



Fairbanks North Star Borough

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Update, 2022-2026



Public Review Draft
May 6, 2022

How to comment on the public review draft:

1. Submit a comment on the project website: <https://fnsbceds.com/>
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The deadline for comments is Friday, June 10th, 2022.

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Economic Development Commission (in order of seat)

Mayor Bryce Ward – Chair Mark Billingsley Abigail Riggs Paul Robinson Russell Talvi Frank Tomaszewski – Assembly representative Kristan Kelly – Assembly representative	Deb Hickok (past member) Matt Cooper (past member) Mike Meeks (past member) Mindy O’Neall (past member)
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Community and Partner Organizations

City of Fairbanks City Council City of North Pole City Council	Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce
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• Appendix H: Interior Alaska Economic Summit agenda and meeting summary	
• Appendix I: List of Relevant Plans and Background Documents	
• Slide presentations and discussion summaries for all roundtables can be found at FNSBCEDS.com	

1.Introduction

What is a CEDS?



Serves as a road map to economic resilience and prosperity.



Brings the private and public sector together to develop a regional strategy and action plan.



Must go through a robust update every five years, with less intensive updates annually.



Makes recommendations to support businesses, create more and better paying jobs, improve quality of life, and increase resilience.

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a locally based, regionally driven planning document that guides local government and community action. The goals, strategies, and actions in this document provide regional leaders, funders, and partners with the background and direction they need for allocating funding and prioritizing efforts that support economic development in the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB). While the FNSB self-funded this CEDS update, the planning process and CEDS complies with U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) CEDS requirements.

The EDA recommends communities consider the concept of economic resilience when creating a CEDS. Building economic resilience requires a proactive approach to identify and mitigate current and potential threats and disruptions to a community or region's economy. Examples of ways to build resilience include diversifying the economy, enhancing business and workforce development supports, strengthening infrastructure, and conducting pre-disaster recovery planning.

Regional economic prosperity is linked to an area's ability to prevent, withstand, and quickly recover from major disruptions (i.e., 'shocks') to its economic base....in the context of economic development, economic resilience becomes inclusive of three primary attributes: the ability to recover quickly from a shock, the ability to withstand a shock, and the ability to avoid the shock altogether.

Extract from the U.S. Economic Development Administration's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Content Guidelines: Recommendations for Creating an Impactful CEDS*

What does a CEDS include?

Numbers

that tell the FNSB story – people, economy, regional comparisons

An economic vision

that describes what we want our future economy to look like

Goals & strategies

that are specific, measurable, and describe what we hope to accomplish over the next 5 years

Implementation plan

that describes how we'll work on our priorities and measure progress

Comparative analysis

that examine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and competitive advantages/disadvantages for FNSB overall and by sector

Who developed the CEDS?

The [FNSB Economic Development Commission](#) (EDC) led the process with support from FNSB staff and project consultants. The final CEDS will be adopted by the FNSB Assembly. The CEDS was developed with detailed input from regional leaders, organizations, businesses, residents, and agency partners. The Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation and the Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce both played a key role in CEDS development by helping arrange industry and private sector engagement and facilitate breakout sessions at the Interior Alaska Economic Summit. For a detailed list of the individuals and organizations involved, see the Acknowledgements page.



Interior Alaska Economic Summit news coverage

How was the CEDS developed?

The FNSB CEDS planning process began in spring 2021. The appendices include detailed outreach materials including copies of flyers, the Interior Alaska Economic Summit agenda, and slide presentations. The appendices also contain a list of relevant background documents that were reviewed as part of the planning process. Key elements of the CEDS development process included:

Spring - Fall 2021 <i>Discover and Listen</i>	Winter 2021 - 2022 <i>Draft and Review</i>	Spring - Summer 2022 <i>Finalize and Activate</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compiled data on the people, economy, and more. Reviewed relevant background documents. Launched project website. Hosted booths at community events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Midnight Sun Festival Golden Days Street Fair Tanana Valley State Fair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Held small group discussions and sector specific roundtables. Conducted over 20 interviews with EDC members, industry experts, and other key stakeholders. Hosted the Interior Alaska Economic Summit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coming May 2022: draft CEDS released for 30-day public comment period. Coming June 2022: update the CEDS to reflect comments. Coming Summer/Fall 2022: present the CEDS for adoption to the FNSB Planning Commission and the FNSB Assembly.



Golden Days Street Fair, July 2021



Interior Alaska Economic Summit, February 2022

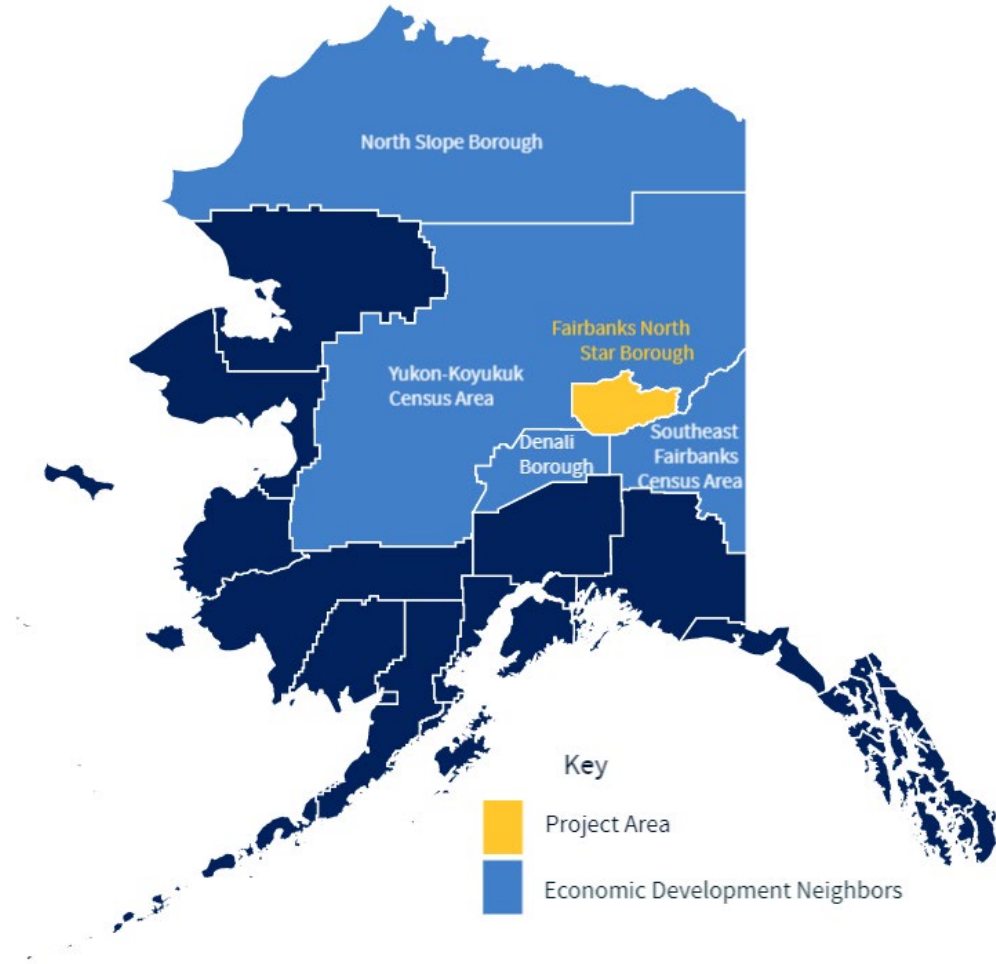
Roundtables

As part of the FNSB CEDS planning process the project team convened a series of industry and community roundtables to collect targeted input from key voices. Each roundtable was approximately one hour. During the roundtables the project team introduced the project, shared topical background information, and facilitated a conversation around the positive/contributing factors, challenges/negative factors, and priority needs/opportunities/projects within each sector. The following roundtables were held:

Industry Focused Roundtables	Key Organization/Community Roundtables
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agriculture• Child Care• Communications• Education & Workforce Development• Energy• Forestry• Health Care• Mining• Research & Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City of Fairbanks City Council• City of North Pole City Council• Explore Fairbanks board and staff• Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce Weekly Business Luncheon• Greater Fairbanks Board of Realtors General Membership• Associated Students of the University of Alaska Fairbanks• FNSB Community Planning and Assessing Department Staff• Small Business Owners and Entrepreneurs

Project Area

The CEDS project area is defined as the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB), including the Cities of Fairbanks and North Pole. FNSB also serves as the economic hub for Interior Alaska. Figure 1 identifies some of the key neighboring regions where there is opportunity for collaboration and partnership on economic development topics such as natural resource development, agriculture, Arctic policy, and tourism. Key regional partners beyond FNSB boundaries include the Denali Borough; North Slope Borough; the communities of Anderson, Delta Junction, Nenana, Tok; and Tanana Chiefs Conference and other Tribal organizations. For more information about the FNSB region, see the appendix.



What is the structure of the CEDS?

Chapter 1	Introduction
Provides an overview of CEDS planning and the process used to develop this CEDS.	
Chapter 2	Regional Future Direction
Outlines a regional vision and goals, with objectives and strategies that support the economic vitality of the FNSB. This section is sorted into industry clusters (key sectors that drive the FNSB economy) and community influencers (supportive foundations needed for the economy to grow and flourish). For each sector we have identified key SWOT components, performance measures, objectives, strategies, and actions.	
Chapter 3	Action Plan
Detailed action plans on how to make progress on strategies and actions. The action plans identify who will lead each action, supporting partners, resources needed (when identified), and anticipated timeline.	
Appendices	Varies
<p>Includes detailed contextual information to inform CEDS development, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix A: Acronyms • Appendix B: Summary Background • Appendix C: IMPLAN Economic Impact Analysis Summary • Appendix C: Situational Assessment • Appendix D: Regional SWOT Analysis • Appendix E: FNSB's Status as an Alaska Regional Development Organization • Appendix F: Location Quotient Analysis • Appendix G: Outreach Materials (flyers, distribution list emails) • Appendix H: Interior Alaska Economic Summit agenda and meeting summary • Appendix I: List of Relevant Plans and Background Documents • Slide presentations and discussion summaries for all roundtables can be found at FNSBCEDS.com 	

When and how is the CEDS updated?

Regional CEDS documents typically go through a comprehensive, robust update every five years, in accordance with guidelines from the EDA. Between full updates, FNSB, in partnership with regional partners, conducts less intensive annual updates, which focus on the following three questions:

1. How are we doing toward achieving our economic development goals and vision? What have we accomplished over the past year? How are we making progress on our measures of success?
2. What has changed in the region? Which data need to be updated to better tell the story of the FNSB?
3. What can we do better? Are there strategies and actions that should be added or adapted?

During the planning process for the FNSB CEDS, the project team convened an Interior Alaska Economic Summit. Participants expressed an interest in having the Summit recur annually as an opportunity to check in on CEDS implementation.

How Does the CEDS Align with the FNSB's Capital Improvement Program?

In 2019 the FNSB Assembly adopted Ordinance 2019-35, changing how the FNSB vets and approves public projects on its Capital Improvement Program (CIP) list. The new process invites increased input from the public, adds a prioritization element, and identifies potential funding sources. The CIP is now a fiscally constrained plan that aligns with estimated resources. The CIP is released every two years. To view the most current CIP list, visit <https://www.fnsb.gov/540/Capital-Improvement-Program-CIP>. The FNSB CIP program is an important tool to guide implementation of priority capital projects, including those identified in the CEDS.

How does the FNSB CEDS Overlap with Other Related Regional Economic Development Plans?

The FNSB CEDS is intended to be widely used resource for the full community, not just borough staff and leadership. The sector summaries contain links and references to other key programs, plans, and partner websites that support and align with the CEDS goals, objectives, and strategies. The appendix also includes a list of key background documents and relevant plans reviewed as part of CEDS development. For example, a key Tribal partner and regional neighbor, Tanana Chiefs Conference, also maintains a regional CEDS. The two CEDS documents share common themes and recommendations, especially around energy, communications, forestry, and child care.

2. Regional Future Direction

This chapter identifies an economic vision and goals for the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB), along with a set of five-year objectives, strategies, and actions by sector.

Economic Vision

FNSB is the economic hub for Interior Alaska and the gateway to Alaska's Arctic, where dreams and opportunities thrive for everyone.



FNSB Overarching Economic Goals

Strength

FNSB is home to a diverse and prosperous economy with strong local, regional, and global connections

Resilience

FNSB residents have reliable, equitable, affordable access to essentials such as housing, food and energy supplies

Prosperity

Current and future FNSB residents enjoy a high quality of life, livable wages, a healthy environment, and access to recreation

Excellence

FNSB is home to strong education and research institutions supporting Alaska communities and the private sector

Objectives, Strategies, and Actions by Sector

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) focuses on key components of the FNSB economy, sorted into the following industry clusters and community influencers:

Industry Clusters

Key sectors that drive the FNSB economy

Agriculture
Energy
Forestry
Health Care
Mining
Research & Innovation
Visitor Industry

Community Influencers

Supportive foundations needed to grow and flourish

Business Development & Entrepreneurship
Communications
Education & Workforce Development
Land Use, Housing, & Environment
Recreation & Entertainment
Transportation

The CEDS includes summaries that capture key information for core sectors in the FNSB. Each industry cluster has a sector summary; there are also sector summaries available for some of the community influencers, including Small Business Development & Entrepreneurship; Communications; Education & Workforce Development; and Recreation & Entertainment.

