



Update: EMS Workgroup

Prepared for Kenai Borough Assembly

Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Presented by: Stormy Brown, Co-Chair, EMS Workgroup

History of the EMS Workgroup

In its final report to the assembly, the **KPB Healthcare Task Force** emphasized the need for continued work to address concerns regarding emergency service delivery in less-populated areas across the borough.

The **EMS Workgroup** was re-assigned to the KPB administration to continue to analyze and make recommendations regarding improvements in this area.

KPB Healthcare Task Summary Report

Deliverable 1: Evaluation of current state of the KPB healthcare delivery system.
Process will include stakeholder presentations, public input, review of the consultant report, and subcommittee work.

The following summarizes the takeaways from presentations, stakeholder interviews, and work completed by the task force and task force subcommittees. Through these presentations and interviews, and the work of the healthcare consultant, the task force identified region-wide gaps in the healthcare delivery system on the peninsula, determined that, if unchanged, current health system operations are unsustainable, and identified challenges and opportunities to adapt to the changes facing the healthcare system on the Peninsula.

Task Force Evaluation:

Point 1. Region-wide gaps: Through the subcommittee work and subsequent task force review, the task force finds that substantial gaps exist borough-wide in the following areas:

1. **Emergency Medical Services:** A need for consistent Emergency Medical Services (EMS) including medical response and transportation across the borough. KPB assembly and administration should continue work on evaluating structures to address this gap.
2. **Chronic disease education and prevention:** A need for early education and intervention to reduce the number of serious complications due to unmanaged/unmitigated chronic diseases such as Diabetes and high blood pressure.
3. **Substance abuse:** A need for resources, education, and both in- and out-patient treatment programs, in response to this growing substance abuse issue on the peninsula. KPB assembly and administration should explore the viability of supporting the creation of a detox facility.
4. **Home-health, hospice, palliative care:** A need to address access to and consistent delivery of at-home and end-of-life care, including a lack of medical hospice.
5. **Mental health:** A need for better availability of and access to resources and in- and out-patient treatment options.
6. **Non-emergency transportation:** A need for reliable, affordable, non-emergency transportation options to improve overall access to care. Transportation particularly limits access to mental health appointments and substance abuse treatment, and exacerbates the problem of isolated older individuals unable to get to care. Some transportation issues exist within towns and their outlying areas and others are long distance (between Seward and Anchorage or other hospitals).

Point 2 Hospital Sustainability: Through Stroudwater work and review of the Stroudwater report (Appendix I) the Task Force finds the following:

KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH | KPB Healthcare Task Force Report [REDACTED] 3



EMS Workgroup Members

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- Kelly Cooper and Stormy Brown, Co-Chairs
- Angela Ramponi, Mayor's Office
- Bob Cicciarella, Fire Chief – KESA
- Paul Perry, Fire & EMS Programs Coordinator, KPC
- Connie Bacon, Fire Chief – Bear Creek
- Dan Michels, Cooper Landing Emergency Services (Board)
- Scott Walden, Office of Emergency Management
- Amy Fenske and Colette Thompson – KPB Legal

Additional Input: KPB Fire/EMS Chiefs, Lands, GIS, Finance



The Workgroup's Plan

Initially, the workgroup set out to examine the legal and logistical elements and possibilities of solutions including:

- Borough-wide EMS powers
- Extending, altering, or combining any EMS service areas
- Alternative possibilities to alleviate the above stated issues

