

# 2022-2026 Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

## Transportation Influencer Summary – **DRAFT**

**Includes:** Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats | Targets | Goals | Strategies & Actions | Relevant Plans

<b>Strengths</b> <i>Internal attributes that contribute to success</i>	<b>Weaknesses</b> <i>Internal barriers to success</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alaska Railroad connectivity to other parts of the state and recent expansion efforts</li> <li>Connected to other parts of Alaska and the contiguous U.S. via roads</li> <li>Fairbanks is situated at the confluence of the Chena and Tanana Rivers</li> <li>Rail car storage</li> <li>Fairbanks International Airport – growing regional, state, and international hub</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Harsh winter weather conditions</li> <li>“Orphan roads” with no road maintenance</li> <li>Limited public transportation</li> <li>Not enough bike paths</li> <li>Low density and long driving distances</li> <li>Federal Aviation Administration is unequipped to manage increase in flight volume at airport control towers as military base activity increases</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b> <i>External forces that contribute to success</i>	<b>Threats</b> <i>External forces that could be barriers to success</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FNSB is well-positioned as a global transportation hub for serving, promoting, and advancing the nation’s Arctic interests</li> <li>Increased collaboration between neighboring communities (Denali Borough, City of Nenana, Tok)</li> <li>Expanding rail service to be year-round, and potential connection with Alberta</li> <li>Current and potential federal funding opportunities for new infrastructure through the American Rescue Plan, COVID-19 relief funds, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and more</li> <li>Electric car charging infrastructure expansion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate change impacts on infrastructure</li> <li>Ongoing designation as an EPA nonattainment area due to air quality, and potential cuts in federal funding</li> <li>Ongoing supply chain disruptions due to the pandemic and workforce shortages impacting new construction</li> </ul>

<b>Where We Are</b> (2019 as pre-pandemic baseline)	What measurements can we use to track progress? Where do we want to be in 5 years?	<b>2026 Targets</b> (5% growth from 2019)
<b>2,702</b>	<b>Employment</b> – Number of full-time and part time transportation and warehousing jobs in FNSB <i>10% increase from 2014</i>	<b>2,837</b>
<b>596,066</b>	<b>Air Passengers</b> – Fairbanks International Airport passenger arrivals <i>2020 passenger arrivals were half the 2019 number</i>	<b>625,869</b>
<b>???</b>	<b>Other potential indicators</b> – border crossings; tons of freight moved; miles of pedestrian paths and vehicle road connections made; reduction in miles of unmaintained roads; increased access to local businesses; increased public transportation options	<b>???</b>

Sources: Employment from Bureau of Economic Analysis; Passenger data from FNSB Community Research Quarterly

**Transportation Goal** – long term improvements and changes we want to see in five years or more



1. FNSB serves as a transportation hub for Interior Alaska, providing reliable and critical movement of people and materials by road, air, and rail.

Strategies & Actions – the activities we will implement over the next 5 years to accomplish goals & targets and who will lead them	Lead
<b>1. Implement Plans</b> – Implement recommendations identified in regional transportation plans: <i>(Goal 1)</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. FNSB Comprehensive Roads Plan</li> <li>b. Eastside Master Plan (airport)</li> <li>c. Terminal Ground Access Study (airport)</li> <li>d. 2045 in Motion long-range Transportation Plan</li> <li>e. Green Streets Plan</li> <li>f. Freight Mobility Plan</li> <li>g. Fairbanks Road/Rail Crossing Reduction/Realignment Plan</li> <li>h. Connect Fairbanks: Non-Motorized Plan</li> </ol>	
<b>2. Expand Transit</b> – Strategically expand public transit options in FNSB to better meet the needs of residents. <i>(Goal 1)</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Increase public transit and carpool options, including service to military bases.</li> <li>b. Offer reduced fare transit options to college students.</li> </ol>	
<b>3. Support Transportation Innovation</b> – Support efforts to establish Fairbanks as a destination for transportation innovation. Strategy. <i>(Goal 1)</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Establish Fairbanks International Airport as an unmanned aircraft system hub.</li> <li>b. Attract businesses to conduct cold weather transportation product testing in FNSB.</li> <li>c. Implement transportation-related strategies to address air quality issues.</li> </ol>	
<b>4. Explore New Connections</b> – Explore opportunities to build new transportation connections that strategically support development. <i>(Goal 1)</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Support Alaska Railroad 18-mile extension so natural gas can be transported by rail.</li> <li>b. Participate in planning efforts for an Alaska to Alberta connection rail connection.</li> </ol>	