Following the summaries there are broad recommendations for land use, housing, environment, utilities, and transportation. While these items are all needed to support a healthy economy, there are other planning efforts underway that already cover these topics in more depth. To avoid duplication, this CEDS references these related plans and offer broad support for implementation.

The sector summaries include industry and community voices from the FNSB CEDS stakeholder engagement process. Unless otherwise noted, quotes come from sector roundtables, interviews, and Summit conversations.

Sector Summary Outline



SWOT Categories in the Sector Summaries

The SWOT items listed in each of the sector summaries are sorted into the following broad categories:

- Natural Resources & Environment – natural and environmental attributes and assets
- Businesses, Organizations, & Government – institution-based resources and policies
- Education & Workforce – education and workforce attributes and programs
- Funding & Markets – supply chain, consumer demand, and financial characteristics
- Infrastructure – physical and capital resources (or lack thereof)

Agriculture Summary

Strengths *Internal attributes that contribute to success*

Natural Resources & Environment

- Access to forests, spaces for foraging (e.g., mushrooms)
- Alaska is a worldwide peony supplier
- High quality agricultural lands in the region

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Fairbanks has seen growth in number of farms, farm sales, and farm employment
- Tanana Valley Farmer's Market
- University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF)'s Fairbanks Experiment Farm

Education & Workforce

- Regional farmers using innovative growing methods

Funding & Markets

- Locally grown foods avoid the shipping costs and quality issues associated with imported foods
- WIC is accepted at farmer's markets, helping make produce available to everyone regardless of income

Infrastructure

- FNSB has rail and road connectivity and an airport to support movement of equipment, supplies, and products

Opportunities *External forces that contribute to success*

Natural Resources & Environment

- The growing season is lengthening due to climate change and improved technology

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Alaska approved by US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to produce industrial hemp
- Alaska has the highest percentage of beginning farmers in the country (2017 Census of Agriculture)
- Co-op model could be brought to the region

Funding & Markets

- Legalization of cannabis and industry growth

Infrastructure

- Microreactor waste heat could support farming

Weaknesses *Internal barriers to success*

Natural Resources & Environment

- Limited value-added processing of agricultural products
- Short growing season (by number of days)
- Lack of available farm lands

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- The State of Alaska has a history of unsuccessful agriculture ventures

Education & Workforce

- Challenges securing seasonal labor force
- Farm volunteers not covered under worker's comp insurance in Alaska
- Limited knowledge of agricultural education opportunities

Funding & Markets

- Disparity between agricultural and retail value of land
- High costs for shipping materials to/from the region
- High export costs and logistical challenges
- High reliance on imported foods
- Poor farm to market linkages; local produce is rarely sold in supermarkets

Infrastructure

- Lack of agricultural storage and processing facilities

Threats *External forces that could be barriers to success*

Natural Resources & Environment

- Climate change

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Reduction in state funding for research and facilities

Funding & Markets

- Complex logistics to harvest, process, and export agricultural products
- Consumer preferences for produce to be available year-round instead of seasonally
- Reliance on imported food and vulnerability to supply disruptions create major food security concerns
- Farm tax deferral requirements from State of Alaska

Where We Are	What measurements can we use to track progress? Where do we want to be in 5 years?	Targets
274 Farms (2017)	Farms – Total number of farms in Interior Alaska <i>Out of 990 total in the state; increase of 26% from 2012</i>	300 farms (2022), 330 farms (2027)
\$10.4 M (2017)	Sales – Total market value of agricultural products sold from Interior Alaska <i>Up 14% from 2012; approximately 80% comes from crops, 20% from livestock/poultry</i>	\$11.4 M (2022), \$12.6 M (2027)
285 Jobs (2019)	Employment – Total number of full-time and part-time employment in the agriculture industry in FNSB <i>Farm employment in FNSB increased 31% between 2014 and 2019</i>	315 Jobs (2026)
30 Members (2022)	Golden Heart Grown – Total businesses participating in the Golden Heart Grown program, which helps distinguish and promote goods produced in Interior Alaska	40 Members (2026)
<i>Additional measures to potentially add: (requests/inquiries in progress): Farmer's market public assistance coupon redemption at regional markets</i>		

Sources: Farms and Sales data from the USDA, Census of Agriculture, 2017; Interior Alaska includes the Fairbanks North Star Borough, Denali Borough, Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area and Southeast Fairbanks Census Area; Employment data comes from the Bureau of Economic Analysis, Total Full-Time and Part-Time Employment by Industry. The USDA Census of Agriculture is only conducted every 5 years



“It’s as much on the consumer as it is on the producer to increase agriculture production. If farmers sold out by noon every day at the farmer’s market, they would grow more.”

“Alaska leads the nation in new farms. It’s important to support farmers markets and farm stands. Those are the viable sales venues, rather than getting products in grocery stores.”



Agriculture Objectives – Long term improvements and changes we want to see in five years or more



1. Interior Alaska is a thriving agricultural hub, producing high quality goods that are consumed locally and exported to other Alaska communities and beyond.



2. Achieve greater food security in Interior Alaska by increasing production, distribution, processing, and storage of locally grown products.


“The disparity between the agricultural value and retail value of land has never been as great as it is now.”

“A lot of states allow volunteer work on farms, but in Alaska, volunteers aren’t covered by worker’s compensation.”

“Farmers need more access to training and start-up funds for basic infrastructure like fences and watering.”

“One goal should be to increase food storage capacity in case of an emergency.”

Strategies & Actions – Activities we will implement over the next five years to accomplish goals & targets

- 1. Promote Local** – Promote locally grown agriculture products. (*Objectives 1, 2*)
 - a. Encourage residents to buy local, including expanding the Golden Heart Grown program, distribution of the Interior Agriculture Directory, and Buy Alaska.
 - b. Encourage event organizers, restaurants, and schools to increase reliance on locally grown foods.
 - c. Expand education and awareness around local farmer’s markets.
 - d. Promote community supported agriculture.
 - e. Establish farmer’s markets on military bases. 
 - f. Strengthen social media campaigns around locally grown products, including identifying influencers.
 - g. Better promote the ability to use special supplemental nutrition program (SNAP) and (WIC) resources at farmer’s markets.
- 2. Recruit Workers** – Educate, train, and support new farmers and agricultural workers. (*Objectives 1, 2*)
 - a. Support the establishment of a statewide farming training/certification program.
 - b. Advocate for the removal of state-level barriers so volunteer farm workers can be covered by worker’s compensation insurance.
 - c. Increase agricultural education at all levels of schooling, including hands-on learning experiences and adding high school coursework on farming, canning, and preserving.
 - d. Add a farmer’s certification program to UAF.
- 3. Land Policies** – Establish and implement land use policies that protect farmland. (*Objectives 1, 2*)
 - a. Put agricultural lands into agricultural trust lands.
 - b. Designate new agricultural areas and prepare land sales of state land for agricultural uses.

4. **Support Farmers** – Existing and new farmers in Interior Alaska have the resources, workforce support, and tools needed to succeed and grow. *(Objectives 1, 2)*
 - a. Better connect farmers to existing trainings and resources.
 - b. Increase access to start-up funds and financial support, including funding for basic infrastructure and start up equipment, establish tax exemptions, and offer forgivable loans.
 - c. Support infrastructure, programming, and funding recommendations identified in the 2020 Fairbanks Experiment Farm Long-Range Plan. 🔧
 - d. Support emerging industries such as hemp.
 - e. Improve collaboration between farmers, retailers, and policy makers to cross-pollinate ideas and make progress on shared objectives.
 - f. Expand 4H and Future Farmers of America programs in FNSB and connect growers with landowners.
 - g. Advocate for changes in State statutes to support farming land/uses.
 - h. Connect local meat/fish processors waste products with local farmers to produce local nutrients on farms.
5. **Food Security** – Increase local food storage capacity. *(Objective 2)*
 - a. Establish a community cooperative processing center and storage facility. 🔧
 - b. Support the creation of food forests. 🔧

Key	★	Priority (TBD)	🔧	Capital Project	📖	Military-related
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Other Relevant Resources

- **2020 Long-Range Plan for the UAF Fairbanks Experiment Farm.** University of Alaska Fairbanks Institute of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Extension. 2020. [View here.](#)
- **Interior Agriculture Directory.** Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation. 2021. [View here.](#)



Energy Summary

Strengths *Internal attributes that contribute to success*

Natural Resources & Environment

- Proximity to coal, biomass resources

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Chena Hot Springs annual renewable energy fair
- National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) joined with Cold Climate Housing Research Center (CCHRC)
- The reopening of the Arctic Energy Office at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF)

Funding & Markets

- Net metering program that allows Golden Valley Electric Association (GVEA) members to install renewable energy, with over 500 participants

Infrastructure

- FNSB has rail and road connectivity and an airport to move equipment, supplies, and products
- Connected to the Railbelt power grid
- Improvements to the power grid including battery energy storage, solar and wind investments, and transmission and distribution enhancements
- New facilities including a wood kiln, PetroStar's asphalt plant, UAF's coal-fired power plant
- Progress with natural gas expansion, including line extensions, tank storage, utility consolidation, and cost stability through contracting agreements

Opportunities *External forces that contribute to success*

Natural Resources & Environment

- Renewable energy development throughout the Railbelt

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Creation of a Railbelt Electric Reliability Organization
- Increased collaboration between adjacent communities
- State and federal interest in increasing renewables

Funding & Markets

- Federal funding opportunities for new infrastructure through the American Rescue Plan Act, COVID-19 relief funds, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and more

Infrastructure

- Alaska Gas Line
- Eielson selected as pilot location for the Air Force's first nuclear microreactor
- Electric car charging infrastructure expansion
- Improved battery storage technology that can help utilities better integrate variable sources (wind, solar)
- Transportation of natural gas by rail

Weaknesses *Internal barriers to success*

Natural Resources & Environment

- Air quality challenges associated with wood burning
- Environmental concerns with fossil fuel use

Education & Workforce

- Workforce challenges, including high turnover and challenges recruiting a skilled workforce

Funding & Markets

- Challenge of integrating low carbon energy sources without sacrificing cost or reliability
- High costs, and variability of costs, of energy
- No natural gas transport options except trucking
- Single provider for power

Infrastructure

- Delays in completion of the Titan LNG plant expansion
- Limited natural gas line network and lack of funding for main line extensions; limited liquefaction capacity
- Low density, small population create challenges to achieve economies of scale for new infrastructure
- Maintaining infrastructure in a harsh environment
- Reliance on aging coal infrastructure for power generation

Threats *External forces that could be barriers to success*

Natural Resources & Environment

- Ongoing designation as an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) nonattainment area due to air quality, and potential cuts in federal funding

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Evolving safety, emissions, cybersecurity, and legal requirements from federal, state, and local agencies can create administrative and compliance challenges
- Federal policies that restrict resource development

Funding & Markets

- Ongoing supply chain disruptions and increasing supply costs due to the pandemic and workforce shortages
- Reliance on imported fuel sources
- Reliance on oil and gas and negative impacts from market price fluctuations and availability

Infrastructure

- Cyber threats and the cost of upgrading communication infrastructure for protection and security enhancements

Where We Are	What measurements can we use to track progress? Where do we want to be in 5 years?	2026 Targets
311 (2021)	New Annual Natural Gas Service Lines – Number of homes being converted + new homes with natural gas connections	500 (annual)
\$5,292 (2018)	Annual Household Cost – Total annual energy cost per household - <i>This amount is 1.3 times the Alaska average, 2.3 times the national average, and 33% higher than Anchorage</i>	\$3,500 (1/3 reduction)
15.3% (2022)	Renewables – Percentage of Railbelt energy that comes from renewable sources – <i>total renewable energy generation for GVEA alone is 10.4%</i>	25% (2030)

Sources: Natural gas connections from the Interior Energy Project; annual energy costs from the 2018 Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) Statewide Housing Assessment; renewable percentage provided by GVEA



“The cost of energy isn’t just about the cost of the fuel itself, but also the cost of operations and maintenance to use that fuel, and costs on the environment.”

“Laying the groundwork for a successful Railbelt system which can integrate renewable resources is as equally important (if not more important) than the adding of the renewable resources itself.”



Energy Objectives – Long term improvements and changes we want to see in five years or more



1. Interior Alaska will have access to low-cost energy through its diversified, sustainable, reliable energy portfolio.



2. Interior Alaska will be a hub for piloting innovative solutions to unique cold climate energy challenges.

“We need a shared energy vision for Interior Alaska that everyone buys into and supports.”

“We are struggling, as are many other businesses in the Interior, from the lack of qualified personnel available and interested in working for the utility.”

“Material costs and lead times were (and continue to be) a challenge. Even common components have double or tripled in price and have lead times approaching 3 years.”

“We need to maximize the benefit of available federal infrastructure funding to establish infrastructure upgrades which could dynamically change the way energy is generated and transmitted across the Railbelt (and potentially new areas as well).”