HCTF EMS Workgroup Purpose Overview and Plan

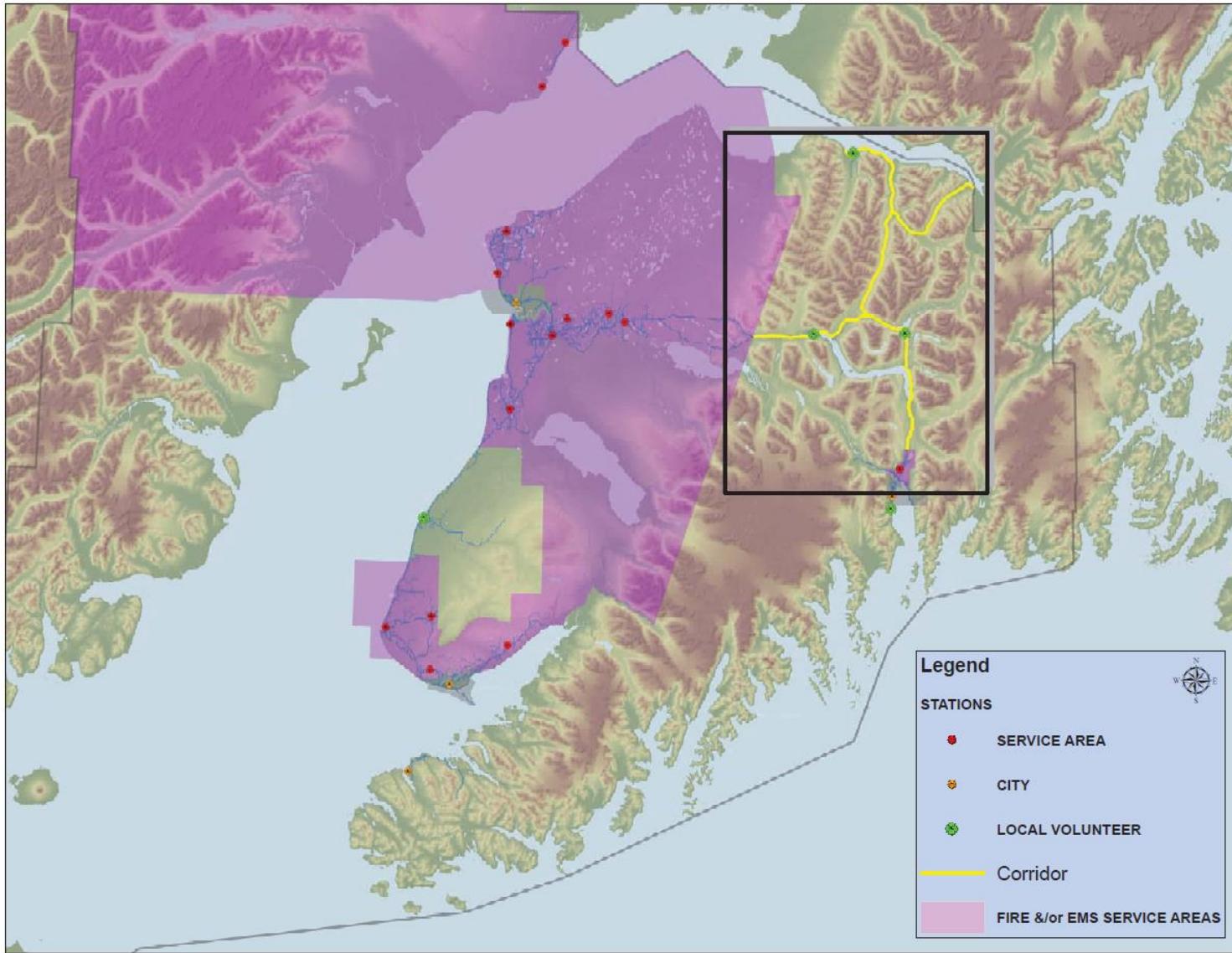
Background
The KPB healthcare task force created the EMS workgroup (EMS WG) to examine EMS issues borough-wide. These issues were identified by community stakeholders as a priority during the Task Force Subcommittee stakeholder feedback sessions, but were not central to the current work of the main body of the task force. The EMS workgroup is headed by Kelly Cooper (KPB Assembly Member) and Stormy Brown (KPB HR Director) and comprised of individuals involved in various aspects of the EMS system on the peninsula. At this point in time the WG reports back to the task force; however, this group will report to the Mayor's administration should the task force conclude or determine that EMS issues are not within their scope.

Issues
The process and structure of EMS delivery across the area has gaps and needs improvement. Significant differences in service level and availability across the geography, including gaps in coverage, recruitment, training, and funding have been identified as areas of opportunity. As the KPB has authority to manage most of the geography today through five established fire service areas, the borough administration will need to play a key role in solving these issues.
Borough-wide EMS authority or alteration of existing borough service areas may address the above issues in the following ways:

- Recruitment – Establishing a consistent process for recruiting volunteer responders across the geography, and encouraging responders to serve across current boundaries
- Coverage – Ensuring responder resources are available, appropriately placed and supported where they are needed, eliminating as many geographical gaps as is possible
- Funding – Assessing the cost of delivering the needed and appropriate level of service across the geography, ensuring high-traffic, low population areas (e.g. Sterling Highway through Cooper Landing) are appropriately resourced, etc.
- Training - Ensuring training levels and service levels are consistent and appropriate.

