



Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Borough Staff Roundtable

February 24, 2022

Invited Participants

Name	Role	Status
Brittany Smart	Special Assistance to Mayor Ward; CEDS PM	Attended
Daniel Welch	Natural Resources Development Manager, Natural Resources Dept	Attended
Bryan Sehmel	Land Officer, Natural Resources Department	Attended
Kellen Spillman	Interim Director, Community Planning	Attended
Melissa Kellner	Interim Deputy Director, Community Planning	Attended
George Stefan	Platting Officer, Community Planning	Attended
Don Galligan	Transportation Planner, Community Planning	Attended
Stephanie Pearson	Community Research Technician, Community Planning	Attended
Cecily Manning	Director of Assessing, Assessing Department	Invited
Brad Accord	Deputy Assessor, Assessing Department	Invited

The Project Team



FNSB Economic Development Commission

*Mayor Bryce Ward | Abigail Riggs | Frank Tomaszewski
Kristan Kelly | Mark Billingsley | Paul Robinson | Russell Talvi
Past Members: Deb Hickok, Matt Cooper, Mike Meeks, Mindy O’Neall*

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.



Reminder: 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:**

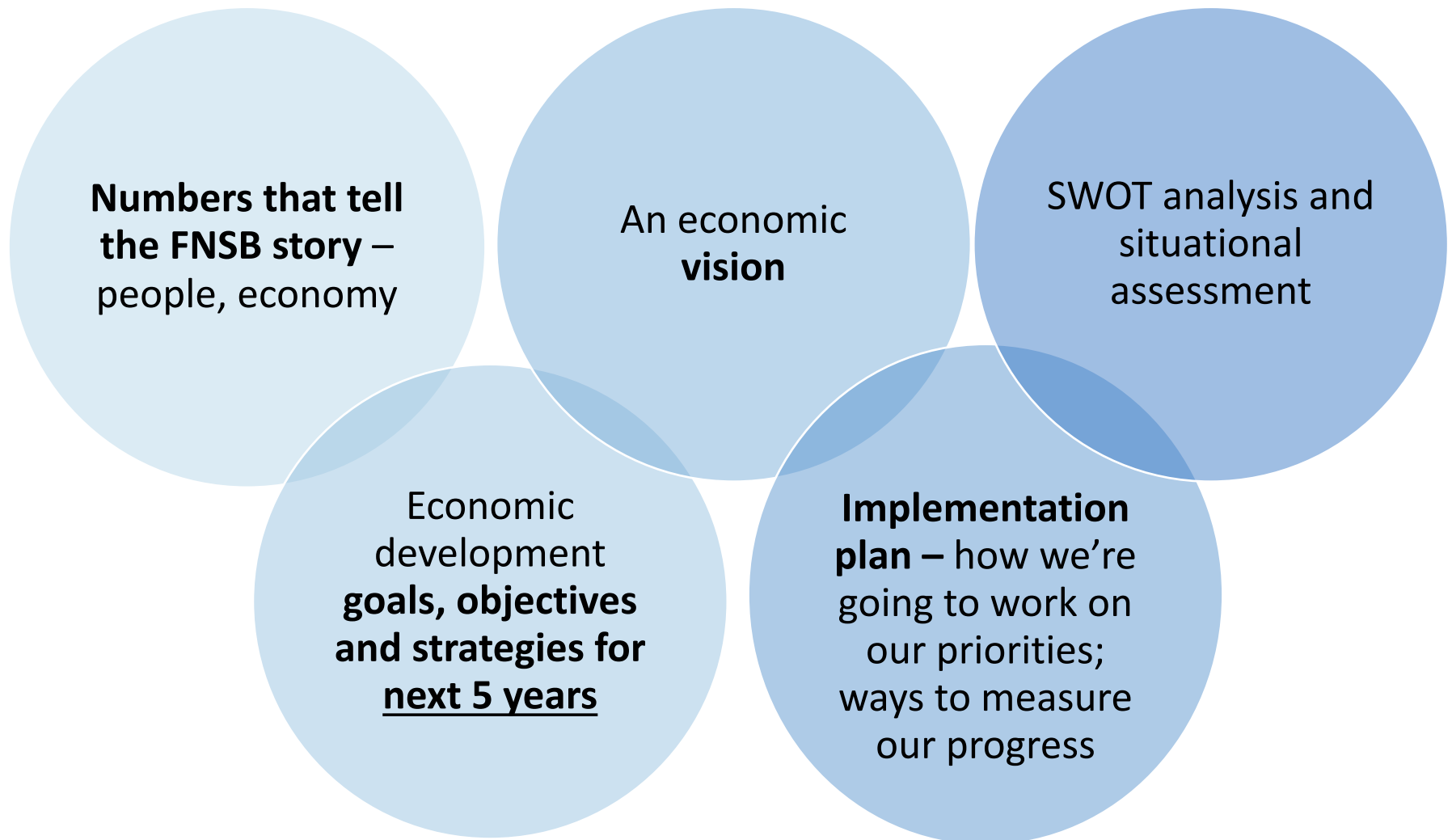
Secure and
support
businesses

Create more
and better
paying jobs

Improve
quality of life

Increase
resilience to
changes,
threats

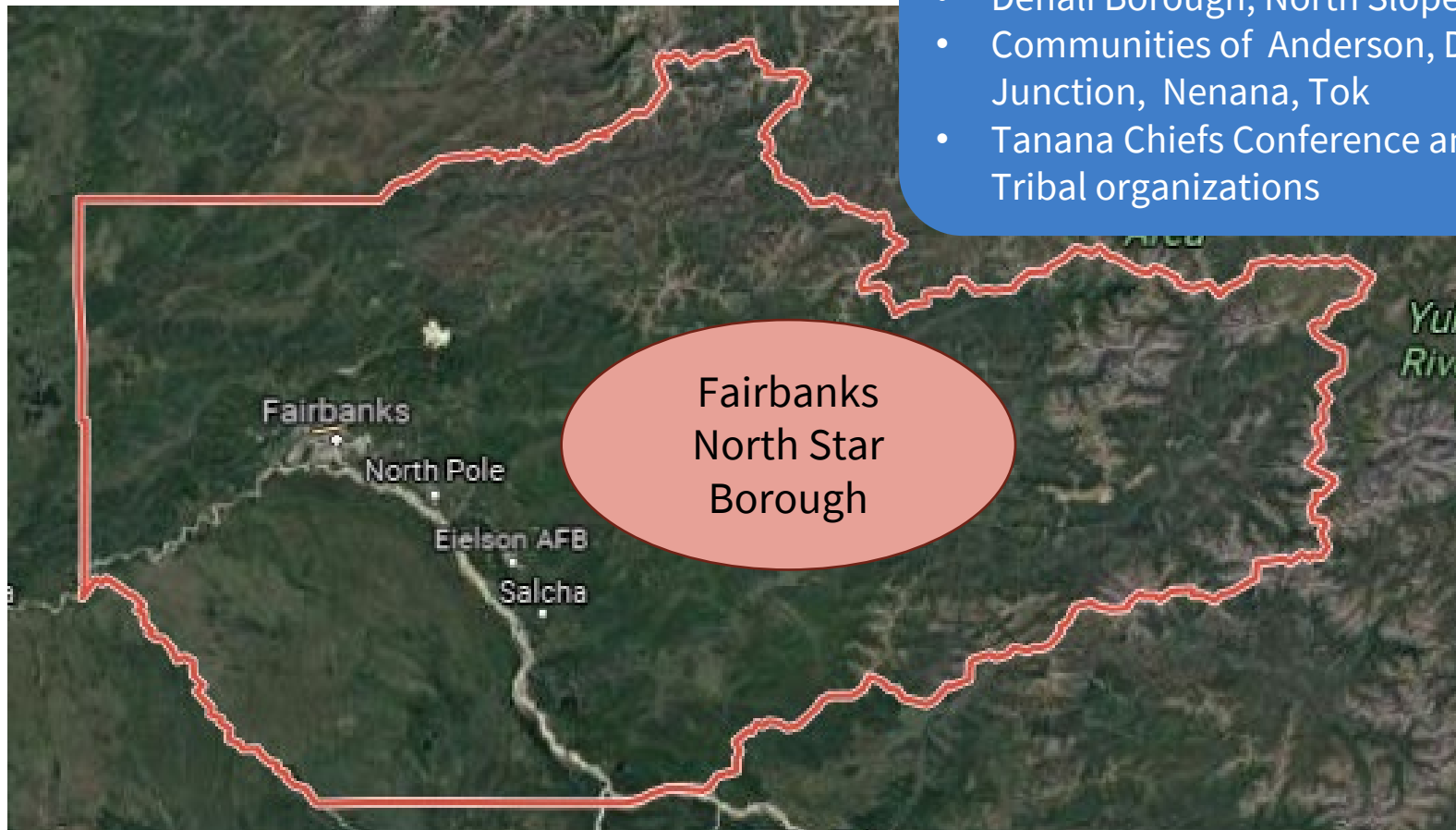
What does a CEDS include?