Strategies & Actions – Activities we will implement over the next five years to accomplish goals & targets

1. **Expand Natural Gas** – Secure and implement more low-cost natural gas in the Interior. *(Objective 1)*

- Support continued efforts for homeowners to convert their homes to accept natural gas, including funding FNSB’s Oil to Gas Conversion Program. 🔑
- Increase liquefaction capacity. 🔑
- Implement Phase 2 of the Interior Gas Utility (IGU) buildout. 🔑
- Continue to build out main line extensions (e.g., Pearl Creek); include natural gas in new subdivisions. 🔑
- Support long-term planning for a natural gas pipeline, with Fairbanks connector. 🔑

2. **Energy Innovation** – Promote Interior Alaska as a site for energy innovation. *(Objectives 1, 2)*

- Support safe installation of the Air Force’s first microreactor on Eielson Air Force Base. 🔑 📖
- Support microgrid research and development. 🔑
- Support other pilot projects that advance and test new energy technologies in the Interior. 🔑 📖
- Expand weatherization and energy efficiency initiatives. 🔑
- Invest in electric vehicle charging infrastructure. 🔑
- Explore and invest in carbon capture/reduction technologies. 🔑
- Support research and implementation of value-added uses of energy sources, such as for coal and waste heat. 🔑 📖

3. **Resilient Power Grid** – Collaborate with other Railbelt utilities to achieve a resilient, efficient power grid that can better integrate future renewable energy sources for power generation. *(Objectives 1, 2)*

- Add an additional 45-50 megawatt (MW) of battery storage to help regulate variable power load from renewables and create backup power during outages/disruptions. 🔑
- Upgrade existing Railbelt intertie from 138 kV to 230 kV. 🔑

- c. Complete planning for and construct the Roadbelt intertie, 230kV line connecting Healy to Nikiski. 🔑
- d. Identify opportunities to collaborate with other sectors (e.g., shared utility easements with telecommunications). 🔑

4. Plan for Renewables – Integrate renewables into Interior Alaska’s long-range energy portfolio.
(Objectives 1, 2)

- a. Support geothermal projects in areas with geothermal potential (e.g., Chena Hot Springs). 🔑
- b. Support wind farms in Interior Alaska. 🔑
- c. Collaborate with other Railbelt utilities to develop renewable energy projects (e.g., Bradley Lake Hydroelectric Project) that can reliably meet shared energy needs, reduce carbon output, and lower energy costs. 🔑
- d. Continue to expand and encourage participation in GVEA’s SNAP Plus net metering system, where members can install renewable generation that is connected to the grid. 🔑

5. Increase Collaboration – Improve collaboration between Interior Alaska energy stakeholders.
(Objectives 1, 2)

- a. Convene utility providers and local policymakers to develop an Interior Alaska Energy Plan.
- b. Encourage greater Department of Defense (DoD) participation in regional energy planning. 🏠
- c. Encourage regional stakeholder participation in the Alaska Nuclear Energy Working Group.
- d. Continue to participate in conversations with regional Railbelt partners such as the Roadbelt Electric Reliability Organization, Bradley Lake Management Committee, and Railbelt Utility Managers groups.
- e. Work with education and workforce development providers to expand outreach about and availability of training opportunities to support the needs of the energy sector.

Key	★	Priority (TBD)	🔑	Capital Project	🏠	Military-related
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“Success is not going to come overnight and a staged approach needs to be done to ensure that reliability, cost, and environmental impacts are all considered in the decision-making process.”

“One of the biggest challenges is trying to integrate low carbon energy resources in such a way that does not sacrifice cost or reliability.”

Other Relevant Resources

- **Small Scale Nuclear Power: an option for Alaska?** UAF Alaska Center for Energy and Power. January 2021. [View here](#).
- **Alaska State Energy Profile.** U.S. Energy Information Administration. 2022. [View here](#).
- **Interior Energy Project.** Alaska Industrial Development & Export Authority. [Project website here](#).
- **FNSB CEDS Economic Impact Analysis: Interior Gas Utility Phase 2 Buildout.** Fairbanks North Star Borough, Nov. 2021. [View here](#).



Health Care Summary

Strengths *Internal attributes that contribute to success*

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- FNSB is a health care hub, serving both the FNSB and other Interior Alaska communities
- FNSB is home to quality health facilities
- Industry partners generally work well together

Education & Workforce

- Alaskans have access to workforce and education opportunities such as the SHARP program and Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho (WWAMI) programs

Funding & Markets

- Telehealth has been successfully used to increase access to health care and fill priority needs, including expanding access to behavioral health care

Weaknesses *Internal barriers to success*

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- FNSB has limited public health authority
- Gaps in licensing requirements
- Nursing care is unavailable in the community
- Services for persons experiencing homelessness are insufficient to meet demand

Education & Workforce

- Lack of data to identify employment gaps
- Winters, high cost of living can be a barrier for recruiting and retaining out-of-town health care workers

Funding & Markets

- Duplication of technology that results in underutilization
- Limited services for seniors/Elders; dementia care not eligible for federal funds
- Medicaid, Medicare billing rates are too low to cover costs
- Military families have high behavioral health needs associated with transitions and the stressful nature of their work, and the community sometimes struggles to maintain sufficient behavioral health staffing capacity

Opportunities *External forces that contribute to success*

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Crisis Now model offers new ways of responding to people in crisis in FNSB, creating more effective, efficient methods that will also free up public safety resources and create new job opportunities
- Fort Wainwright conducted a Behavioral Health Epidemiological Consultation (BH EPICON) in response to a series of suicides in the Fort Wainwright community; the EPICON identified recommendations to improve moral and quality of life for troops

Infrastructure

- Continued improvements to telehealth technology

Threats *External forces that could be barriers to success*

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Complexity of state and federal reimbursement systems

Education & Workforce

- Cost of living, high housing costs are a barrier for recruitment and retention of workers
- COVID-19 and ongoing impacts to health, travel, workers
- Nationwide workforce shortages mean FNSB is competing with other facilities across the country

Funding & Markets

- State budget cuts threaten health care and social service program funding

Infrastructure

- Lack of internet access limits telemedicine applications

Where We Are	What measurements can we use to track progress? Where do we want to be in 5 years?	2026 Targets
#6 (2018)	Health Outcomes Ranking , out of 25 Alaska boroughs/census areas; <i>Based on indicators including premature death rate, # of residents reporting poor physical/mental health days, and low birthweight</i>	#3
160:1 (2020)	Mental Health Providers – Ratio of population to mental health care providers. <i>This is higher than the statewide ratio of 200:1, although stakeholder feedback indicates there are still not enough providers to meet the need</i>	Need to ID
30.9% (2021)	Turnover Rate – staff turnover rate for Foundation Health Partners, which includes Fairbanks Memorial Hospital, Tanana Valley Clinic, and Denali Center. The 2021 turnover rate was up from 2020, when the rate was 26.6%.	Need to ID

Sources: Health Outcomes Ranking and Mental Health Providers comes from the County Health Rankings, tool provided by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



“Telehealth has been helpful and is used extensively, especially by DoD families. ‘Without telehealth we would be in a much worse situation than we are.’”

“We need better collaboration between providers to share technology. ‘More is not better’ if equipment is being duplicated and underutilized. It can also be challenging to find skilled staff for operations.”



Health Care Objective – Long term improvements and changes we want to see in five years or more



1. The Fairbanks health care industry has the workforce, tools, and expertise needed to provide quality, affordable, timely care for residents throughout Interior Alaska.

“Workforce challenges have gotten worse, with retirements and departures exacerbated by the pandemic.”

“Retention is a major challenge in the dental industry, too. There are many women working in the industry who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic (e.g., loss of child care).”

“Crisis Now model will be helping transform the crisis system. Fairbanks is pioneering some of this in Alaska. This will create more effective, efficient ways to support people in crisis. This will help individuals in need while freeing up resources for corrections, EMS, police, etc. There will also be new job opportunities.”

Strategies & Actions – Activities we will implement over the next five years to accomplish goals & targets

- 1. Community Health** – Implement the goals and strategies identified in the 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and the 2020-2022 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). (Objective 1)

Priority focus areas in the CHNA and CHIP include:

- a. Mental Health: Improve access to and sustainability of services and housing for individuals with mental health needs to support safe, stable living in the least restrictive environment.
- b. Senior Care: Ensure our rapidly growing senior-age population can live safely in the least restrictive environments for as long as possible.
- c. Adverse Childhood Experiences/Trauma: Reduce numbers of Interior Alaskans experiencing preventable trauma and increase numbers of Interior Alaskans with protective factors.
- d. Physical Health/Healthy Behaviors: Reduce the incidence and long-term impacts of chronic health conditions such as cardiovascular disease, stroke, cancer, and diabetes.
- e. COVID-19: Interior Alaska prepared to respond to outbreaks of the COVID-19 virus and other emergencies.

See Other Relevant Planning Efforts & Recommendations for housing related recommendations.

See Education & Workforce Development for other health care-related workforce development recommendations.

- 2. Collaboration** – Convene health care providers on a regular basis to identify shared priorities. (Objective 1)

- a. Maintain joint planning and cooperation among military and civilian health planners and health and social service providers serving the region. Consider conducting a joint assessment of health needs and resources on a regular basis (from Eielson Regional Growth Plan). 📖
- b. Implement the Open Minds service model to serve consumers with chronic and complex conditions.
- c. Create shared data collection and tracking tools to identify workforce and specialty needs/gaps. 📖
- d. Create a shared recruitment and retainment plan to attract health care workers to FNSB. 📖

3. Filling the Gaps – Identify and address gaps in specialty care. *(Objective 1)*

- a. Address and recruit for known gaps in medical specialty care (Otolaryngology and potentially orthopedics), behavioral health services, geriatric specialties, dermatology. 📌
- b. Reopen the dental hygiene program at the University of Alaska Anchorage.
- c. Expand and improve the registered nurse (RN) program statewide.
- d. Establish a licensed practical nursing (LPN) program at UAF.
- e. Increase the availability of senior and elder services, especially for dementia-related disease; advocate for improved reimbursement options to provide senior care.
- f. Expand in-home nursing care options, including certified nursing assistants (CNAs).
- g. Expand 24/7 outpatient care.
- h. Increase secondary school career paths in health care fields.
- i. Advocate for Medicare and Medicaid revisions, including price transparency and reimbursable rates.

4. Healthy Families – Support households moving to our community by ensuring there is access to high quality of life in the FNSB community. *(Objective 1)*

- a. Ensure adequate availability of family support services to build on strengths of military families and mitigate risks. 📌
- b. Recruit and retain mental health clinicians and behavioral health providers. 📌
- c. Implement recommendations identified in the Fort Wainwright EPICON to improve quality of life in the community. 📌

See Recreation & Entertainment for related recommendations.

Key	★	Priority (TBD)	🔧	Capital Project	📌	Military-related
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“We need more senior and elder services at multiple service levels. Especially for dementia-related disease. The lack of current reimbursement options makes this challenging.”



Other Relevant Resources

- **Community Health Needs Assessment.** Foundation Health Partners. 2019. [View here.](#)
- **2020-2022 Community Health Improvement Plan.** Foundation Health Partners. 2020. [View here.](#)
- **Eielson Regional Growth Plan.** Fairbanks North Star Borough. 2018. [View here.](#)
- **Crisis Now.** City of Fairbanks project webpage: [view here.](#) Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority webpage: [view here.](#)

2022-2026 Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Forestry Summary

Strengths *Internal attributes that contribute to success*

Natural Resources & Environment

- Diverse recreation, cultural, and research opportunities in Tanana Valley State Forest (TVSF)
- Fungal pharmacological diversity in forests
- White spruce makes quality paper

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Forest management partnerships, including the TVSF Citizens Advisory Committee

Education & Workforce

- Availability of programs available to help communities install biomass; creating a locally-sourced heat source and creating local employment opportunities
- Traditional knowledge in forestry

Infrastructure

- Roads that can support both logging and recreation access

Weaknesses *Internal barriers to success*

Natural Resources & Environment

- Forests are managed for their historical uses more than for their future conditions and needs
- Long rotation of harvestable species (e.g., white spruce requires 125 years to grow from seedling to a tree with harvestable value)
- Soil is getting thinner

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- The region lacks sawmill operators

Education & Workforce

- High staff turnover and loss of operational knowledge in communities installing biomass

Funding & Markets

- High energy costs create a barrier for affordable local lumber production

Infrastructure

- Limited infrastructure (roads, power), including some areas with winter-only access create challenges for accessing and harvesting forest resources

Other

- Conflicts between logging and recreation/trail users, and between different recreation user groups on forestry roads

Opportunities *External forces that contribute to success*

Natural Resources and Environment

- Salvage timber from disturbances (e.g., spruce bark beetles and wildfire)

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Apply proactive management strategies to combat landscape level change
- U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy's Conversion Research and Development Program is exploring how to improve and scale up biomass technology

Threats *External forces that could be barriers to success*

Natural Resources and Environment

- Climate change and increased wildfire risks
- Invasive species
- Loss of old growth forest
- Potential environmental impacts of logging and logging roads, including impacts on animals and insects
- Spruce bark beetle infestations

Funding & Markets

- Most lumber is imported

Where We Are	What measurements can we use to track progress? Where do we want to be in 5 years?	2026 Targets
224 (2019)	Employment – Total number of FNSB residents employed full or part time in forestry, fishing, or related activities <i>No change between 2018 and 2019</i>	235 (5% growth)
13	Biomass Use for Energy Generation – The number of Interior Alaska communities with biomass projects installed to reduce heat (includes Southeast Fairbanks Census Area, Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area, and Fairbanks North Star Borough)	16
Need to ID	Timber Sales and Harvest Data – <i>forthcoming</i>	Need to ID

Sources: Employment numbers from the Bureau of Economic Analysis; Biomass installations from the Alaska Wood Energy Development Task Group projects page



“Access can be a challenge. There is limited infrastructure, and some areas only have winter access.”

