



Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

City of North Pole: City Council Work Session

February 7, 2022

The Project Team

Project Steering Committee: the **FNSB Economic Development Commission**

Mayor Bryce Ward | Abigail Riggs | Frank Tomaszewski | Kristan Kelly | Mark Billingsley | Paul Robinson | Russell Talvi



FNSB Project Manager:
Brittany Smart



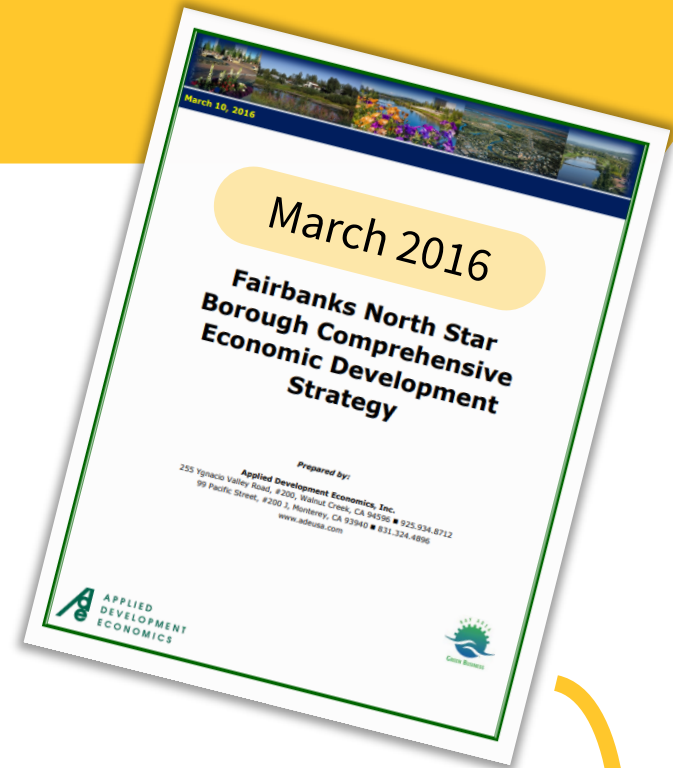
Contracting Team:
Shelly Wade, AICP
Molly Mylius

Supporting team
members:



Project Purpose

To develop an updated Five-Year FNSB Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).



CEDS must go through a robust update every five years, with shorter, less intensive updates annually.



What is a CEDS?

- A locally-based, regionally-driven economic development roadmap that guides government and community action.
- Brings the private and public sector together to develop a regional strategy and action plan.
- Identifies projects and makes recommendations to:

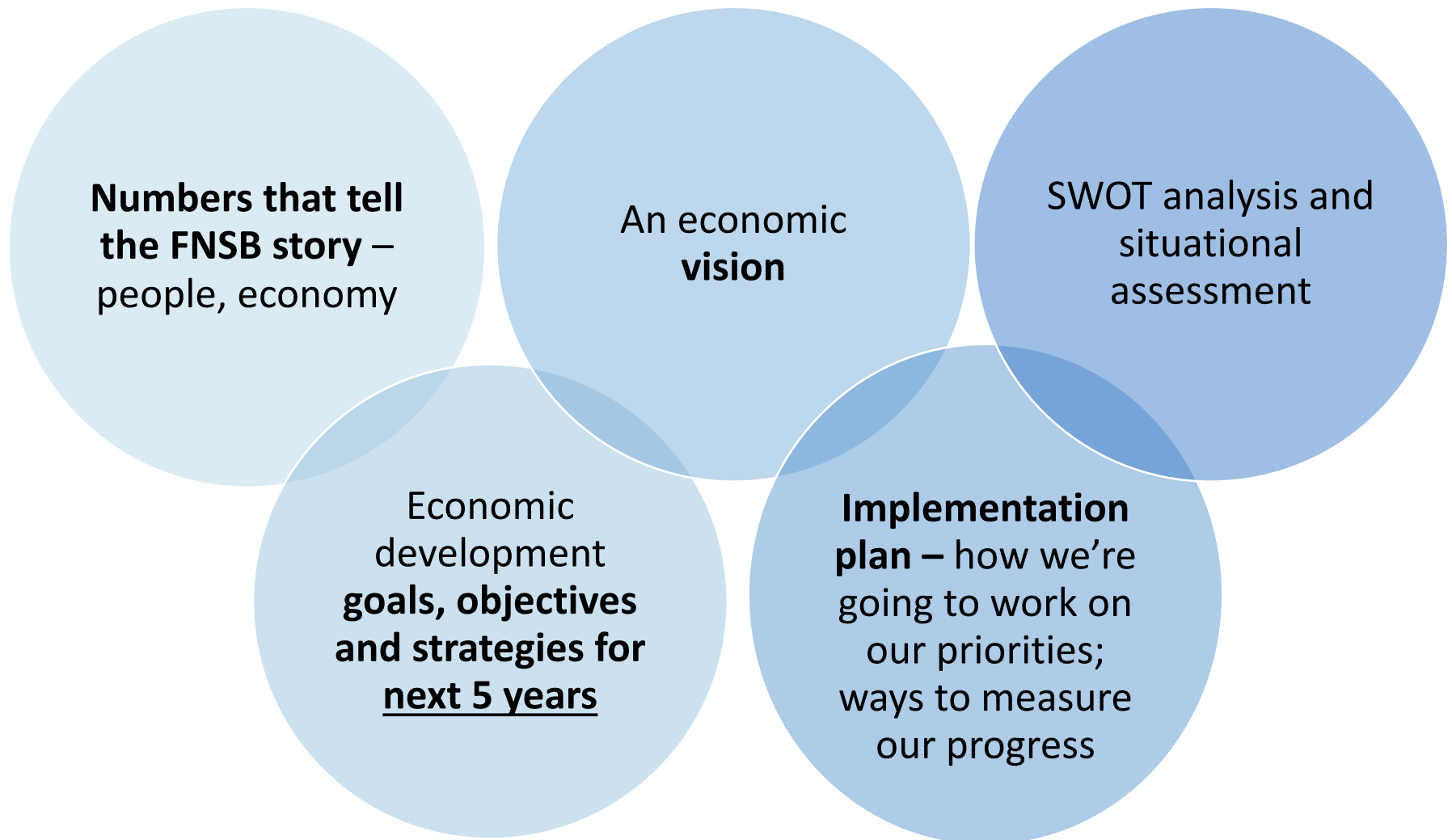
Secure and
support
businesses

Create more
and better
paying jobs

Improve
quality of life

Increase
resilience to
changes,
threats

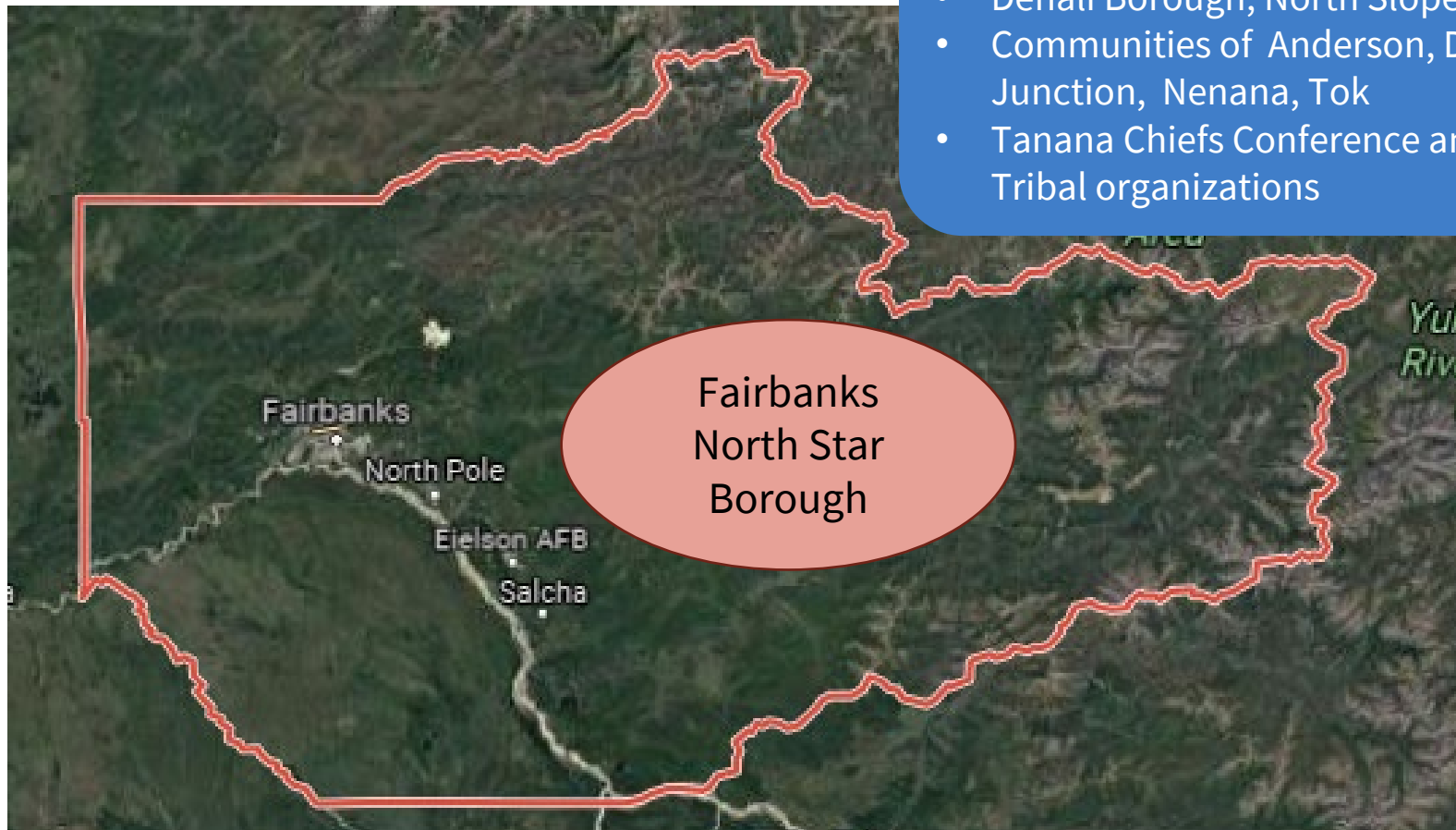
What does a CEDS include?



