

Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Update

Work Session with the FNSB Economic Development Commission

June 22, 2:30 p.m.

Mona Lisa Drexler Assembly Chambers, 907 Terminal Street, Fairbanks

Participants

- **FNSB Economic Development Commission:** Mayor Bryce Ward, Abigail Riggs, Deb Hickok, Frank Tomaszewski, Russell Talvi
 - *Absent: Commissioners Mike Meeks, Paul Robinson, and Matt Cooper*
- **FNSB Staff:** Brittany Smart and Stephanie Pearson
- **Agnew::Beck Project Consultant:** Shelly Wade

Public Involvement Plan Update – See Slides for Details

- Commissioner Talvi asked about the upcoming airshow at the Eielson Airforce Base.
 - Response: We are strategically leveraging our opportunities for public outreach and are focused on the Golden Days Street Fair. However, if commissioners are going to the airshow, that could be an opportunity for them to get public input.
- Next Steps: We are going to have an Economic Summit in late January or early February. Any big events we should be aware of. We want to avoid scheduling conflicts.
 - Commissioner input:
 - There is a tourism conference on the third or fourth Wednesday of January.
 - The Alaska Municipal League is in early February.

Headlines – FNSB Economy in the News: What does success look like?

Activity – Instructions, Part 1

- It's 5 years from now. There is a story about the FNSB economy in the news. What is the headline? What do you want it to say? ***Individually: Take 2 minutes to write a headline.***

Activity – Individual Results, Part 1

- Housing increase – FNSB is the fastest growing little town in the U.S.
- Better food security. Fairbanks has it!
- Better air quality in the FNSB!
- Lower utility costs have made it to Fairbanks
- Improved wildland fire mitigation
- Office apprenticeships

Activity – Instructions, Part 2

- ***In small groups:*** Compare and combine your individual headlines into one shared headline. What does it say? Are there any accompanying graphics, video or audio clips? Where exactly would you like the headline to appear?

Activity – Small Group Results, Part 2

- “Industrial hemp becomes Fairbanks’ top export” – Daily News Miner
- “Fairbanks leading economic growth in Alaska” – Daily News Miner
- “FNSB ranked in top 10 places to live in the U.S.” – Forbes, New York Times

- “The golden heart of Alaska has found the golden goose: Fairbanks, America’s Arctic, has an economy that’s heating up with a surprisingly low unemployment, diverse opportunities and the global home to the Arctic Council” – Forbes
- “Fairbanks, America’s Arctic, has an economy that’s heading up with surprisingly low unemployment, diverse opportunities and the global home to the Arctic Council”
- “Fairbanks is the fastest-growing economy in Alaska and the Pacific Northwest”
- “Fairbanks named the Arctic hub community for the United States”
- “Fairbanks North Star Borough has the lowest unemployment rate in the U.S., across multiple sectors”
- “Thriving, healthy and growing, Fairbanks has it all for the young and old”
- “Fairbanks North Star Borough, Fastest Growing Little County in the Northwest”
- “Thriving Economic Development in America’s Arctic with Resilient, Sustainable and Innovative Growth”

Economic Vision & Goals

- The 2016 CEDS vision reflects the concept of planning. It’s also long and hard to memorize.
- We are looking for something that is between 8 to 10 words which clearly states our vision and captures Fairbanks.
 - Example: “Fairbanks is a robust hub for the Arctic and Alaska”
- The economic vision should capture the uniqueness of Fairbanks.
 - Example: “Land of the Midnight Sun”
- What does economic success in Fairbanks look like? What are tangible goals for the next five years?
 - There is such thing as unhealthy growth, so success would be healthy and sustainable growth.
 - Increasing and diversifying local exports, so if one large employer leaves, we are not as impacted.
 - Better local food security.
 - A deep skilled labor pool for existing industry sectors.
 - Universal Pre-K, in addition to affordable and available childcare. This is an investment in the start of the workforce pipeline and future economy.
 - Lower energy and living costs.
 - Being able to produce more of our food locally.

Next Steps

- We have captured your preliminary goals and vision shared in this session and will continue to get public and stakeholder feedback, including other community events and industry roundtables. Later this fall, we will conduct a work session with the Commission to review the draft SWOT, vision, and goals.
- We will continue to reach out to EDC members to schedule one-on-one conversations to get input.
- Other upcoming events
 - We have a Chamber Luncheon, and Commissioners could come (virtually) and join as ambassadors of this process.
 - Our next in-person event is Golden Days in July. We are still figuring out the logistics.
 - Commissioner Hickock volunteered her time to man the booth at the Street Fair. Commissioner Talvi also said he is available. Shelly will work with both commissioners to schedule and prepare them. Thank you, Commissioners!
 - We have the Tanana Valley State Fair (July 30 to August 8), which will be a big event.
- Any ideas or questions can be emailed to Shelly or Brittany at shelly@agnewbeck.com or brittany.smart@fnsb.gov.