“We need continued forest management partnerships around shared priorities. For example, logging and recreation both need to consider fires, spruce beetles, access. Tanana Valley State Forest Citizens Advisory Committee is a positive example of collaboration.”



Forestry Objectives – Long term improvements and changes we want to see in five years or more



1. Interior Alaska forests are healthy, vibrant, and sustainably managed to support a productive balance of commercial, recreational, and personal activities.
2. Natural resources are preserved and protected for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

“We should consider establishing a Buy Local Wood program.”

“This is a working document and it’s important to acknowledge that things like harvest numbers and timber sales will change from year to year due to unknown events like wildfires. It’s important to leave room for change and adaptability.”

“We see opposition to timber harvests in areas with popular but unprotected trails.”

Strategies & Actions – Activities we will implement over the next five years to accomplish goals & targets

- 1. Collaborative Management** – Forestry stakeholders collaborate on management decisions. (*Objectives 1, 2*)
 - a. Ensure that forest management activities are not excluded from the array of permitted uses within FNSB boundaries, including state forests.
 - b. Encourage collaboration between user groups, including involving recreation user groups when planning logging access roads.
 - c. Support continuation of existing partnerships including the TVSF Citizens Advisory Committee.
 - d. Complete the update to the TVSF Management Plan.
 - e. Coordinate management of fire risk.
 - f. Support protection efforts such as educating visitors on Leave No Trace principles.
 - g. Incorporate traditional ecological knowledge into management decisions.
 - h. Encourage neighborhood-clustered development that provides open spaces for recreation, agriculture, fire protection, and efficient provision of services.
 - i. Use FNSB platting authority to develop a rural road platting process to create legal emergency access to remote areas and subdivisions in FNSB.
- 2. Biomass** – Manage local forests to maximize long-term productivity of local biomass for heating and construction materials, to reduce threats from wildfires, and minimize environmental and community impacts. (*Objectives 1, 2*)
 - a. Encourage Interior Alaska communities to explore wood-fired heat by conducting pre-feasibility studies, with support from the Alaska Wood Energy Development Task Group.
 - b. Support communities with wood-fired heating systems with ongoing training and professional development for operators. 🔧
 - c. Proactively identify areas with high wildfire risk and support strategic fuel removal.
 - d. Increase biomass education and awareness.
 - e. Update the FNSB Community Wildlife Protection Program.
- 3. Local Products** – Develop and promote local wood products (e.g., furniture manufacturing and forest products). (*Objective 1*)

- a. Update the 2007 publication, “New Growth: Prospectus for Forest Products Industry of Interior Alaska,” summarizing the region’s timber potential and sale details for potential investors.
- b. Create a Buy Local wood program.
- c. Develop a wood grading system for local materials.
- d. Increase food forests and commercial research into forest resources. 🔧
- e. Increase sawmills in the region by providing education and training for sawmill operators, creation of a directory of local sawmills, and the establishment of a community sawmill. 🔧
- f. Review liability insurance policies and facilitate a FNSB timber sale.

Key	★	Priority (TBD)	🔧	Capital Project	📖	Military-related
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Other Relevant Resources

- **Map of the Tanana Valley State Forest.** Alaska Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry. December 2021. [View here.](#)
- **2020 Forest Action Plan.** Alaska Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry. December 2020. [View here.](#)
- **New Growth Prospectus for the Forest Products Industry of Interior Alaska.** State of Alaska. March 2007. [View here.](#)
- **Tanana Valley State Forest Management Plan Revision.** Alaska Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry. Current plan updated in 2001; update in progress. [View here.](#)
- **Alaska Timber Jobs Task Force Report (2012) and Status Update (2018).** Alaska Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry. [View here.](#)



Mining Summary

Strengths *Internal attributes that contribute to success*

Natural Resources & Environment

- Fort Knox partnership with Trout Unlimited
- Interior Alaska has world-class mineral deposits

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Fort Knox contributes millions in property taxes annually to the FNSB (\$11.1 million in 2020), the FNSB's 2nd largest taxpayer (1st is the Trans-Alaska Pipeline)
- Mining company contributions to the community, including event sponsorships and University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) programs
- Three of Alaska's largest mining operations (Usibelli, Fort Knox, and Pogo) are within 150 miles of Fairbanks

Education & Workforce

- Mining employment offers high wage jobs
- UAF supports industry workforce needs and provides research capabilities

Weaknesses *Internal barriers to success*

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Active mining at Fort Knox is expected to end in 2027
- Complex land ownership patterns and limited understanding of land ownership and status by the public
- Limited land status mapping
- Mining companies often end community outreach after permitting; lack of communications with the public

Funding & Markets

- Exploration and production costs higher than the Lower 48
- High costs of energy
- Length of time between exploration and actual production

Infrastructure

- There is a lack of infrastructure for potential mines

Other

- Mining conflicts with other user groups including recreation users, subsistence users, homeowners
- Poor public perception of mining and lack of understanding of what modern mining looks like
- Land with subsurface mineral rights was allowed to be developed into residential uses

Opportunities *External forces that contribute to success*

Natural Resources & Environment

- Alaska's reputation as a mineral source is increasing
- Potential future mining extraction projects in region

Funding & Markets

- Federal funding opportunities for new infrastructure
- Green technology's mineral and metal needs
- Increasing global demand for rare earth minerals, precious metals

Infrastructure

- Road systems through the Brooks Range and Ambler Mining District in planning phases

Threats *External forces that could be barriers to success*

Natural Resources & Environment

- Negative environmental impacts from mining

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Changes to local, state, and federal regulations and taxation policies create uncertainty for mining developers
- Federal policies that restrict new resource development

Education & Workforce

- Increasing skilled labor shortage

Funding & Markets

- Pricing uncertainty for minerals and metals

Other

- Lack of public trust in regulatory agencies, companies
- Land use conflicts with mining
- Public perceptions of mining

Where We Are	What measurements can we use to track progress? Where do we want to be in 5 years?	2026 Targets
\$1.9 billion (2020)	Mineral Value – Export value of minerals being extracted in Alaska <i>Alaska recently surpassed Florida to be the sixth most-productive mining state</i>	\$2.1 billion (10% increase)
3 Mines (2020)	Producing Mines – How many major deposits are moving from exploration and permitting to operation in Interior Alaska. <i>The Interior has three active mines (Fort Knox, Northern Star Pogo, Usibelli Coal) and two in exploration (Livengood, Tetlin)</i>	4 mines
1,293 Jobs (2019)	Employment – FNSB residents employed full or part time in mining, quarrying, and oil and gas jobs. <i>This number has decreased by almost half over the past 5 years (2,322 in 2014)</i>	1,420 (10% increase)

Sources for export value comes from Alaska Miners Association; employment numbers from the Bureau of Economic Analysis



“Interior Alaska is home to world-class mineralization.”

“There is a perception that Alaska is a pristine land, so that drives some of the resistance to resource extraction.”

“Mining is important here. There are not as many jobs as some industries, but the wages are much higher. Fort Knox is also an important part of the tax base. We also do it well – it is heavily regulated and safe.”



Mining Objectives – Long term improvements and changes we want to see in five years or more



1. Interior Alaska’s abundant mineral resources are a mechanism supporting a thriving, responsible, modern mining industry and local communities.



2. FNSB residents and local and regional leaders have an understanding of mining, including the industry’s economic importance, environmental stewardship, and employment opportunities.

“State law has a provision for how oil properties are taxed; the mining industry would like to see a similar provision. Without that, there is a lot of uncertainty for investors about the future tax environment, which makes it hard to do long term planning.”

“The Port of Alaska in Anchorage is really important to Interior Alaska. Whether freight comes to FNSB on barge or truck or rail, it often passes through the Port of Alaska first.”

“With the high cost of energy and lack of economies of scale, I don’t see processing happening here anytime soon. Energy costs are a big issue for the viability of mining operations.”

“A big accomplishment that we are starting to see is making the connection between green technology and mineral development. Everyone wants wind turbines and solar panels but they don’t want mining, and they don’t realize you can’t have one without the other. If you want these things, wouldn’t you rather the minerals are mined in the U.S. where there is more regulation, minimum wage and labor laws?”

Strategies & Actions – Activities we will implement over the next five years to accomplish goals & targets

- 1. Workforce Development** – Create and maintain a highly trained workforce that supports mining and geology needs across the spectrum, from exploration through permitting and production. *(Objectives 1, 2)*
 - a. Create natural resources curriculum in public schools and universities.
 - b. Support and expand mining and geology related degree programs in Alaska, including expanding the UAF Mining and Geologic Engineering program.
 - c. Expand vocational training programs that address workforce needs, such as millwright education and internships, through public private partnerships.
 - d. Expand the availability of commercial driver’s license training and licensing.
 - e. Increase awareness of career opportunities and job skill requirements in the mining industry, including opportunities for professional growth and advancement.
- 2. Increase Production** – Support responsible exploration, permitting, remediation, and restoration for potential new mines in Interior Alaska. *(Objective 1)*
 - a. Support exploration and permitting phases for large projects in Interior Alaska. 🔑
 - b. Address potential transportation concerns associated with the Tetlin (Manh Choh) Project. 🔑
 - c. Encourage robust public outreach and opportunities for public input during permitting phases.
 - d. Perform cost/benefit analysis for expansion of transportation network to access sites in the exploration phase. 🔑

- 3. Fair Policies** – Ensure local, regional, and state policies balance environmental, economic, and community needs while supporting a competitive environment for exploration and investment. *(Objectives 1, 2)*
 - a. Review regional and state taxation policies to ensure mining is taxed at rates that benefit communities without placing an uneven burden on the industry, and that creates stability and certainty for mining investors.
 - b. Encourage local, state, and federal agencies to create and follow consistent, predictable timelines for project permitting.
 - c. Ensure adequate environmental protections and regulations are in place and consistently followed, including mining reclamation.
 - d. Use land use planning tools to mitigate conflict.
 - e. Update FNSB Comprehensive Plan for mining and actively notice non-compatible use.
- 4. Outreach** – Increase communications and education with the public on modern mining practices and implement long-term engagement with communities around active and potential deposits. *(Objective 2)*
 - a. Increase public education on modern mining and the safety measures that are taken.
 - b. Launch a public relations campaign around how minerals (including rare earth minerals) are required to manufacture essentials such as smart phones, renewables, and electric vehicles.
 - c. Educate mining operators on the benefits of engagement beyond the permitting phase.
 - d. Increase tours to active mines.

Key	★	Priority (TBD)		Capital Project		Military-related
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“We sit around and tell each other in the mining industry about how good of a job we are doing with environmental stewardship, but we are not good at telling the public.”

“There are a host of organizations, along with the state, that are working hard to engage with the public and educate them on the benefits of the industry and the need on furthering the green economy. You need minerals to produce everything. Tesla needs much more copper than an internal combustion engine.”

Other Relevant Resources

- **The Economic Benefits of Alaska’s Mining Industry.** Alaska Miners Association. 2021. [View here.](#)
- **Major Mines in Alaska.** Alaska Miners Association. 2022. [View here.](#)
- **Mineral Industry Annual Reports.** Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys. [View here.](#)
- **The Economic Potential of Alaska’s Mining Industry.** UAA Institute of Social and Economic Research. 2022. [View here.](#)



2022-2026 Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Research & Innovation Summary

Photo courtesy of University of Alaska Fairbanks

Strengths <i>Internal attributes that contribute to success</i>	Weaknesses <i>Internal barriers to success</i>
<p>Natural Resources & Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interior Alaska offers a unique subarctic environment for study and exploration, with vast areas of uncontrolled airspace and undeveloped lands <p>Businesses, Organizations, & Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Department of Defense (DoD) has robust and growing research efforts in Interior Alaska• National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) joined forces with Cold Climate Housing Research Center (CCHRC) with focus on energy systems• University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) Center for Innovation, Commercialization, and Entrepreneurship (Center ICE) launched its Innovation Accelerator• UAF is a major driver of innovation <p>Education & Workforce</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The sector creates jobs for residents and offers solutions to unique challenges experienced in Alaska communities	<p>Businesses, Organizations, & Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Private sector research needs are not consistently communicated to UAF• UAF is perceived as inaccessible/uninviting to local residents, with fees for parking, library access, etc.• UAF research capacity is not well understood or accessible to the community or private sector• University/academic research at UAF does not always successfully transfer to implementation by the private sector or practical use in Interior Alaska communities <p>Education & Workforce</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shortage of skilled workforce and lack of clarity around specific workforce needs <p>Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limitations of data speeds limit processing power
Opportunities <i>External forces that contribute to success</i>	Threats <i>External forces that could be barriers to success</i>
<p>Businesses, Organizations, & Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Science Foundation Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) funds extensive Alaska research efforts and infrastructure improvements <p>Funding & Markets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current and potential federal funding opportunities for new infrastructure through the American Rescue Plan, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and more• Many funding opportunities available for research areas relevant to regional economic development <p>Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Autonomous systems and remote sensing technologies have the potential to lower costs and increase safety• Improvements in cloud computing technology could help address some of the data processing challenges in the region	<p>Businesses, Organizations, & Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Issues with security barriers and proprietary research (especially with military facilities) resulting in testing facilities closed off/not accessible to other researchers <p>Education & Workforce</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Potential for technology improvements to outsource jobs (e.g., unmanned aircraft system technologies) <p>Funding & Markets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Budget uncertainty and constantly shifting funding priorities at the federal level• Federal funding is often time-limited and cannot be used to sustain long-term projects (over 10 years)• State budget challenges and uncertainty with direct negative impacts to UAF

Where We Are	What measurements can we use to track progress? Where do we want to be in 5 years?	2026 Targets
\$49 M	Private Sector Business Research – Business research and development expenditures (80% privately funded by companies, 8% federal, 10% other); <i>Helps identify private sector investment since it excludes universities and federally funded research centers</i>	\$51.4 M
\$110.9 M (FY20)	Academic Sector Research – Research-related expenditures from external research funding, including federal grants, state pass throughs, and state research grants; <i>up 14% from FY2015 (\$97.5 M)</i>	\$130 M
49 (FY20)	Ph.D.s – Annual number of UAF students receiving Ph.D.s.; <i>increasing this number will be key (FY20) for achieving Tier 1 Research University status (requires increasing the annual # of PhDs by a factor of 2-4)</i>	100

Sources: Business Enterprise Research and Development Survey, 2019; UAF Fact Sheets



“Research funding brings in dollars and employs people. The translation of research also supports economic development by providing innovative solutions to business challenges.”