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	→
Project Website	•	← ongoing website updates →														Adoption
Stakeholder Interviews	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•						
Interactive Discussions	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•						
Community Events			Midnight Sun, Golden Days, Fair													
Economic Summit											•					
E-Newsletters, <u>Social Media</u>, Public Notices, News, Radio										•	•		•		•	
Key Phases	<i>Project Kickoff</i>		<i>Research & Events, Interviews</i>				<i>Draft Vision & Goals</i>			<i>Economic Summit</i>		<i>Public Review Draft</i>			<i>Final CEDS</i>	→

We are here

Completed Engagement Activities

Sector Roundtables

- Visitor Industry: Explore Fairbanks Board & Staff Work Session
- Education & Workforce Development
- Research & Innovation
- Child Care

In partnership with FEDCo

- Agriculture
- Communications
- Energy
- Forestry
- Health Care
- Mining

Other Engagement

- Economic Development Commission Work Sessions: March, June, November 2021; February 2022
- Project Website
- Regional Snapshot
- Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce Business Luncheon
- Greater Fairbanks Board of Realtors General Membership Meeting
- UAF Student Government
- City of Fairbanks
- City of North Pole
- **Interior AK Economic Summit!!!**
- Fairbanks North Borough Staff

Upcoming Activities

Roundtables

- Young Entrepreneurs



Other Engagement

- Interview with:
 - Tribal organizations
 - New FNSB Economic Development Commissioners

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



Where We Are Today & Your Input

Interior Alaska Economic Summit

February
22-23, 2022

View the flyer
online [here](#)



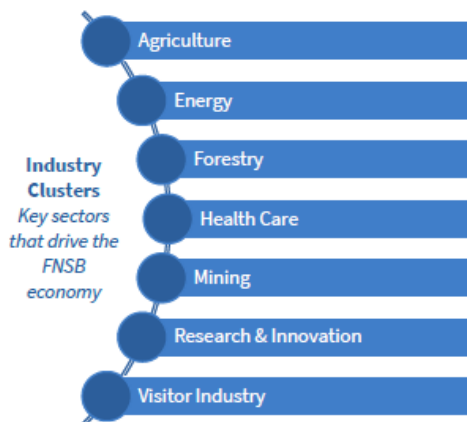
Save the Date: February 22nd -23rd 2022

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.

Your Thoughts on the Proposed Economic Vision

The Land of the Midnight Sun & Golden Heart of Alaska is a global economic hub, where families, businesses, adventurers, and opportunities thrive.

- Feels generic → Remove “global” → Add “Arctic”
- Remove “Land of the Midnight Sun” → Keep “Golden Heart”
- Everyone should see themselves in the vision – are we being equitable?

Land Use, Housing, and Environment

Project idea:

Conduct housing needs assessment and plans for annual updates.

Project idea:

Conduct outreach to increase community knowledge of existing land use policies that impact business development, housing, recreation, etc.

Project idea:

Continue to take steps to improve air quality with a focus on reducing PM2.5.




Recreation & Entertainment

Project idea:

Secure funding for and implement phases 2 of the Pioneer Park Master Plan, including opening the park to the riverfront, adding a multi-purpose center.

Indicator idea:

Miles of trail in FNSB.



**2022-2026 Fairbanks North Star Borough
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
Recreation & Entertainment Summary - DRAFT**
Includes: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats | Targets | Goals | Strategies & Actions | Relevant Plans

Strengths <i>Internal attributes that contribute to success</i>	Weaknesses <i>Internal barriers to success</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to outdoor recreation (trails, parks, fishing)• Availability of quality public libraries• Beautiful landscapes and wildlife• Downtown Fairbanks is historic, walkable, and features many retail and restaurant options, with great waterfront access• Increasing number of local restaurants and breweries• Many community events, festivals throughout the year• Quality and diverse museums that attract visitors and preserve the region's history and heritage• Shopping hub for the surrounding region, with flagship stores such as Costco• Traditional arts and crafts of Alaska Native artists	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conflicts between logging and recreation/trail users, and between different recreation user groups on forestry trails• Limited access to opportunities for seniors and those with mobility challenges• Limited chain restaurants and shopping outlets• Outlying areas of the FNSB have fewer opportunities and dedicated space for bicycles and pedestrians• Sales tax in North Pole (4%) can be a disincentive for shopping locally for some residents• The area within a 20-minute drive radius of EAFB, including the nearby City of North Pole, has limited retail, dining and indoor recreation options; in a telephone-based retail needs survey of the North Pole area in 2017, respondents gave poor scores for local shopping and retail
Opportunities <i>External forces that contribute to success</i>	Threats <i>External forces that could be barriers to success</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alaska Long Trail• Funding for quality-of-life improvements based on a Fort Wainwright Behavioral Health Epidemiological Consultation (BH EPICON) study that was conducted in response to a high number of suicides and fatalities• Increasing year-round visitation to better support the leisure and hospitality industry year-round	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Land use conflicts at recreation and aurora sites• Ongoing supply chain disruptions due to the pandemic and workforce shortages