Project Area: FNSB

Key regional partners beyond FNSB boundaries include:

- Denali Borough, North Slope Borough
- Communities of Anderson, Delta Junction, Nenana, Tok
- Tanana Chiefs Conference and other Tribal organizations



CEDS Update Timeline

	2021									2022						
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	→
Interviews, Discussions											We are here					Adoption
Community Events			Midnight Sun, Golden Days, Fair													
Economic Summit																
Other Tools (website, media, newsletters, etc.)																
Key Phases	Project Kickoff		Research & Events, Interviews			Draft Vision & Goals			Economic Summit		Public Review Draft		Final CEDS		→	

Other Completed Activities

Stakeholder Roundtables

- Visitor Industry: Explore Fairbanks Board & Staff Work Session
 - Education & Workforce Development
 - Research & Innovation
- In partnership with FEDC*
- Agriculture
 - Communications
 - Energy
 - Forestry
 - Health Care
 - Mining

Other Engagement

- Economic Development Commission Work Sessions: March, June, November
- Project Website
- Regional Snapshot
- Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce Business Luncheon
- Greater Fairbanks Board of Realtors General Membership Meeting
- Booths at Midnight Sun Festival, Golden Days, and Tanana Valley State Fair
- City of Fairbanks City Council

Upcoming Activities

Roundtables

- Young Entrepreneurs
- Child Care providers
- UAF Student Government

Other Engagement

- Economic Summit (Feb. 22-23)
- Complete outstanding interviews
 - Tribal organizations
 - New FNSB Economic Development Commissioners
 - Supplemental energy, mining, construction interviews



Proposed FNSB CEDS Topics/Sectors

Industry Clusters

key sectors that drive the FNSB economy

Energy
Health Care
Military
Natural Resources
(Agriculture, Forestry, Mining)
Research & Innovation
Visitation

Community Influencers

supportive foundations that clusters rely on to grow and flourish

Communications
Education & Workforce Development
Government
Housing and Land Use
Quality of Life
Transportation
Utilities

City of North Pole Context

City of North Pole in the 2016 CEDS – Relevant Project Ideas

- **Support Completion of the Interior Energy Project.**
 - The Interior Energy Project is proceeding with the development of local natural gas distribution systems in North Pole, with plans for further expansions in future phases.
- **Complete Petro Star Asphalt Plant.**
 - Petro Star has announced plans to invest \$30 million in an asphalt plant in North Pole. With the shift of the Flint Hills refinery from production to distribution, the Petro Star project would constitute a major boost to the energy industry in FNSB.
- **Regional Retail Market Analysis.**
 - Produce a market analysis primarily focused on the North Pole area, but also addressing potential market expansions associated with other regional military and civilian developments that would expand retail development opportunities in FNSB.
- **Expand Potable Water Systems.**
 - Expand community wide water and wastewater systems.