“There are so many opportunities. Even though we’re not a coastal town, UAF supports coastal communities through mariculture, fisheries research, ocean energy, transportation, tourism. We support the fisheries industry with research. There are many funding opportunities for ocean research and most require University partnerships.”



Photos courtesy of University of Alaska Fairbanks

Research & Innovation Objectives – Long term improvements and changes we want to see in five years or more



1. Interior Alaska is a renowned research hub and attracts scholars, entrepreneurs, institutions, and experts from rural communities to generate innovative solutions to modern challenges, with both local and global applications.



2. Research efforts in Interior Alaska are successfully translated into private sector application and catalyze the growth of new and existing businesses.

“We need to consider how industry needs get identified and communicated back to research institutions like UAF; how do they get elevated to research priorities?”

“Large companies are coming in and hiring UAF graduates to manage aerial and underwater autonomous equipment; those employees can stay here but support high tech jobs from a distance. Fairbanks could continue to grow as a hub for these remote, high-skilled workers.”

Strategies & Actions – Activities we will implement over the next five years to accomplish goals & targets

- 1. Enhance Research Institutions** – Position UAF and other Interior Alaska institutions as global leaders in research and innovation. *(Objective 1)*
 - a. Achieve Tier 1 Research University status for UAF.
 - b. Establish Fairbanks International Airport as an unmanned aircraft system hub. 🔑 📖
 - c. Leverage the collaboration between CCHRC and NREL to further grow renewable energy research and energy conservation facilities and programs; use as a model for other partnerships.
 - d. Identify sector needs and create workforce pipelines to fill needed “middle ground” research roles, including the vocational and trade skills needed to support research projects.
 - e. Better retain UAF students in the community after graduation.
- 2. Expand Research and Development** – Celebrate, promote, and expand research efforts that support economic development, resiliency, and quality of life in Alaska communities. *(Objectives 1, 2)*
 - a. Research of agricultural and mariculture technologies and harvesting potential. 🔑
 - b. Research aimed at climate change documentation, adaptation, and carbon capture and storage. 🔑
 - c. Research energy solutions including renewable energy technologies, microgrids, nuclear, energy efficiency. 🔑 📖
 - d. Military-relevant research, including cold weather testing, unmanned aircraft systems, satellite remote sensing, aerospace, natural hazards, and Arctic-relevant topics like infrastructure, emergency response, transportation. 🔑 📖
 - e. Biomedical and public health research efforts such as the One Health concept. 🔑
 - f. Geologic and mineral research. 🔑
 - g. Research that identifies solutions to meet Alaska’s unique housing needs including design techniques, water-sewer improvements, and increasing utilization of local materials. 🔑
 - h. Fisheries and oceans research that supports coastal communities and ocean-based economic activities.
 - i. Develop an Arctic Emergency Services Center of Excellence. 🔑
- 3. Engage Entrepreneurs**– Assist innovators in building on their discoveries and pivoting into private sector and business opportunities. *(Objective 2)*
 - a. Promote and expand the Center ICE’s new [Innovation Accelerator](#) program and [Students2Startups](#) internship program.

- b. Create a dedicated community space for early-stage innovators to collaborate and share resources.
- c. Establish network of entrepreneurial mentors who can connect with new entrepreneurs.
- d. Expand networking and engagement between entrepreneurs, Center ICE, and other relevant programs.

4. Build Community Partnerships – Engage communities and Tribes as critical partners in research efforts. (Objectives 1, 2)

- a. Collaborate with Tribes to elevate the role of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) in research efforts.
- b. Support greater community participation and diverse local hire in research efforts and ensure community-based research is communicated back to communities in stakeholders in accessible and usable formats, including the potential creation of a database of UAF research projects and outcomes.
- c. Involve communities in the design phases when crafting research proposals.
- d. Create a research communications strategy for better reporting and updating the community on research achievements, priorities, and projects, and to solicit industry research needs.
- e. Actively address the lack of diversity in the research field and identify strategies for improvement.

Key	★	Priority (TBD)		Capital Project		Military-related
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Other Relevant Resources

Photo courtesy of University of Alaska Fairbanks

- **UAF Strategic Plan 2027.** University of Alaska Fairbanks. November 2021. [View here.](#)
- **UAF Department of Defense Support.** University of Alaska Fairbanks webpage. [View here.](#)
- **List of UAF Research Facilities.** University of Alaska Fairbanks. [View here.](#)
- **North to Opportunity: Aerospace Industry Summary Page.** The State of Alaska. [View here.](#)
- **Arctic Research Plan.** Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee, National Science & Technology Council. Dec. 2021. [View here.](#)

Visitor Industry Summary

Strengths *Internal attributes that contribute to success*

Natural Resources & Environment

- Access to outdoor recreation (trails, parks, fishing)
- Aurora tourism drives winter visitation
- Beautiful landscapes, abundant wildlife
- Chena Hot Springs
- Midnight sun in summer
- Proximity to Denali National Park and the Arctic Circle

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Explore Fairbanks
- Thriving mix of local restaurants, breweries

Education & Workforce

- Quality outfitters, guides and hospitality operators

Infrastructure

- On the road and railroad system

Other

- Arts and culture opportunities; Alaska Native culture
- Dog sled racing, including the Yukon Quest

Weaknesses *Internal barriers to success*

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Misunderstanding from government and citizens of the purpose and use of the bed tax
- Visible homelessness in downtown Fairbanks, with insufficient services to meet demand

Education & Workforce

- Staffing challenges during pandemic (e.g., lack of J-1 Visa workers); challenges recruiting for seasonal employment

Funding & Markets

- Lack of direct flights to Fairbanks

Infrastructure

- Aging infrastructure: roads and sidewalks in disrepair, limited sidewalk snow removal in winter
- Challenge of getting from Fairbanks to Denali
- Not enough venues for hosting events
- Transportation sector is understaffed
- Winter roadside facilities are limited; winter road closures

Opportunities *External forces that contribute to success*

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Increased collaboration between neighboring destinations (Denali Borough, City of Nenana, Tok)

Funding & Markets

- Growing interest in Arctic tourism
- Increase in winter travel
- Increasing year-round tourism

Infrastructure

- Alaska Long Trail
- Expanding rail service to be year-round, and potential connection with Alberta

Threats *External forces that could be barriers to success*

Natural Resources & Environment

- Air quality challenges, especially in winter
- Climate change, including increased wildfire risks
- Light pollution (threat to aurora viewing)

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Land use conflicts at recreation and aurora sites

Funding & Markets

- Dependence on cruise lines for many visitors
- COVID-19 and ongoing impacts to health, travel, workers
- Supply chain shortages (e.g., impacts on rental car supply)

Where We Are (2019 as pre-pandemic baseline)	What measurements can we use to track progress? Where do we want to be in 5 years?	2026 Targets
5,991	Jobs – FNSB residents employed in leisure & hospitality <i>10% of total workforce in 2019; this sector saw the greatest losses in 2020</i>	6,290
\$70.5 Million	Visitor Spending – Hotel/motel annual room receipts <i>Increased 8% from 2016 to 2019, then declined 55% between 2019 and 2020</i>	80 Million
\$143 Million	Wages – Annual wages to FNSB residents employed in leisure & hospitality <i>Only 4% of total wages, indicating these jobs pay less than other industries</i>	\$150 Million
596,066	Passengers – Fairbanks International Airport passenger arrivals <i>2020 passenger arrivals were half the 2019 number</i>	625,869
11.7 days (2016)	Trip Length – Average stay for visitors whose Alaska trips include Interior Alaska <i>Visitors to Interior Alaska stay longer than the statewide visitor average of 9.2 days</i>	12.5 days (increase of ~1 day)

Sources: Employment & wages from 2019 Bureau of Economic Analysis; Hotel receipts from FNSB Community Research Quarterly (as reported by Cities of Fairbanks & North Pole, FNSB Financial Services), Passenger data from FNSB Community Research Quarterly; trip length from the Alaska Visitor Statistics Program.



“We are in a good opportunity right now with the independent travelers. We are looking ahead to the increase in cruises, and we are thinking about who we want to be as a destination going forward. Look at what Hawaii is doing.”

“A new convention center could help meet multiple objectives. It could help bring more visitors during shoulder seasons.”

“We need to move away from the concept of a ‘tourism season’ – our visitors are not just tourists, and we want to be a year-round industry, not just seasonal.”



Visitor Industry Objectives – Long term improvements and changes we want to see in five years or more



1. Interior Alaska is striving to be a year-round, world-class, adaptable visitor destination.
2. Fairbanks is a prominent international hub for military, arts, energy, and Arctic-focused conferences.
3. Interior Alaska is recognized and celebrated for its outdoor access and opportunities.

“The Alaska Railroad is involved in a major Seward project...the Seward dock is being rebuilt, which will allow for more passengers. That means more visitors to Fairbanks.”

“The J1 program is critical to tourism because they work many of the seasonal service jobs. During the pandemic, participation in the program dropped, causing businesses to close or limit hours.”

Strategies & Actions – Activities we will implement over the next five years to accomplish goals & targets

1. **Coordinated Marketing/Planning** – Fund destination marketing and planning efforts. (*Objectives 1, 2, 3*)
 - a. Promote Fairbanks as an in-state destination for Alaskans.
 - b. Promote Interior Alaska as a road trip destination for Canadians (currently 10% of visitors), and Lower 48 visitors.
 - c. Collaborate with neighboring destinations (Denali Borough, Nenana, Tok) on marketing.
 - d. Advocate to the Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA) to conduct the Alaska Visitor Statistics Program (AVSP) annually and better capture winter visitation trends.
 - e. Create a local data collection strategy to gain insight about visitor trends.
 - f. Conduct visitor capacity planning to determine realistic targets for future visitation based on local resources and to ensure visitors enjoy quality visits without negative impacts to local quality of life or the environment.
2. **Top-Ranked Meeting Hub** – Develop a world class convention and arts center. (*Objective 2*)
 - a. Construct a convention and arts center. 🔧 🏠
 - b. Maintain the Carlson Center as a community event space. 🔧
3. **International Destination** – Promote Interior Alaska as a destination for Arctic and aurora tourism. (*Objectives 1, 2*)
 - a. Create a collective marketing strategy for aurora viewing, including international promotion.
 - b. Promote summer solstice travel.
 - c. Work with neighboring regions to promote Arctic tourism.
 - d. Identify long-term placement for Ice Alaska venue.
4. **Better Access** – Advocate for reliable, regularly scheduled transportation services to and from Fairbanks. (*Objectives 1-3*)
 - a. Increase rail service in winter months.
 - b. Support long-term rail connectivity to the Lower 48. 🔧
 - c. Expand cooperative marketing programs with airlines to gain access to new visitor markets.
 - d. Expand flight options in winter.
 - e. Increase transportation options to destinations near Fairbanks (e.g., Denali National Park).

5. Recreation Opportunities – Expand indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities that appeal to residents and visitors alike. *(Objectives 1, 3)*

- a. Complete and implement the FNSB Recreational Trails Plan. 🔧
- b. Support establishment of the Alaska Long Trail. 🔧

See *Recreation and Entertainment for related actions, including the Carlson Center, Pioneer Park Master Plan and North Star Athletics Complex.*

6. Quality Infrastructure & Effective Policies – Implement infrastructure and policy recommendations from regional plans that help create livable, vibrant communities and destinations. *(Objectives 1-3)*

- a. Maintain and implement the Chena Riverfront Plan.
- b. Complete and implement the Fairbanks Downtown Plan.