Workgroup Plan
The workgroup will examine the feasibility of structural changes to address the above identified issues. Specifically, the workgroup will examine the legal and logistical elements of:
1. Borough-wide EMS powers
2. Extending, altering, or combining any EMS service areas
3. Alternative possibilities to alleviate the above stated issues
The workgroup will report on the feasibility and of the above options and recommend a preferred option and path forward to the task force or Mayor's administration.





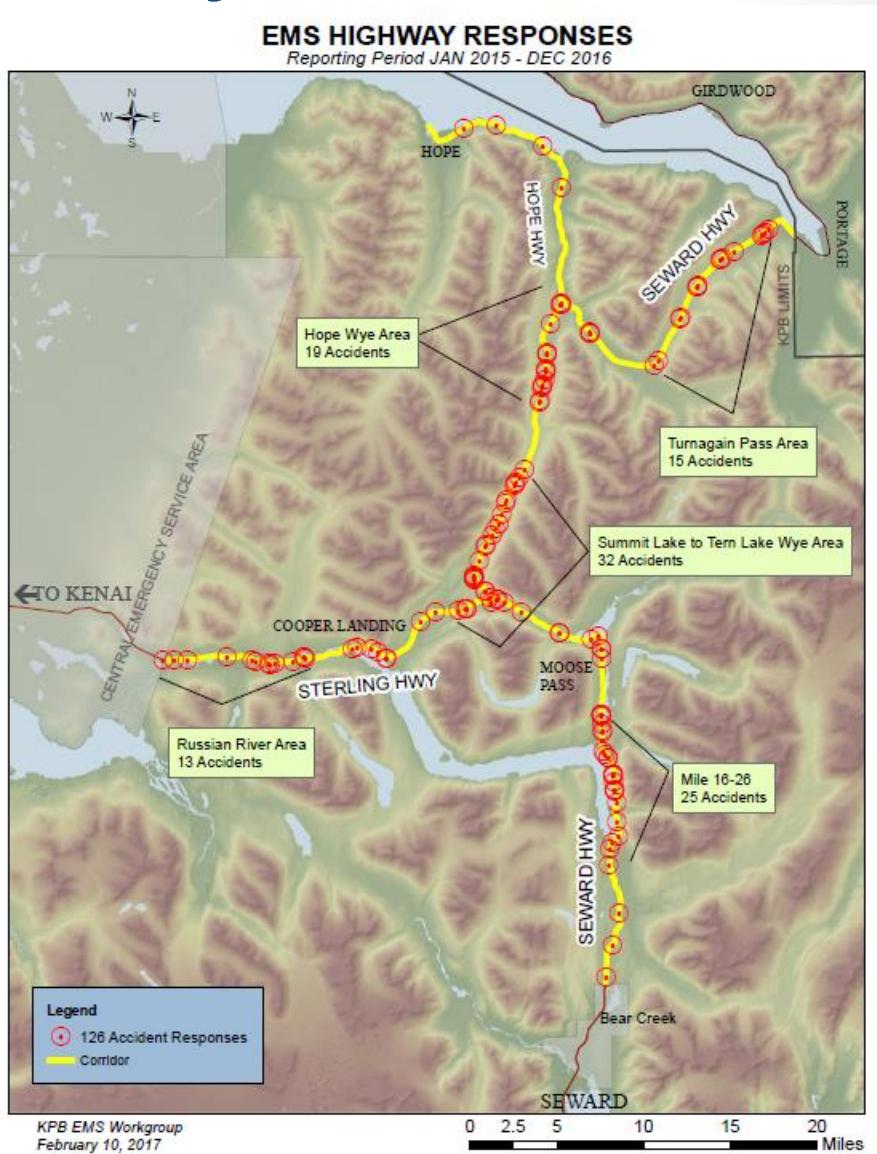
SECTION 2: SUMMARY OF THE PROBLEM

EMS System Summary

The Kenai Peninsula Borough currently has five* emergency services areas.

Although service areas cover much of the borough, some of the most highly traveled highways do not fall within a borough service area.

Most of this highway corridor abuts non-taxable federal land and is sparsely populated, resulting in an insufficient tax base for a service area.



*Note: CES and CPEMS are considered 1 service area in this presentation



EMS System Summary

Currently, several small community volunteer agencies and volunteers from KPC and other service areas attempt to provide services for the entire corridor, in conjunction with mutual aid from nearby KPB service areas.