**Other Relevant Resources**

- **Comprehensive Roads Plan.** Fairbanks North Star Borough. In progress. [View here.](#)
- **2045 in Motion: Building a More Resilient Future (long-range metropolitan plan).** FAST Planning. In progress. [View here.](#)
- **Fairbanks Road/Rail Crossing Reduction/Realignment Plan.** FAST Planning. August 2021. [View here.](#)
- **FAST Transportation Improvement Program.** FAST Planning. June 2021. [View here.](#)
- **Connect Fairbanks: Non-Motorized Plan.** FAST Planning. May 2021. [View here.](#)
- **Fairbanks International Airport Terminal Ground Access Study.** Fairbanks International Airport. January 2020. [View here.](#)
- **Eastside Master Plan.** Fairbanks International Airport. August 2019. [View here.](#)
- **Green Streets Plan.** FAST Planning. June 2019. [View here.](#)
- **Freight Mobility Plan.** Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System (now FAST Planning). January 2019. [View here.](#)



# Interior Alaska Economic Summit, February 22-23, 2022

## Transportation Breakout: Discussion Summary (02-23-22)

To view results from the other sessions, visit <https://fnsbceds.com/> (results will be posted by March 11<sup>th</sup>)

This document compiles feedback and notes from the breakout session. The other tools that were used to guide the discussion include:

- An economic cluster/influencer one-pager that identified a preliminary SWOT analysis, goals, strategies, actions, and measures of success
- A worksheet identifying a proposed economic vision statement and guiding questions for each of the activities. The guiding questions have been copied into this document for reference. The feedback on the economic vision statement was compiled separately and will be released by March 11<sup>th</sup>.

### Participants *(alphabetical by first name, based on sign in sheet)*

First	Last	Affiliation	Email
Angelina	Leavitt	Fairbanks International Airport	angelina.leavitt@alaska.gov
April	Woolery	Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF)	april.woolery@alaska.gov
Crystal	Tidwell	IUOE 302, Labor Union	Ctidwell@iuoe302.org
Jeremy	Langton	Fairbanks International Airport	jeremy.langton@alaska.gov
Jomo	Stewart	Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation	jstewart@investfairbanks.com
Juliet	Shepherd	Shepherd et. al	julietsshepherd@gmail.com
Marji	Illingworth	North Pole Peonies	marji@northpolepeonies.com
Melissa	Stepovich	Fairbanks International Airport	melissa.stepovich@alaska.gov
Mike	Welch	City of North Pole	mwelch@northpolealaska.org

*Facilitated by Patrick Cotter, RESPEC*

*RSVPs: 19 participants*

## Feedback on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

### Guiding Questions:

1. What did we get right?
2. What's missing?
3. What would you change?
4. What's the most important item in each quadrant?

### Discussion Notes:

Color Key: **Blue** = proposed revision | **red** = proposed deletion | **green** = proposed addition

Strengths	Weaknesses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Like: FAA bullet; this includes both personnel and radar/equipment</li> <li>• Like: orphan roads issue identified</li> <li>• Revise: revise last bullet to read, "ongoing supply chain <b>and logistics</b> disruptions"</li> <li>• Add: road service area model is no longer workable for road maintenance; low density RSAs are especially a challenge</li> <li>• Add: only Alaska Airlines has the ability to carry refrigerated cargo</li> <li>• Add: issues with off-road vehicle conflicts</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add: road service area structure changes</li> <li>• Add: trails</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add: private airfields that threaten safety of military installations; technology could threaten the airport</li> <li>• Add: changing tech (e.g., long-haul aircraft)</li> <li>• Add: ATVs on roads (new legislation)</li> <li>• Add: unfunded maintenance needs from the State; the DOT&amp;PF is understaffed and underfunded</li> </ul>

## Goals, Strategies, Actions Discussion Questions

### Guiding Questions:

1. What did we get right?
2. What would you change?
3. What's missing?
4. Who will lead each of the strategies? What do you see as you/your organization's role?
5. Which of the strategies is most important for us to focus on over the next year?

### Discussion Notes:

- General observations/comments
  - Add: more funds put toward road maintenance
  - Add: electric vehicles
- Strategy 1: Implement Plans

- Add: Road Service Area Expansion Plan
- Strategy 2: Expand Transit
  - Revise: Change strategy wording from “expand” to “optimize”
  - Revise: action b, so it reads “reduced **fare** transit”
  - Add: private transport for tourists
- Strategy 3: Support Transportation Innovation
  - No comments
- Strategy 4: Explore New Connections
  - No comments

## Measures of Success Discussion Questions

### Guiding Questions:

1. What did we get right?
2. What’s missing?
3. What would you change?
4. Which of these indicators will be the most effective at measuring our success?

### Discussion Notes:

- Add: funding for DOT snow removal equipment & personnel
  - Rural areas miss out because feeder roads are maintained except those in road service areas, and many are not dense enough to support good roads; some areas have no service
  - Need more equitable funding for rural roads
- Add: vehicle miles traveled (VMT)
- Add: average daily traffic (ADT)
- Add: transit ridership
- Add: Pavement condition index (PCI)
- Add: wages for skilled workforce