See *Communication, Health Care, and Land Use for other quality of life related and infrastructure improvements.*

Key	★	Priority (TBD)	🔧	Capital Project	📖	Military-related
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Other Relevant Resources

- **Alaska Visitor Statistics Program.** Alaska Travel Industry Association. [View here.](#)
- **Chena Riverfront Plan.** Fairbanks North Star Borough Chena Riverfront Commission. Amended 2016. [View here.](#)
- **Comprehensive Recreational Trails Plan.** Fairbanks North Star Borough. Est. completion spring 2022. [View here.](#)
- **Explore Fairbanks 2022 Strategic Marketing Plan.** Explore Fairbanks. 2021. [View here.](#)
- **Feasibility Study & Market Analysis for the Management Options of the Carlson Center.** Fairbanks North Star Borough. 2020. [View here.](#)
- **Fairbanks Downtown Plan.** Fairbanks North Star Borough. Est. completion Fall 2022. [View here.](#)



2022-2026 Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Small Business Development & Entrepreneurship Summary

Strengths *Internal attributes that contribute to success*

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Growth and success of local cannabis industry
- Many small businesses
- No state or borough sales tax
- Strong local business-focused organizations including the Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce (GFCC) and Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation (FEDC)

Education & Workforce

- FNSB is a veteran-friendly community, with many military households choosing to stay in the community after active-duty service
- Resources to support small businesses, including University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), Alaska Angel Investors, Explore Fairbanks, startup week
- thread offers pre-training for new child care employees, reducing costs for small child care businesses

Opportunities *External forces that contribute to success*

Education & Workforce

- Barriers to military licensing for Family Child Care homes have been removed, resulting in an increase in certified homes in the region

Funding & Markets

- Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES), American Rescue Plan (ARPA), and other stimulus funding helped businesses weather pandemic impacts
- State of Alaska actions that eliminate startup barriers including reducing fees and business license costs
- Strategic Arctic location presents unique economic and entrepreneurial opportunities

Infrastructure

- Federal funding opportunities for new infrastructure

Weaknesses *Internal barriers to success*

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Lack of a child care licensing specialist in Fairbanks causes delays for new providers who are trying to open new businesses, and for current providers to renew current licenses

Education & Workforce

- Labor shortages

Funding & Markets

- Breweries and marijuana dispensaries experience challenges with taxation, licensing, regulation
- High costs for shipping materials, construction, energy
- Limitations on the distribution of COVID-19 relief funding
- Limited access to venture capital funding
- Limited local manufacturing and production options
- Low density, small population create challenges to achieve economies of scale for business ventures
- Military households are isolated from town

Threats *External forces that could be barriers to success*

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Banking regulations, employee requirements, and other challenges for cannabis growers and retailers; federal marijuana legalization could result in out-of-state retailers flooding the market and outcompeting local companies

Education & Workforce

- Slow processing of background checks for child care providers, delaying hiring and facility capacity

Funding & Markets

- Low Department of Defense (DoD) reimbursement rates for child care that do not reflect local costs
- Competition with large chains and Amazon
- Ongoing supply chain disruptions and continued pandemic-related hardships

Where We Are	What measurements can we use to track progress? Where do we want to be in 5 years?	2026 Targets
69% (2022)	FNSB Businesses Experiencing Hardship from COVID-19 – Based on a survey of 35 businesses conducted by FEDC, January 2022	0%
2,438 (2019)	Number of Small Businesses in FNSB – Total number of business establishments with 49 or fewer employees in FNSB; more than half of these businesses have fewer than 5 employees <i>This represents 97% of all businesses in FNSB</i>	2,560
5,992 (2018)	Self-Employed Individuals – Based on nonemployer statistics that count businesses with no employees; these businesses generated a combined \$236 M in receipts in 2018 <i>This represents a 3% increase from 2016, with 5,802 nonemployment in 2018</i>	6,292

Sources: Business Hardship from FEDC's Annual Business Survey, January 2022; Businesses in FNSB from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment Wages; Self-Employed Individuals from the U.S. Census



“The federal funding really helped small businesses. The State also did several things that made things easier, such as free business licenses. We need to continue to provide education and resources for owners and entrepreneurs.”

“I would like to see government better listen and act on the requests of business owners who spend time vocalizing their issues.”



Small Business Development & Entrepreneurship Objectives – Long term improvements and changes we want to see in five years or more



1. The Fairbanks North Star Borough is a business-friendly community, offering an environment where small businesses grow and thrive.




2. Entrepreneurs have access to the resources and information they need to successfully launch businesses and related efforts that fill a unique economic development niche.

“FEDC is doing an awesome job. They’re keeping our community defense oriented, and working on issues like natural gas.”

“We have a not user-friendly downtown. Navigation is hard, parking is harder, there are no bike lanes, no public restrooms, no housing, etc.”

“We should expand advocacy to promote the entrepreneurial opportunity of becoming a state-licensed child care provider.”

Strategies & Actions – Activities we will implement over the next five years to accomplish goals & targets

1. **Promote Local** – Expand promotion and marketing of local businesses and products. *(Objective 1)*
 - a. Encourage Interior Alaska businesses to join BuyAlaska.com.
 - b. Assist local businesses with trainings on digital and online effectiveness and networking topics.
 - c. Increase events, advertising, and services associated with the Fairbanks First: Shop Local program to encourage greater business participation; expand military discount participation and promotion through Explore Fairbanks. 
 - d. Host a community event during the annual Small Business Saturday activities in November.
2. **Build Knowledge & Capacity** – Connect business owners and entrepreneurs with information and training. *(Objectives 1, 2)*
 - a. Promote existing online resources, including the extensive existing library of online workshops from the Alaska Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and Alaska Manufacturers Extension Partnership (MEP); create a one-stop shop for resources, trainings, and funding.
 - b. Encourage those interested in starting a small business to connect with advisors at the Small Business Development Center, Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation, and the Job Training Center.
 - c. Hold trainings and job fairs, including potentially a small business-focused job fair.
 - d. Assist small businesses with the trademark and copyright process, promotional tools.
 - e. Partner with the Veterans Administration to connect veterans with business startup resources.
 - f. Offer trainings to entrepreneurs on how to use Airbnb and other online tools to promote activities and tours.

See *Research and Innovation* section for related recommendations.

3. **Address Barriers** – Identify and address barriers to small business success. *(Objectives 1, 2)*
 - a. Address challenges in the child care sector, including advocating for a child care licensing specialist in Fairbanks and for child care providers to use alternative (non-state) services for background checks for new employees.

- b. Reduce barriers in the marijuana industry, including supporting statewide tax reform, revision of license caps, address banking challenges, and revisiting prohibition of children at retail sites.
- c. Support regulatory updates and licensing improvements to reduce barriers for breweries, bars, and other establishments.

4. Fund Entrepreneurs – Connect entrepreneurs with startup funding. *(Objective 2)*

- a. Better promote and utilize the Kiva crowd-funded microfinance program (FEDC as Trustee).
- b. Continue to advocate for relief funding for businesses impacted by the pandemic.
- c. Facilitate networking and connections between investors and entrepreneurs (e.g., Alaska Angel Conference).

5. Identify Opportunities – Promote and encourage small business opportunities for services and goods with high demand and unmet needs in the community. *(Objective 2)*

- a. Identify areas where existing businesses are not meeting community needs and promote small business development opportunities.

Key	★	Priority (TBD)	🔧	Capital Project	📖	Military-related
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Other Relevant Resources

- **Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce:** [Website](#).
- **Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation:** [Website](#).
- **Alaska Small Business Development Center:** [Website](#).
- **Alaska Manufacturing Extension Partnership:** [Website](#).
- **Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation:** List of Small Business Resources. [Here](#).
- **Alaska Small Business Development Center:** Annual Business Survey. [Here](#).

2022-2026 Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Communications Summary

Strengths *Internal attributes that contribute to success*

Funding & Markets

- Increased demand for internet due to distance learning, telemedicine, remote work

Infrastructure

- Expansion of middle mile infrastructure (the segment of physical telecommunications infrastructure that links community networks with global network lines) over the past decade
- Major improvements and investments in new infrastructure in Alaska, including installation of a 5th fiber optic cable along the Dalton Highway, the GCI's TERRA network, Quintillion, and satellite expansion
- Telecommunications technology is becoming more affordable and longer lasting

Weaknesses *Internal barriers to success*

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Current Federal Communications Commission (FCC) broadband maps use a process developed 20 years ago that is not helpful, relevant, or accurate to capture current needs

Funding & Markets

- Limited availability of funding, especially for middle mile and last mile infrastructure
- Limited internet connectivity; 11% of the population do not have any internet service providers (FCC, 2020)

Infrastructure

- High cost of operations and maintenance
- Land use policies that create challenges for affordably installing telecommunications infrastructure
- Poor cell service in portions of FNSB
- The region's relatively small population spread across a large geography, with limited overland connectivity to surrounding rural areas and distance from lower 48 networks

Opportunities *External forces that contribute to success*

Funding & Markets

- Availability of programs that aim to reduce the costs of internet for low-income households
- Current and potential federal funding opportunities for new infrastructure through the American Rescue Plan Act, COVID-19 relief funds, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and more

Infrastructure

- Rapidly evolving technology improvements, including satellite

Threats *External forces that could be barriers to success*

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Lack of coordination between state and federal partners

Education & Workforce

- Workforce shortages

Infrastructure

- Some of the submarine fiber optic cables connecting Alaska to the Lower 48 are nearing the end of their design life
- Technology advancements – infrastructure becomes obsolete quickly

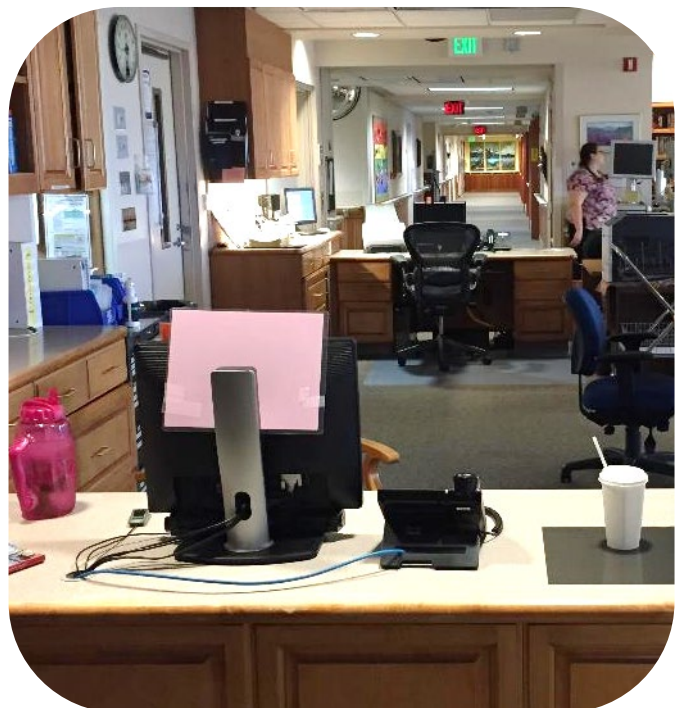
Where We Are (2019)	What measurements can we use to track progress? Where do we want to be in 5 years?	2026 Targets
98.4% urban 70% rural	Speeds – Percentage of FNSB population with access to fixed terrestrial broadband at speeds of at least 25 Mbps downstream and 3 Mbps upstream <i>Overall state rate is 85.2%; likely overestimates coverage due to methodology</i>	100% urban 100 % rural
37 communities 6,383 residents	Unserved – Number of unserved communities in Interior Alaska (lacking speeds of at least 25 Mbps downstream and 3 Mbps upstream)	0 communities 0 residents

Sources: Speeds come from Federal Communications Commission Fourteen Broadband Deployment Report, January 2021; unserved communities/residents come from Governor’s Alaska Broadband Task Force Report, November 2021



“Providers want to help connect Alaskans. There is a lot of shared interest in achieving better connectivity.”

“Broadband and energy can coexist. It would be great to develop shared agreements for intertie projects so we can maximize space and resources.”



Communications Objectives – Long term improvements and changes we want to see in five years or more



1. Provide residents in Interior Alaska equitable access to affordable, reliable, quality phone and internet services.



2. Public, private, and Tribal partners are working collaboratively to achieve the region's connectivity needs.

“There are still many middle mile gaps in Alaska’s infrastructure, and less funding is going toward the middle mile.”

“There needs to be more trust and relationship building between Tribal communities, the state, federal agencies, and private sector partners. The most underserved areas are often Tribal communities. Funds are becoming available for Tribal and in many areas, partnerships will be required for projects to be successful, and to ensure Tribes are receiving a quality product.”

“There should be a review of existing land use policies to ensure they are supporting current telecommunication needs. The industry is changing rapidly and it’s important to ensure land use and other policies are evolving to match.”