As a result of this informal structure, significant call volume, and inconsistent resources, **KPB resources are frequently used in this region**.



How does this impact us?

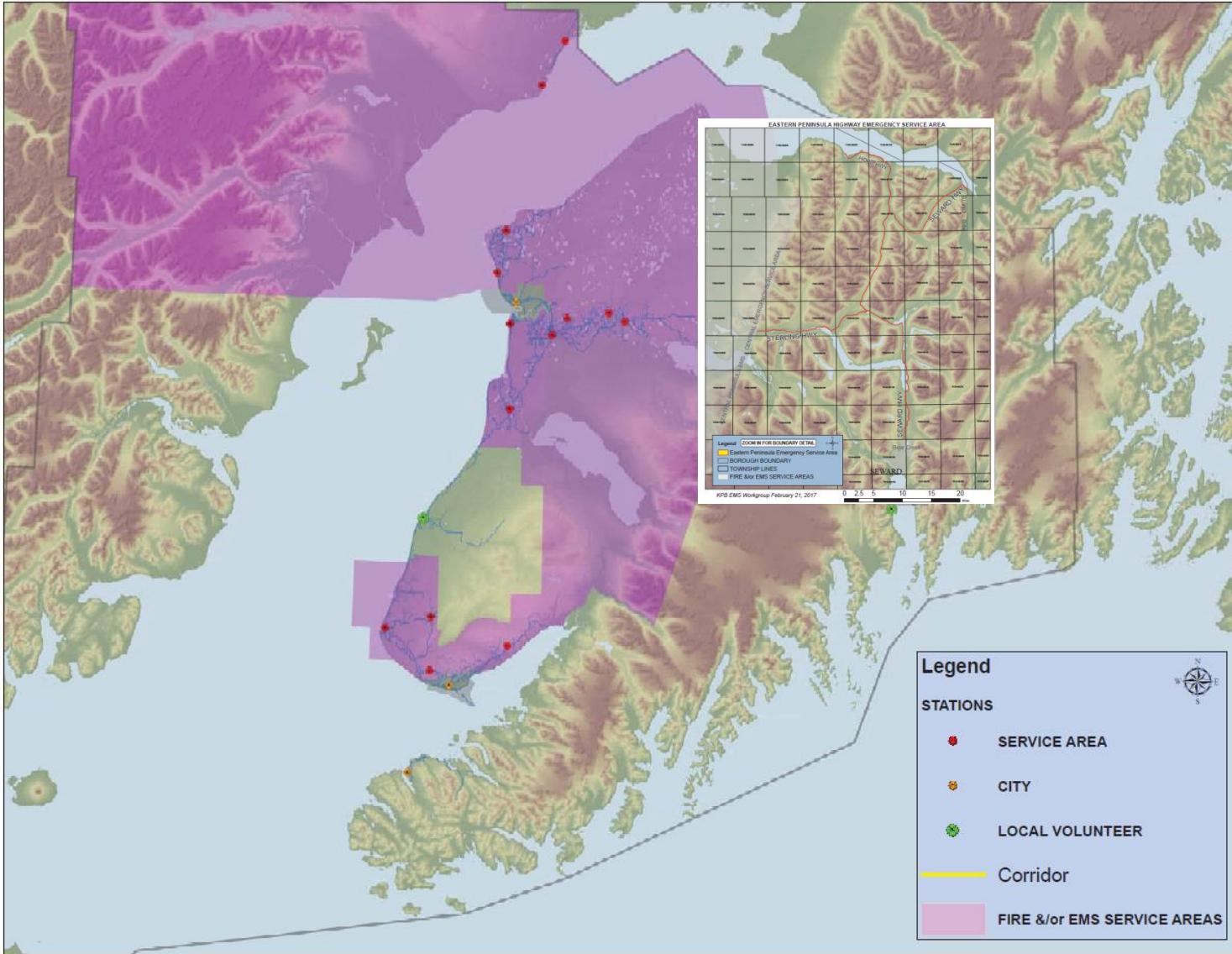
- **Impact on the KPB-** Calls for mutual aid when local volunteers are unable to respond pull KPB services out of their own response areas, often for extended periods.
- **Impact on local communities-** Local emergency volunteers may be unable to respond to their own communities because they are overwhelmed responding to highway calls with extended response and transport times due to remote locations. There is little, if any, reward or reimbursement for the volunteers.
- **Impact on all KPB residents** – Inability to be sure that timely, or any, response will be there for their friends, family, customers, or themselves in an accident along the sole roadway connecting KPB to the rest of the state. A real possibility that delays in response could impact outcomes.