Full project list starts on page 108 of [the 2016 CEDS](#)

Interior Alaska COVID-19 Economic Impact and Recovery Plan



Interior Alaska COVID-19 Economic Impact and Recovery Plan



Objective: *To create an Interior Alaska COVID-19 Economic Impact and Recovery Plan focused on the following principles:*



Resilience through
innovation



Strong local businesses



A safe & healthy
community



A fully-employed
workforce

Source: <https://covid-fnsb.hub.arcgis.com/pages/strategies>

City of North Pole Comprehensive Strategic Plan, Economic Development Goals

- GOAL A: Grow and Support Existing Businesses and Organizations and Attract New Business
- GOAL B: Promote North Pole as a Destination
- GOAL C: Expand Workforce Development Opportunities for Residents

City of North Pole Comprehensive Strategic Plan, Economic Development Priority Strategies

- Strategy A-1: Strengthen and cultivate the **community's relationship with Eielson Air Force Base** (EAFB)
- Strategy A-2: Attract **new businesses** that will generate revenue for the City and meet the needs of residents and visitors
- Strategy C-1: Expand and strengthen **career technical education and other workforce and career readiness opportunities** at North Pole Middle School and High Schools

Source: City of North Pole Comprehensive Strategic Plan, 2016: [here](#)

Proposed 2022 City of North Pole Legislative Priorities (from today's meeting packet)

1. North Pole Utility Sewer Main Extension (\$3.5 M)

- To build a new sewer discharge sewer main; engineering and design are complete. This will address wastewater treatment violation issues that have occurred with the current discharge channel.

2. Combined Heat and Power Plant Serving North Pole Area (\$2.4 M)

- Construction of a coal (and possibly natural gas) gasification plant to manufacture electricity and hot water for district heat. Will be used to heat water expansion, public facilities (schools, municipal pool, library, public safety, city hall) and potentially other facilities. Will also help address air quality.

3. Interior Training Facility (~\$6M - \$11M)

- A facility to assist interior state, federal, and local law enforcement and public safety with a facility to conduct emergency vehicle driver and firearms training

4. Adopt an Equitable and Sustainable Cost for Public Employee Retirement System (\$404k)

- Reduce the contribution in half, from 22% contribution to 11% contribution; the current contribution of \$807k represents more than 11% of the City's annual budget

Discussion Questions

1. What **factors are a barrier** to successful economic development in the city of North Pole (and more broadly, FNSB, Interior AK)?
2. What **priorities (strategies/projects)** should be included in the 5-Year CEDS? Specifically, what strategies or projects will:
 - Increase local employment
 - Support businesses
 - Increase the economy's resilience and mitigate vulnerabilitiesIn the city, borough, Interior AK?

Discussion Notes: Barriers

- Challenges with the North Pole Chamber of Commerce; this means there is no local promotion efforts (aside from broader regional promotion via Explore Fairbanks).
- Shortage of workers and especially of qualified/trained workers with needed skill sets. Even seeing this within the city's efforts to hire qualified candidates for administrators and other positions.
- Limited housing capacity to support the increased military families; many variables contributing to the housing challenge.
- The challenge of balancing the desire to maintain the small town feel that many residents cherish, with the current growth that is occurring. "If we don't work to accommodate the needs of our military neighbors, they will things their own way."
- Current education and workforce development training programs are not in line with needs of major employers. Need closer communication and coordination between the education sector and industry.
- The North Pole community sometimes feels left out of regional planning and decision-making. Need to continue to engage the City and its residents in regional conversations like this one.
- Natural gas has not been the golden solution that was promised in terms of cost savings, especially for businesses. The cost of conversion is often not worth it. Conversion rates have been lower than projected.

Discussion Notes: Opportunities

- North Pole is small but its location is critical to support housing and commercial needs of Eielson AFB.
- Spouses of incoming military households may be able to fill some of the workforce gaps in the community.
- North Pole is in the only military facility zone in Alaska – many opportunities to capitalize on this for housing and other benefits.
- Improve K-12 education, including vocational and technical education. Learn and reflect on past efforts, such as the 4-4-5 plan from 2008 – that was an ambitious effort but never came to fruition; once the plan was done the work stopped.
- North Pole has aging infrastructure, including its piped water systems. In a small community, external funds are often required to fully meet the costs of building, replacing, and maintaining infrastructure.
- North Pole is looking at building a heat and power plant for the community (in packet of proposed legislative priorities). Estimates it would be paid off in 4 years. The City has a request in to the Department of Energy and should know more this summer. The waste heat could also support local greenhouses.
- North Pole will be getting a Three Bears store this year; this should attract additional shoppers to North Pole, including from adjacent communities to the south.