Strategies & Actions – Activities we will implement over the next five years to accomplish goals & targets

- 1. Collaboration** – Encourage partnerships between public, private, and Tribal entities to collaborate on needed infrastructure projects. *(Objectives 1, 2)*
 - a. Support implementation of the Governor’s Task Force on Broadband recommendations to establish a State Office of Broadband Deployment, a State Broadband Advisory Board, and a Regional Broadband Planning Committee.
 - b. Advocate for improved data and maps to ensure data-driven decision making.
 - c. Ensure all shareholders can participate in decision making, with resident needs a top priority.
 - d. Ensure infrastructure planning efforts are transparent with clear lines of accountability.
- 2. Installation** – Install and sustainably operate and maintain infrastructure that will better serve the region with reliable phone and internet service. *(Objectives 1, 2)*
 - a. Create a plan to address unserved communities in Alaska.
 - b. Review land use policies to ensure they are supporting current telecommunication needs.
 - c. Advocate for streamlined state and federal permitting for broadband projects and reduced permitting fees and collaborate with other utilities to share easements where appropriate (e.g., transmission lines).
 - d. Support leasing of FNSB facilities for small communication system technology (e.g., small cell towers), including school locations.
 - e. Support efforts to develop reliable and affordable power, especially in underserved rural areas. *See Energy for related recommendations.*
 - f. Work closely with education and workforce development partners to ensure the local workforce has the skills to deploy, operate, maintain, and repair broadband infrastructure. *See Education and Workforce Development for related recommendations.*

- 3. Affordability and Access** – Ensure all residents can afford quality internet. (*Objectives 1, 2*)
- Better promote the FCC’s Emergency Broadband Benefit, which provides discounts on internet service for qualifying households.
 - Support communities with ongoing operation and maintenance funding by establishing an Alaska Universal Service Fund and a Federal Grant-Matching Fund, as recommended by the Governor’s Task Force on Broadband. 🔑
 - Establish community-level broadband access by configuring community facilities with public internet, especially in communities that lack affordable and reliable connectivity to homes. 🔑
 - Support investment of communication facilities and upgrades in FNSB. 🔑

Key	★	Priority (TBD)	🔑	Capital Project	📖	Military-related
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Other Relevant Resources

- **Tanana Chiefs Conference Tribal Broadband Plan.** Tanana Chiefs Conference. 2021.
- **Governor’s Task Force on Broadband, Final Report.** State of Alaska. November 2021. [View here.](#)
- **A Blueprint for Alaska’s Broadband Future.** Denali Commission. December 2019. [View here.](#)
- **A Blueprint for Alaska’s Broadband Future.** State of Alaska Statewide Broadband Task Force. October 2014. [View here.](#)
- **Joint Alaska Senate/House Resolutions in Support of Broadband.** The Alaska State Legislature, 2021. View [here](#) (Senate), [here](#) (House).

Education & Workforce Development Summary

Strengths *Internal attributes that contribute to success*

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Strong high school programs, trade schools, and pre-college programs
- High school-based trade programs and apprenticeship programs are working well
- Military bases offer employment, including civilian jobs
- University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) and its many affiliated programs, including the Pipeline Training Center Education & Workforce
- FNSB has a higher labor participation rate than Alaska
- Trade and apprenticeship opportunities available across industries

Weaknesses *Internal barriers to success*

Natural Resources & Environment

- Winter driving conditions as a barrier to employment for military households who are uncomfortable with the 20–30-minute commute

Education & Workforce

- Distance learning challenges, especially for disadvantaged youth
- Female workers have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic due to child care and caregiving roles
- High costs and limited availability of child care, unreliable school bus service create challenges for working parents
- Lack of awareness of existing career and training programs
- Licensing barriers and challenges in many industries
- Rapidly aging workforce with many older workers retiring

Funding & Markets

- Financial costs to access postsecondary education
- Seasonal jobs often do not pay a living wage

Infrastructure

- Limited public transportation

Opportunities *External forces that contribute to success*

Education & Workforce

- An increasing number of jobs can be done remotely

Funding & Markets

- Federal funding opportunities for new infrastructure through the American Rescue Plan Act, COVID-19 relief funds, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and more will create increased employment opportunities
- Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) and DoD have resources to cover child care costs for family members who watch the children of relatives

Infrastructure

- Increased deployment of broadband

Threats *External forces that could be barriers to success*

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Delays in background checks causing problems in some industries by delaying hiring (e.g., child care)
- Ongoing impacts from the Alaska Department of Health & Social Services data breach continue to negatively impact administration of child care programs, causing delays in payment and processing of new families and providers

Education & Workforce

- Evolution of work habits during the pandemic and permanent changes to worker preferences and priorities
- Nationwide workforce shortages mean FNSB is competing with other facilities across the country

Funding & Markets

- Growth of the gig economy impacting availability of workers
- High cost of living, housing, energy, internet
- Poor retirement benefits for teachers and public employees
- State budget challenges and uncertainty resulting in cuts to schools, workforce programs, and secondary education institutions such as UAF

Where We Are	What measurements can we use to track progress? Where do we want to be in 5 years?	2026 Targets
72% (2019)	Labor Force Participation Rate – Percentage of FNSB population 16 years and older who are in the workforce. <i>This number has remained steady over the past 5 years</i>	77%
\$68,697	Average Earnings Per Job – Sum of wages, salaries, earnings divided by # of people employed. <i>This has grown 7% since 2014; FNSB's number is slightly lower than Alaska's average of \$71,106</i>	\$72,131

Sources: Labor Force Participation Rate from U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey; Wages from Bureau of Economic Analysis



Photo courtesy of University of Alaska Fairbanks

“Workforce development partners have been working on getting people, such as school counselors, re-trained with refreshed professional development since jobs have changed so much.”

“Educating workers is great, but we need to convert it into employment.”

“Some local employers treat workers as disposable, as ‘warm bodies.’ We need to change how our community thinks about workers, even entry level workers.”

“People are working differently now. They want more independence, flexibility. Employers and trainers need to figure out how to adapt.”



Education & Workforce Development Objectives – Long term improvements and changes we want to see in five years or more



1. FNSB residents will have the education and skills needed for meaningful employment, benefits, livable wages, and a high quality of life.



2. Employers will have access to a skilled workforce that meets their unique, long-term hiring needs.

“Child care cost and availability prevents many parents from working.”

“We should be building in natural resources curricula into high school. For example, kids need to understand where minerals come from and how they are used. Minerals are a part of our modern world. I think it’s really important for upcoming generations to understand that. To accept mines, people they need to make the connection between their daily lives and what mines produce.”

“We need to introduce pathway opportunities such as apprenticeship even earlier and help students navigate to programs with the best fit.”

Strategies & Actions – Activities we will implement over the next five years to accomplish goals & targets

1. **Support Industry-Specific Employment Needs** – Continue to develop relevant career and technical education training programs to fill industry gaps and improve recruitment for existing programs. (*Objectives 1, 2*)
 - a. Priority employment gaps include educators, health care professionals, mining workers, telecommunication workers, utility operators, agriculture workers, leisure and hospitality employment, construction workers, and aviation.
 - b. Expand the availability of local training and employment events (including job fairs) for residents, university students, and incoming military families to learn about education, training, and employment opportunities available in FNSB. 📖
 - c. Support implementation of Alaska’s five workforce development plans, including the Maritime Workforce Plan, Teacher Education Plan, Oil & Gas Workforce Plan, Mining Workforce Plan and Health Workforce Plan.
 - d. Build more robust feedback mechanisms in place so that training pipelines are adaptable and flexible to meet the evolving needs of the future.
 - e. Better integrate industry perspectives into UAF courses so students see relevant opportunities outside of academia.
 - f. Support comprehensive child care industry reform to increase the availability and affordability of child care.
 - g. Conduct employer outreach with information on how to recruit and retain workers.
2. **Educational Foundations** – Increase support of quality public education from birth to age 18. (*Objectives 1, 2*)
 - a. Continue to expand science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM) education.
 - b. Expand career and technical pathways programming in middle and high schools.
 - c. Advocate to increase K-12 education funding.
 - d. Increase the teaching of critical soft skills in schools.
 - e. Support art and creative programming in schools.
 - f. Expand early childhood programs and universal pre-K throughout the FNSB and advocate for public funded pre-K program.

- g. Advocate for improved benefits for teachers and public sector workers to improve retention.
- h. Increase one-on-one career counseling with high school seniors.

3. Remove Barriers to Employment – Address barriers to employment. (*Objectives 1, 2*)

- a. Remove barriers for military spouses to obtain occupational licenses, including in health care; this could include establishing a nurse licensure compact. 📖
- b. Coordinate with the Department of Defense (DoD) to supplement existing information sharing with Air Force and Army families before they arrive in the area. 📖
- c. Encourage FNSB-located Job Centers, workforce development program representatives and large employers to participate in military family welcoming programs. 📖
- d. Prior to departure, conduct debrief/departure interviews or focus groups with military families regarding experience with FNSB employment and workforce development. 📖
- e. Expand access to affordable child care services for military households. 📖
- f. Establish a rideshare program to help DoD household members commute to job centers. 📖

Key	★	Priority (TBD)	🔧	Capital Project	📖	Military-related
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Photo courtesy of University of Alaska Fairbanks

Other Relevant Resources

- **Fairbanks North Star Borough School District Strategic Plan.** FNSB School District. December 2019. [View here.](#)
- **Eielson Regional Growth Plan.** Fairbanks North Star Borough. 2018. [View here.](#)
- **UAF Strategic Plan 2027.** University of Alaska Fairbanks. November 2021. [View here.](#)
- **Alaska Workforce Development Plans (includes Health, Maritime, Mining, Educators and Oil & Gas).** University of Alaska. [View here.](#)

Recreation & Entertainment Summary

Strengths *Internal attributes that contribute to success*

Natural Resources & Environment

- Access to outdoor recreation (trails, parks, fishing, hunting, winter sports) and culture of recreation
- Beautiful landscapes and wildlife
- Proximity to protected public lands, parks

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Availability of quality public libraries
- Increasing number of local hospitality businesses (food, drink, lodging)
- Many community events, festivals throughout the year
- Quality and diverse museums that attract visitors and preserve the region's history and heritage

Funding & Markets

- Shopping and supply hub for the surrounding region

Infrastructure

- Downtown Fairbanks is historic and walkable
- Extensive trail network
- Facilities such as Pioneer Park, Carlson Center, Morris Thompson Cultural & Visitor Center

Other

- Traditional arts and crafts of Alaska Native artists

Weaknesses *Internal barriers to success*

Natural Resources & Environment

- Chena River is polluted, waterfront is mostly private land

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Limited chain restaurants and shopping outlets
- Limited retail, dining, and indoor recreation options in the North Pole area

Education & Workforce

- Lack of information for how to recreate outdoors safely

Funding & Markets

- Limited options to purchase Alaska Native arts and crafts
- Sales tax in North Pole (5.5%) can be a disincentive for shopping locally for some residents

Infrastructure

- Dilapidated, vacant buildings downtown
- Lack of a large concert/convention center
- Limited transit to recreation, entertainment destinations
- Poor bike and pedestrian facilities, especially in winter

Other

- Conflicts between logging and recreation/trail users, and between different recreation user groups on forestry trails
- Lack of “middle” recreation options for those who are not doing extreme/high intensity activities
- Limited access for seniors and those with mobility challenges

Opportunities *External forces that contribute to success*

Funding & Markets

- 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

Infrastructure

- Alaska Long Trail
- Resource extraction could create new recreation access

Threats *External forces that could be barriers to success*

Natural Resources & Environment

- Climate change, such as permafrost melting trails and resulting in damages to board walks, erosion
- Conflicts with resource extraction that negatively impact open space/viewsheds and access
- Land use conflicts at recreation and aurora sites

Businesses, Organizations, & Government

- Regulations of recreation, entertainment, and retail businesses, including food trucks, licensing challenges

Funding & Markets

- 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
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

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2016 and 2020 data

Most Valued Aspects of Living in Fairbanks:

- “Artists are supported by the community”
- “Fairbanks is an urban hub with access to shopping”
- “Outdoor spaces with events”
- “Outdoor adventure”
- “Indigenous roots”
- “Overall food quality and options”
- “Military family wants to retire here”
- “Hiking and fishing”
- “Playing in the Chena River”
- “Festivals and the State Fair”
- “The library”
- “Sledding and skiing”
- “A lot of natural space”
- “Activities for kids”



Recreation & Entertainment Objectives – Long term improvements and changes we want to see in five years or more



1. The FNSB's portfolio of year-round recreation and entertainment options continues to grow, contributing to a high quality of life and encouraging FNSB residents to live joyful, healthy lifestyles.
2. Alaskans, military families, and newcomers increasingly choose to relocate to and live in FNSB due to the high quality of life and abundance of activities.

Strategies & Actions – Activities we will implement over the next five years to accomplish goals & targets

- 1. Support Gathering Spaces & Events** – Ensure Fairbanks has the facilities needed to host year-round gatherings and large community events. *(Objectives 1, 2)*
 - a. 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, and promoting development in the park.
 - b. Better promote and connect residents with Tribal events; improved integration between Tribal and community planning.
 - c. Create and expand designated spaces for food trucks and local vendors in summer. 🔑
 - d. Create safe spaces for transient residents to spend time during the day (e.g., day shelter with operator). 🔑

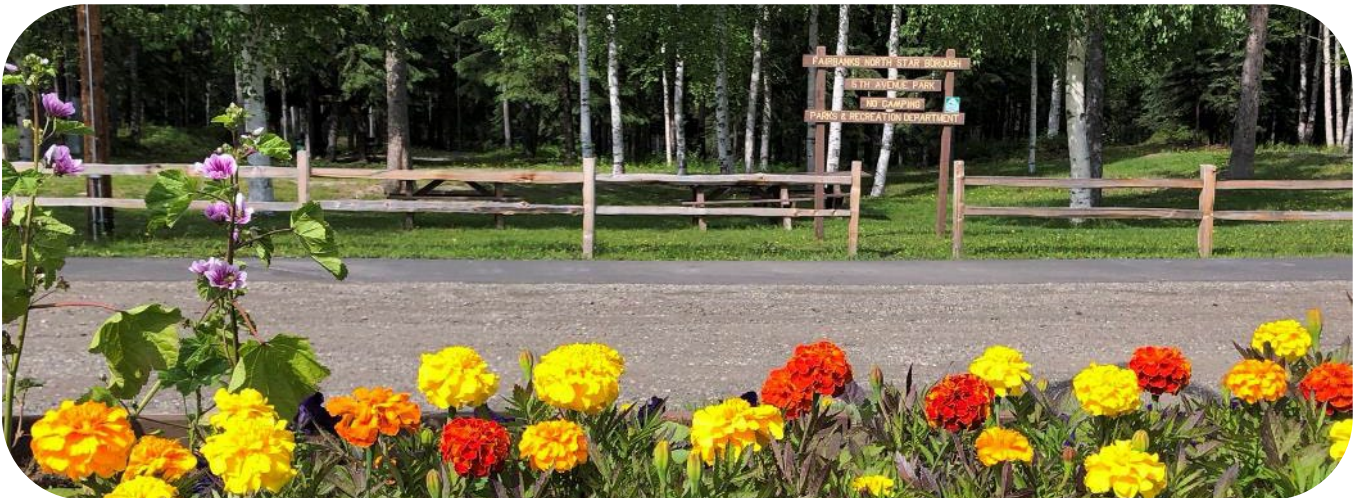
See Visitor Industry summary for related recommendations, including a new Fairbanks Convention and Arts Center in downtown Fairbanks.