The current response model is costly, inefficient and burdensome, but most importantly, does not ensure availability of response along the highway.

Workgroup Question:

**How do we address these gaps without
disrupting the well functioning service areas
that we already have?**





SECTION 3: PROPOSAL AND NEXT STEPS

(10)



Reviewing the Options

1. Borough-wide EMS powers
2. Extending, altering, or combining any EMS service areas
3. Alternative possibilities to alleviate the above stated issues

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Options Considered:

1. Expand existing services areas or adopt non-area wide authorities

Result - Legal and financial complexities associated with parsing out specific portions of existing budget to create a regional baseline authority are nearly insurmountably complex.

2. Create a traditional service area in the underserved region

Result – Two significant issues: Not enough taxable value to support the need, *and* would be asking the few tax-eligible residents in the area to tax themselves to provide a service utilized largely by non-local users.

3. Examine alternative solutions

Result - Identified provision in AK statute that allows service areas with no registered voters to be created via ordinance with the written permission of the property owners.



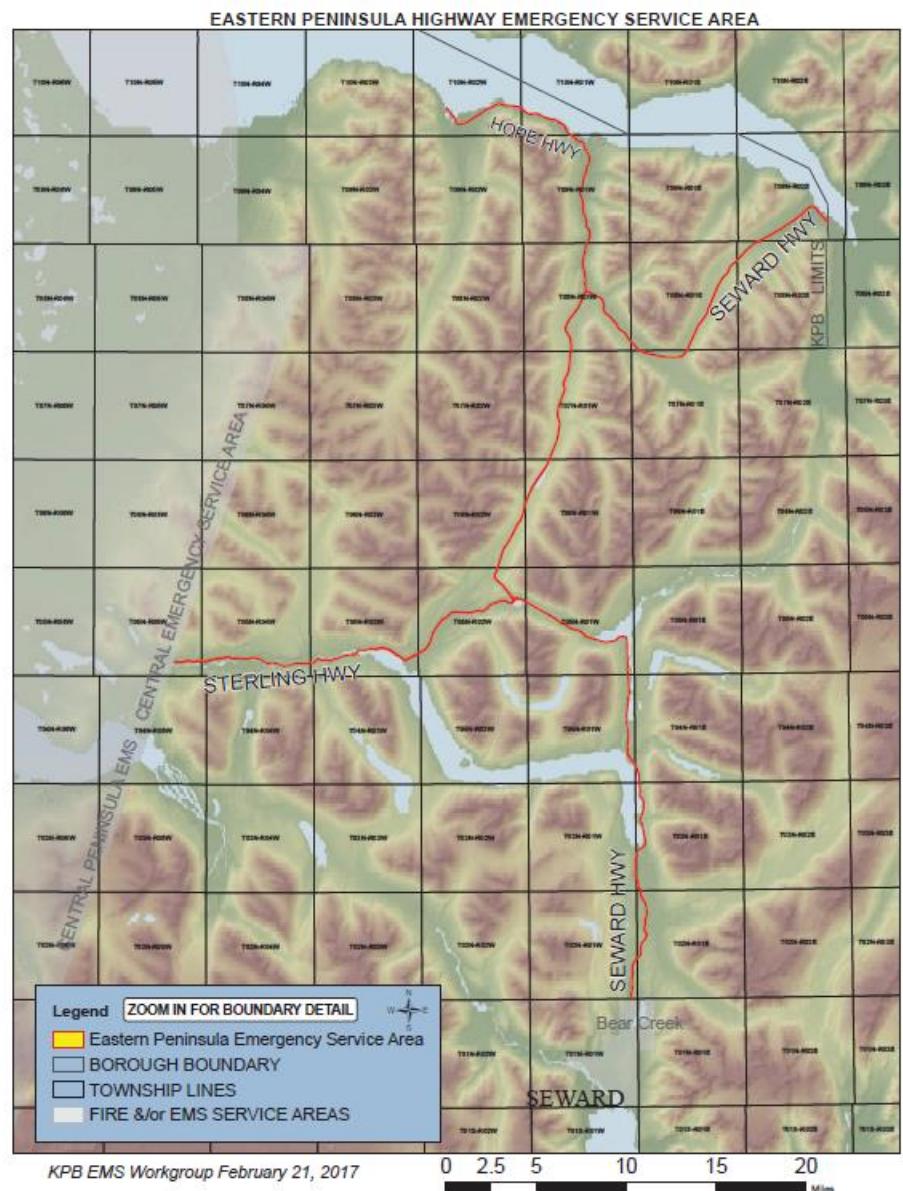
Possible Option – Create a corridor-only service area for the right-of-way, funded via PILT, focused on supporting, coordinating, and supplementing existing agencies