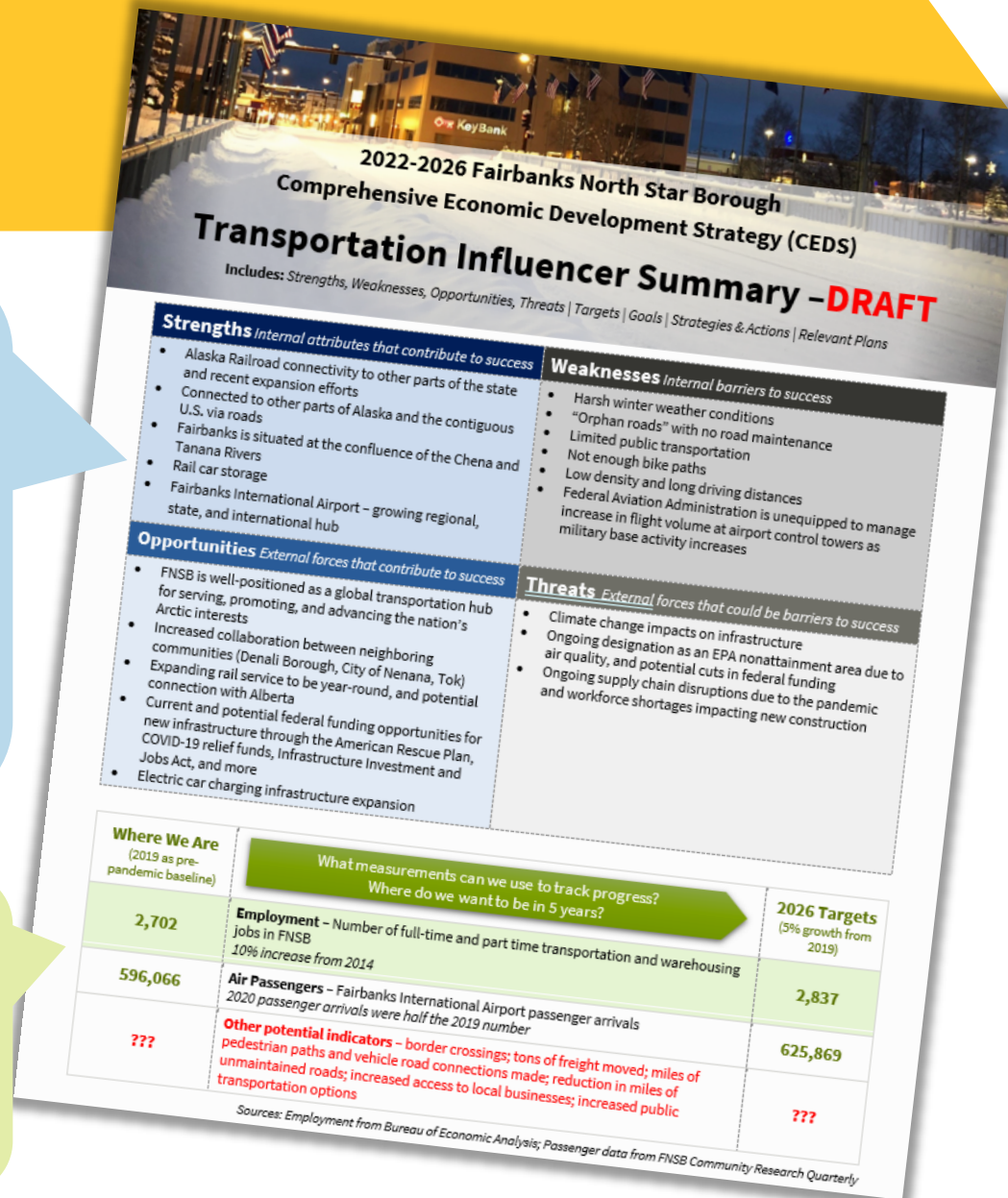
Where We Are	What measurements can we use to track progress? Where do we want to be in 5 years?	2026 Targets (5% growth from 2019)
260 (2020)	Retail Trade Businesses - Number of retail trade businesses in FNSB; largest subcategories include motor vehicle and parts dealers (40), Sporting Goods, Books, Music, etc. (29), Gasoline Stations (29), Building Material and Garden (22) <i>Increase of 3% since 2016 (252 businesses)</i>	273
81 (2020)	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation Businesses - Number of businesses in FNSB; this category includes performing arts (18), and amusements, gambling, and recreation (55) <i>Increase of 4% since 2016 (78 businesses)</i>	85
\$143 Million	Wages - Annual wages to FNSB residents employed in leisure & hospitality <i>Leisure & hospitality employs 10% of the population but only covers 4% of FNSB's total wages, indicating these jobs pay less than other industries</i>	\$150 Million

