Borough resident nearly every day. Everyone has to get to somewhere: work, medical care, school, groceries, errands, family gatherings and social events. It impacts everyone's daily life, either making it easier or harder to get from place to place. And as a "winter city" and region with a substantial moose population wandering on our roads, Anchorage and the Mat-Su have some particularly tough transportation challenges.

The region's transportation system is good, but it can be improved. For example, Anchorage has a great recreational trail system, but many bicyclists and walkers need to get places via safe roads and sidewalks that may not exist. Many of us want to increase walkability in our town. Mat-Su commuters to Anchorage have options, but they are limited. Addressing snow and ice is costly and difficult.

And there are questions. The People Mover bus system is undergoing a transformation – what will this mean for the public? Will we get Uber type service? Are driverless cars on the horizon? The state and federal governments share jurisdiction over Anchorage roads – does this division of governmental responsibilities make sense? Is the public sufficiently engaged in transportation decision-making and are decision makers responsive?

What are other cities and regions doing that we can learn from? Can the Anchorage/Mat-Su region offer more

transportation choices, and how can we fund those options?

If you are interested in these transportation topics and questions, and ways that our transportation system can be improved and made relevant for the future, please join Alaska Common Ground as it hosts a series of free evening events with cutting edge speakers, followed by discussions with local experts on key transportation topics.

The first speaker is Rollin Stanley, General Manager of Urban Strategy in Calgary, Alberta, who will kick off the series giving a free public lecture on "Technology, Demographics, and Transportation." Stanley says, "Transportation investments are about the generations that come long after they are made. What impacts do technology and demographics play in guiding these decisions?" His talk will be on Wednesday, March 22 from 7:00 to 8:30 pm in the Anchorage Museum Auditorium. Stanley has worked in the suburbs of Washington DC, as well as in St. Louis, Toronto, and Calgary.

On April 5th, Paul Soglin, Mayor of Madison, Wisconsin will give a free public lecture on "A Multi-Modal Transportation System (Winter or Not)." Mayor Soglin has served several terms as Mayor of Madison and is now in his 20<sup>th</sup> year as mayor. His tenure is noted for major commitments to public transportation, equity, sustainability, walkability and livability. His talk will be on Wednesday, April 5 from 7:00 to 8:30 pm in the Anchorage Museum Auditorium.

These public lectures will be followed three topical panel discussions, all at the 49<sup>th</sup> State Brewing Company from 7:00 – 8:30 pm. April 11 will be an engaging panel and audience discussion on "How does transportation planning work, and how do I engage?" April 25 will be a panel and audience discussion on "Anything but Cars" looking at how we might better connect our varied modes of transportation. The series will finish on May 9 with a policy maker's panel from Anchorage and the Mat-

Su Borough engaging with the audience on regional transportation visions for the future.

Please join us for these thoughtful conversations on how to envision and transform our region's transportation system. Alaska Common Ground is a non-partisan, non-profit, which promotes community education and dialog on public policy issues.

For more information, go to [www.akcommonground.org](http://www.akcommonground.org) or to Facebook and Twitter @akcommonground.

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[Read the piece on ADN.com.](#)