Corridor-Only Emergency Services

Establishing a highway service area would give the authority to the borough to coordinate and support response efforts along these highways.

The proposed service area would have no tax-payers. The intent would be to fund the needs with a portion of the Payment-in-Lieu-of-Taxes (PILT) payments received by the borough.

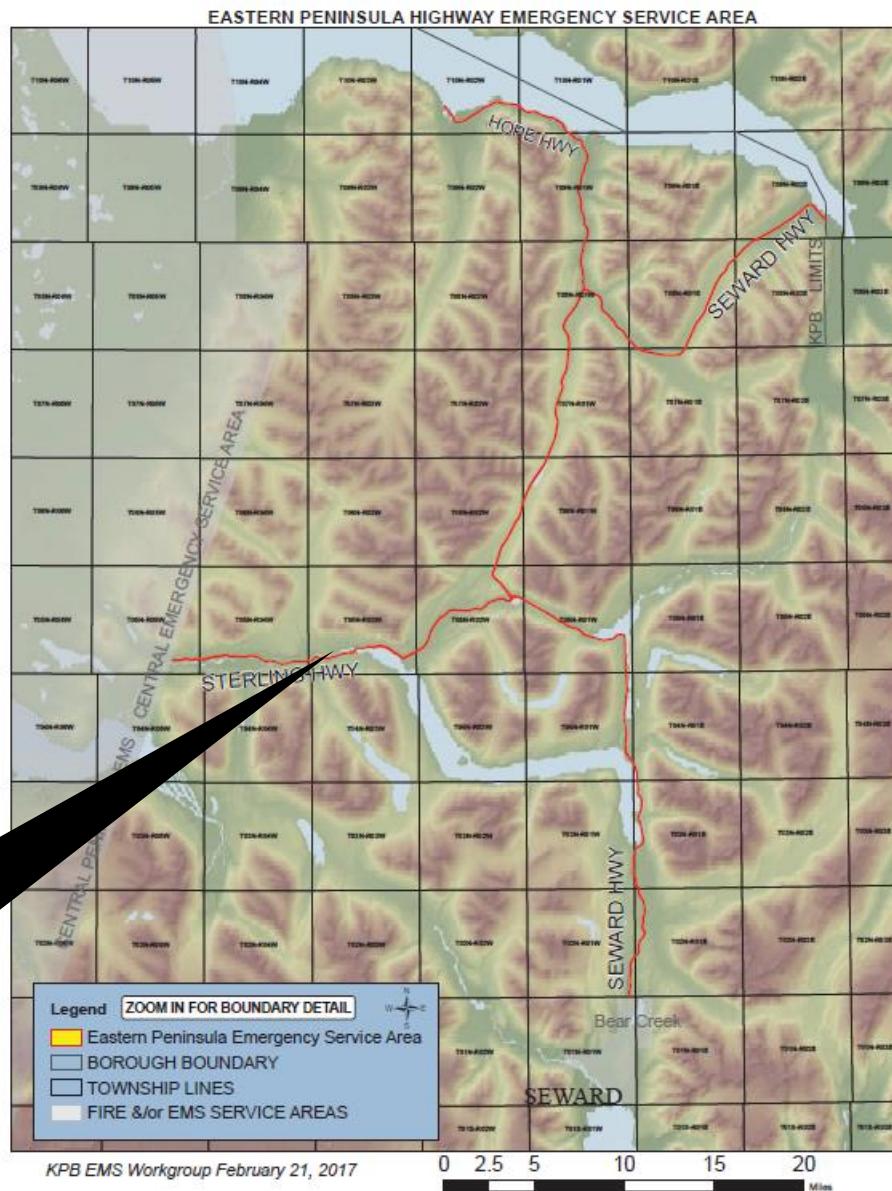
PILT payments are federal payments to municipalities specifically established for the purposes of offsetting the financial impacts of non-taxable federal land within municipal boundaries.