Other Potential Indicators (need baselines and targets): Quality of Life indicators/satisfaction

Transportation

Project idea: Increase public transit and carpool options, including service to military bases and UAF.

Indicator idea:
Safer, better maintained roads.



Discussion Questions

Discussion Questions

Within the work you/your department does, including related plans and policies:

- What **factors contribute** to economic development/economic success in the FNSB?
- What **factors are a barrier** to economic development/economic success in the FNSB?

Discussion Notes: Contributing Factors, Strengths

- Local builders, developers, surveyors are gaining experience, increasing collaboration, and strategically building in phases to meet new construction demand and housing need; Brookside Park is one successful case study
- Potential for future rail expansions: to Delta Junction, to Canada (G2G)
- Quality summer outdoor recreation opportunities such as Tanana Lakes and Chena Lakes
- The new, self-reporting web tool for road problems has been successful

Discussion Notes: Barriers, Part 1

- Limited zoning compliance, especially regarding flood plain regulations; risk of losing participation in the National Flood Insurance Program
- Limited indoor and outdoor winter recreation opportunities
- Competing interests: one of the greatest challenges with land use planning is creating policies that balance competing interests (profits, access, safety, character, etc.)
- Past subdivisions (especially in the 1980s, 1990s) created lots without appropriate road access, including some borough-initiated subdivisions
- Lack of borough authority in key areas like health, housing, zoning/flood plain compliance limits the tools available for the borough to respond to community needs

Discussion Notes: Barriers, Part 2

- Lack of beautification along roadways; in 2005 FNSB Comprehensive Plan phone survey, this was identified as the #1 community priority
- Potential redistribution of transportation funding with the upcoming Mat-Su Metropolitan Planning Organization designation
- Roads that are not maintained/orphan roads; this presents a challenge for developers and businesses; “they look at it and say, ‘I have to maintain my own road? That’s not a cost I was planning on’”
- High cost of utilities and lack of coordination between developers and utility companies; “sometimes it’s easier to just put in a four-plex on well and septic”
- Lack of affordable options and coverage for phone and internet
- High cost of electricity and no competition
- Need more areas for snow dumps

Discussion Notes: Ideas & Opportunities

- Explore creative ways of incentivizing cleanups instead of just through penalties. For example, offering cleanup resources such as a loader; waiving taxes for dilapidated properties that are actively being improved
- Expand partnerships with Native Corporations to address community needs around housing, utilities; lots of success in Anchorage
- Build the Alaska Long Trail
- Possibility of redevelopment incentives downtown
- Increase the length of time visitors stay in Fairbanks (including Alaskans); Whitefish, Montana as a success story to emulate
- Advocate to conduct the Alaska Visitor Statistics Program surveys more frequently (e.g., at least once every 2 years)
- Small government doesn't need to be inflexible; the FNSB should continue to strive to adapt to community needs without getting caught in bureaucracy and minutiae
- FNSB planning efforts are not just for the borough, even if they are facilitated by the borough; they are for the betterment of the entire community
- Expanding stewardship and recreation on FNSB-owned lands, such as protecting trails, creating public use cabins; some of this would require code revisions to increase flexibility
- Increasing collaboration between the borough and the two cities (Fairbanks and North Pole) instead of, "that's not our role"

Next Steps and Wrap-Up

Next Steps

Summit

- Post-Summit communications, 1-pagers & summary of breakout discussions, summit evaluation – *early March*

CEDS Draft & Final

- Public review draft release – *target: April 2022*
- Final draft adoption – *target: summer 2022*

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

Thank you!

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