Next Steps and Wrap-Up

Next Steps

- January-February 2022 – Conclude sector outreach
- **February 22-23, 2022 – Economic Summit**
- April 2022 – Release public review draft
- June 2022 – Release final draft

Interior Alaska Economic Summit

February
22-23, 2022

View the flyer
online [here](#)



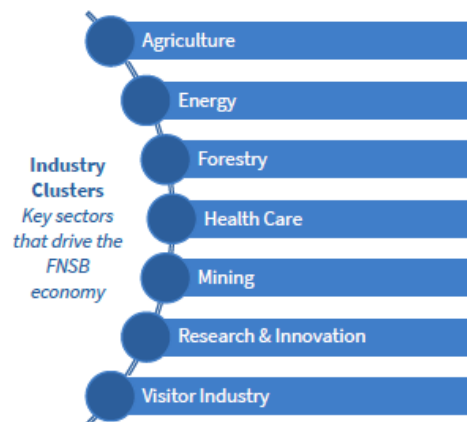
Save the Date: February 22nd -23rd 2022

2022 Interior Alaska Economic Summit

The 2022 Interior Alaska Economic Summit will bring regional community, business, and industry leaders together to collaborate on economic opportunities as we work towards a stronger, more resilient Interior Alaska economy. The Summit is free and will be held at the Westmark in Fairbanks.

Topics for Breakout Sessions

(preliminary at-a-glance agenda on reverse)



RSVP Today

More details coming soon. RSVP and stay informed: www.surveymonkey.com/r/IAEconSummit



PURPOSE & OUTCOMES

- The 2022 Interior Alaska Economic Summit will inform development of the updated 5-Year Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).
- Participants will review and confirm CEDS components, including a shared economic development vision, goals, and 5-year priorities.
- The updated CEDS will better position the community for funding & investment opportunities.

Interior Alaska Economic Summit

February
22-23, 2022

View the at-a-
glance agenda
online [here](#)

Tuesday

February 22nd – Focus on Industry Clusters

Time	Topic		Virtual Option?
9:00 – 9:45 am	Opening Plenary: Welcome and Inspiration		Yes
9:45 – 10:00 am	<i>Break</i>		
10:00 – 11:45 am	Industry Breakouts Round 1	Agriculture	No
		Energy	No
11:45 am – 1:00 pm	<i>Lunch – on your own</i>		
1:00 – 2:45 pm	Industry Breakouts Round 2	Forestry	No
		Health Care	No
2:45 – 3:00 pm	<i>Break</i>		
3:00 – 5:00 pm	Industry Breakouts Round 3	Mining	No
		Research and Innovation	No
		Visitor Industry	No

Wednesday

February 23rd – Focus on Community Influencers

Time	Topic		Virtual Option?
9:00 – 10:45 am	Influencer Breakouts Round 1	Small Business Development & Entrepreneurship	No
		Communications (phone, internet connectivity)	No
10:45 – 11:00 am	<i>Break</i>		
11:00 am – 12:45 pm	Influencer Breakouts Round 2	Land Use, Housing, & Environment (includes utilities)	No
		Indoor & Outdoor Recreation (includes entertainment, retail, parks, trails)	No
12:45 – 1:45 pm	<i>Lunch – on your own</i>		
1:45 – 3:30 pm	Influencer Breakouts Round 3	Education & Workforce Development	No
		Transportation (includes roads, aviation, rail, bike/pedestrian connections)	No
3:30 – 4:00 pm	<i>Break</i>		
4:00 – 5:00 pm	Closing Plenary: Summary of Results and Next Steps		Yes

Learn More on Our Website



2021 Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Update

PURPOSE

WHAT IS INCLUDED?

TOPICS

PROJECT TEAM

GET INVOLVED

SCHEDULE

RESOURCES

CONTACT US

A Stronger, More Resilient Economy.

www.FNSBCEDS.com

Other Relevant Planning Efforts

Tanana Chiefs Conference Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy	<u>www.tananachiefs.org/ceds/</u>
Comprehensive Roads Plan	<u>fnsbroadspan.com/</u>
Fairbanks Downtown Plan	<u>https://downtownfbx2040.com/</u>
Comprehensive Recreational Trails Plan	<u>fnsbtrailsplan.com/</u>
Pioneer Park Master Plan	<u>fairbankspioneerparkplan.com/</u>

Thank you!

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Want to learn more? Visit our website: FNSBCEDS.com