Corridor Map Detail

The corridor service area would carve out property owners and communities along the roadway.

As with other areas in the borough, these communities would continue to be responsible for providing their own emergency services – either through volunteers or by voting for a service area.



Actions and Timeline

	Timing	Action	Audience	Description
1	Complete	RESEARCH	HCTF → Subcommittee → EMS Workgroup	Gather feedback, analyze issue, discuss options, review with stakeholders, create initial recommendation
2	Current	Ordinance 2017-01	Assembly	Align KPB Code language with provisions in the AK statute regarding service area formation in second class boroughs.
3	Current	Resolution 2017-021	Assembly	Assembly recognizes need and recommends further analysis (by mayor/EMS Workgroup) as required in the Code
3	Current	HB148 and SB77	AK Legislature	Streamline process by specifically allowing local option corridor service areas
5	Next Step	RESEARCH/FEEDBACK	Mayor/ EMS Workgroup	Complete analysis of corridor service area option, including costing, service area design and initial timeline. Seek public and stakeholder feedback.
6	POSSIBLE Final Step	Future Ordinance	Assembly	Mayor requests creation of service area for assembly consideration

Actions and Timeline, continued

- **Ordinance 2017 - 01:** The KPB code regarding service area creation does not currently reflect state statute. This ordinance brings the code in line with state statute. A necessary preliminary step.
- **Resolution 2017 - 021:** KPB Code requires an assembly resolution as a “go forth” signal to formally request that the mayor fully examine a service area proposal and bring a recommendation to the assembly. This is a procedural step needed to progress the project.

These are preliminary actions that **update the code to reflect statute**, and **request that the mayor fully examine a proposal**.

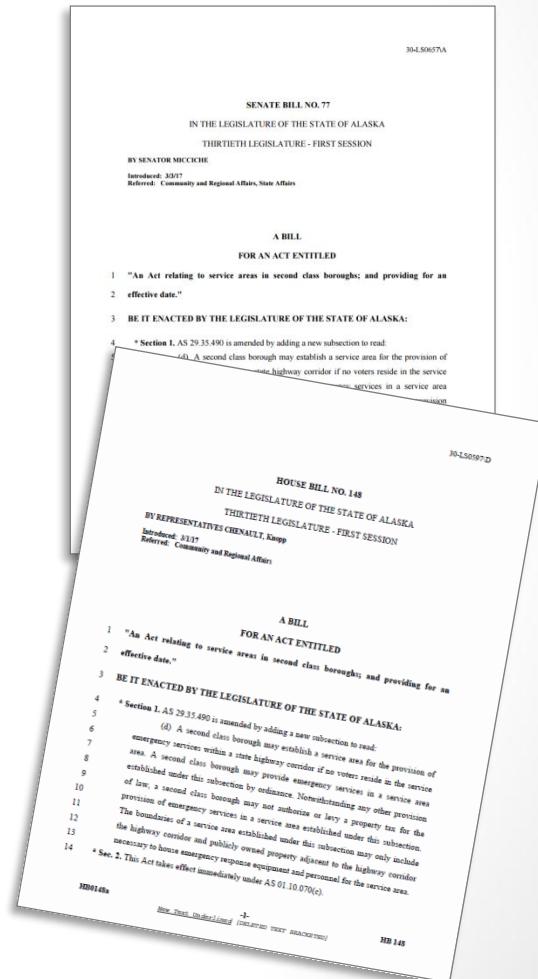
Neither of these actions establish a service area or obligate the borough to provide a service or funding.



Actions and Timeline continued

What about HB148 and SB77 proposed by the KPB?

- Current state statute allows the creation of a service area with no registered voters with the written permission of all owners of real property within the area.
- The nuances and legal complexities of right-of-way and easement ownership make sorting out the definition of “real property owner” on the highway challenging, although not impossible.
- Prior to trying to sort out the “real property owner” of the highway, the workgroup decided to propose state legislation which specifically allows the creation of corridor service areas.
- Achieving this addition to the statutes would significantly streamline the process and reduce complexity.
- It would also give other second-class boroughs in similar situations a less complex solution.



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Next Steps

If the ordinance and resolution currently under consideration by the assembly are passed, the mayor/EMS Workgroup will continue developing a plan for this type of service area and will report back to the assembly with a recommendation.