- 2. Enhance Outdoor Recreation** – Expand outdoor recreation opportunities that appeal to residents and visitors alike. *(Objectives 1, 2)*
 - a. Maintain and modernize existing FNSB outdoor facilities, including athletic fields, Pioneer Park, and improvements to Chena Lake Recreation Area. 🔑
 - b. Better promote existing events such as Equinox activities, World Eskimo Indian-Olympics, and the Yukon Quest.
 - c. Identify ways to better support the missing middle recreationist (e.g., improved facilities, signage, information, guides). 🔑
 - d. Adopt and implement the Comprehensive Recreational Trails Plan. 🔑
 - e. Improve signage and wayfinding throughout the community, including both online and onsite tools. 🔑
 - f. Create a checklist of landmarks around the community for visitors to “check off,” with QR codes and photo opportunities. 🔑
 - g. Revitalize the bike share program in downtown Fairbanks.

See Visitor Industry summary for related recommendations, including the Alaska Long Trail.

- 3. Expand Indoor Recreation** – Expand indoor recreation and wellness opportunities that appeal to residents and visitors alike. *(Objectives 1, 2)*
 - a. Conduct a conceptual design study for renovation of the Carlson Center, including expanding indoor recreation, fitness, and multipurpose space. 🔑
 - b. Remodel and expand the Noel Wien Public Library and consider expanding operating hours. 🔑
 - c. Maintain and modernize existing indoor recreation facilities, including pools & recreation centers. 🔑
 - d. Complete project scoping and design for the North Star Athletics Complex.
 - e. Create a cultural tourism plan to better integrate and connect visitors and residents with cultural learning and retail opportunities in the community.

4. Enhance Retail – Implement the following quality of life strategies. (<i>Objectives 1, 2</i>)					
a. Continue progress on commercial re-district rezoning efforts in the City of North Pole. 📌 b. Create policies to attract businesses to North Pole, including creating a database of commercial real estate opportunities. 📌 c. Encourage commercial and retail operations located near public recreation spaces that enhance the resident and visitor experience (e.g., equipment and facility rentals, dining, etc.).					
5. Connect with Military – Implement quality of life strategies that support military and incoming households. (<i>Objectives 1, 2</i>)					
a. Increase the dissemination of information to new households to increase awareness of local activities and events. 📌 b. Increase distribution of Explore Fairbanks' list of businesses who offer military discounts. 📌 c. Expand promotion and use of the Volunteer Action Center list of volunteer opportunities in the FNSB for military spouses and civilian residents. 📌 d. Consider providing bus transportation options from EAFB and FWW to North Pole and Fairbanks during large events and festivals to increase military engagement in community activities. 📌 e. Develop guided programs to introduce newcomers to Alaska's outdoor recreation opportunities. 📌 f. Investigate options for developing a community center in the Greater North Pole area. 📌 📌 g. Establish a military community liaison to coordinate information-sharing with EAFB and FWW personnel. 📌					
Key	★	Priority (TBD)	🔧	Capital Project	📌 Military-related



Other Relevant Resources

- **Comprehensive Recreational Trails Plan.** Fairbanks North Star Borough. Est. completion spring 2022. [View here.](#)
- **Pioneer Park Master Plan.** Fairbanks North Star Borough. November 2021. [View here.](#)
- **Feasibility Study & Market Analysis for the Carlson Center Study.** Fairbanks North Star Borough. 2020. [View here.](#)
- **Eielson Regional Growth Plan.** Fairbanks North Star Borough. 2018. [View here.](#)

Other Relevant Planning Efforts & Recommendations

This section contains broad information and recommendations for **land use, housing, environment, utilities, and transportation**. While these items are all needed to support a healthy economy, there are other planning efforts underway that already cover these topics in more depth. To avoid duplication, this CEDS references these related plans and offer broad support for implementation.

Strengths <i>Internal attributes that contribute to success</i>	Weaknesses <i>Internal barriers to success</i>
<p>Land Use & Utilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural gas expansion phases 3-6 • New central recycling center opened in late 2017 • Recent FNSB zoning changes that reduce barriers for small businesses, including recent changes to cannabis zoning policies • The FNSB has community-driven land use plans guiding land use decisions and development <p>Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FNSB has high rates of home ownership • Increased military presence – infrastructure, personnel, and their families • Local builders, developers, surveyors are gaining experience, increasing collaboration, and strategically building in phases to meet housing need • Local, regional, state, and federal partners have been collaborating closely to find solutions to shared challenges such as housing • Skilled local construction labor force • FNSB Multi-Family Housing tax exemption <p>Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aurora’s wood kiln producing dry firewood • Chena River Lakes Flood Control Project • FNSB’s Air Quality Division, the woodstove change out program, and the installation of robust air quality monitoring and education tools <p>Transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alaska Railroad connectivity to other parts of the state and recent expansion efforts; rail car storage • Connected to other parts of Alaska and the contiguous U.S. via roads • Fairbanks is at the confluence of the Chena and Tanana Rivers • Fairbanks International Airport is a growing regional, state, and international hub 	<p>Land Use & Utilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deteriorated properties (e.g., Polaris Building) • Development constraints in certain areas, including extensive wetlands and floodplains • Lack of borough authority in key areas like health and housing limits the tools available to respond to community needs • Lack of land use code enforcement in the past • Limited coordination between developers and utilities • Limited options for recycling • Limited undeveloped land serviced by water, wastewater, and other public infrastructure; high cost of utility expansion • Zoning compliance challenges, especially with flood plain regulations • Low density land use patterns, which can make provision of public services prohibitive • Placement and use of snow dumps • Some subdivisions were created in the 1980s and 1990s without appropriate road access • Lack of understanding/clarity of FNSB Zoning Code <p>Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appraisal process that does not account for quality and location of build (e.g., energy efficient), access to services (e.g., located within road service area) • Dated housing stock • Potential shortage of affordable and quality housing <p>Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality nonattainment • Groundwater contamination <p>Transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orphan roads with no road maintenance or constructed access • Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is unequipped to manage increase in flight volume at airport control towers as military base activity increases • Harsh winter weather conditions • Improved FNSB transportation planning tools, including a new self-reporting web tool for road problems • Lack of beautification along roadways • Limited public transportation • Low density and long driving distances • Not enough bike paths • Lack of roadside facilities (e.g., rest stops/bathrooms) • Reliance on locally-maintained roads as major alternate transportation routes, such as Eielson Farm Road

Opportunities *External forces that contribute to success*

Land Use & Utilities

- Department of Defense (DoD) resources and funding to support base growth and expansion
- Military Facility Zone designation by the Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Housing

- Military Facility Zone designation by the Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Transportation

- 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
- Electric car charging infrastructure expansion
- Expanding rail service to be year-round, and potential connection with Alberta
- FNSB is well-positioned as a global transportation hub for serving, promoting, and advancing the nation's Arctic interests
- Increased collaboration between neighboring communities (Denali Borough, City of Nenana, Tok)

Threats *External forces that could be barriers to success*

Land Use & Utilities

- Climate change impacts on infrastructure
- Risk of losing participation in the National Flood Insurance Program due to compliance issues

Housing

- High costs of construction supplies
- Ongoing supply chain disruptions due to the pandemic and workforce shortages impacting construction industry

Environment

- Natural hazards such as wildfires and floods
- Ongoing designation as an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) nonattainment area due to air quality, and impacts on new developments

Transportation

- Climate change impacts on infrastructure
- Ongoing designation as an EPA nonattainment area due to air quality, and potential cuts in federal funding
- Ongoing supply chain disruptions due to the pandemic and workforce shortages impacting new construction

Land Use, Housing, & Environment Objectives – *Long term improvements and changes we want to see in five years or more*



1. FNSB has a healthy housing market with enough affordable, quality housing to meet current and anticipated housing needs.



2. Land use planning tools are used to maintain an appropriate balance between protecting freedoms while guiding development and growth.



3. FNSB residents have clean air, land, and water.

Strategies & Actions – Activities we will implement over the next five years to accomplish goals & targets

1. **Construct Appropriate Housing** – Construct quality, affordable housing to meet community needs. (*Objective 1*)
 - a. Conduct housing needs assessment and plans for annual updates.
 - b. Continue to collaborate closely on housing needs for incoming military families; this requires transparent and real-time communications between local, regional, and federal/military partners on current and anticipated needs, gaps, and changes.
 - c. Ensure new housing meets minimum quality requirements, including energy efficiency.
 - d. Strategically plan for road and utility expansions to align with new housing construction plans.
 - e. Establish tax incentives to strategically encourage new housing.

- f. Expand partnerships with Alaska Native Corporations to meet community needs around housing and utilities.
- g. Invest and support new housing developments in appropriate areas, such as on properties already connected to utilities and other infrastructure.

2. Implement Land Use Plans – Implement land use recommendations from regional and subarea plans. *(Objective 2)*

- a. Implement current and planned subareas plans, including the Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan, Fairbanks Downtown Plan, and City of North Pole Comprehensive Strategic Plan.
- b. Improve standards and processes affecting building quality for residential, commercial, and other uses (from Eielson Regional Growth Plan).
- c. Update and improve the FNSB comprehensive land use categories and map (from Eielson Regional Growth Plan).
- d. Improve existing FNSB, borough-wide zoning code, including adding a zoning matrix (from Eielson Regional Growth Plan).
- e. Improve planning tools to respond to natural environmental constraints and opportunities (from Eielson Regional Growth Plan).
- f. Develop an active monitoring process to assess needs and track progress on land use goals (from Eielson Regional Growth Plan).
- g. Increase collaboration and planning partnerships between FNSB and the Cities of Fairbanks and North Pole (from Eielson Regional Growth Plan).

3. Sustain a Healthy Environment – Address air and water quality challenges. *(Objective 3)*

- a. Address water quality issues and expand water lines to residents impacted by water contamination from sulfolane, Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS), and other pollutants.
- b. Continue to take steps to improve air quality with a focus on reducing PM_{2.5}.
- c. Consider long term storage/treatment solutions for hazardous substances, such as PFAS (e.g., landfill).

4. Expand Utilities – Implement improvements to water, wastewater, and solid waste utilities, as identified in the Eielson Regional Growth Plan. *(Objectives 1, 2)*

- a. Integrate planning for land use, transportation, and utilities.
- b. Identify and implement funding strategies for expanding water and wastewater service areas and distribution systems.
- c. Use utility and land use planning to support air quality solutions.

5. Review Land Use Policies – Review FNSB land use policies to ensure they are responsive to industry and community needs. *(Objective 2)*

- a. Establish policies to protect farmland.
- b. Ensure policies are compatible with evolving telecommunication infrastructure demands.
- c. Explore creative strategies to incentivize cleanups instead of just relying on penalties. Examples could be such as technical assistance with cleanup of dilapidated properties, tax incentives, towing assistance for disabled vehicles, etc.
- d. Consider establishing redevelopment incentives downtown.
- e. Identify opportunities to expand stewardship and recreation access on FNSB-owned lands for residents and visitors, including formally protecting trails and constructing public use cabins.

- f. Allow sale of appropriate FNSB lands for private recreational use (e.g., cabins).

Key	★	Priority (TBD)		Capital Project		Military-related
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Other Relevant Resources

- **FNSB Climate Action and Adaptation Plan.** Fairbanks North Star Borough. In progress. [View here.](#)
- **FNSB Land Suitability Analysis.** Fairbanks North Star Borough. In progress.
- **City of Fairbanks Downtown Plan.** Fairbanks North Star Borough. In progress. [View here.](#)
- **FNSB Comprehensive Roads Plan.** Fairbanks North Star Borough. In progress. [View here.](#)
- **Salcha-Badger Road Area Plan.** Fairbanks North Star Borough. 2019. [View here.](#)
- **Eielson Regional Growth Plan.** Fairbanks North Star Borough. 2018. [View here.](#)
- **City of North Pole Strategic Plan.** City of North Pole. 2016. [View here.](#)
- **FNSB Comprehensive Plan.** Fairbanks North Star Borough. 2005. [View here.](#)

Transportation Objectives – 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 – Activities we will implement over the next five years to accomplish goals & targets

- 1. Implement Plans** – Implement recommendations identified in regional transportation plans: *(Objective 1)*
 - a. FNSB Comprehensive Roads Plan
 - b. Eastside Master Plan (airport)
 - c. Terminal Ground Access Study (airport)
 - d. 2045 in Motion long-range Transportation Plan
 - e. Green Streets Plan
 - f. Freight Mobility Plan
 - g. Fairbanks Road/Rail Crossing Reduction/Realignment Plan
 - h. Connect Fairbanks: Non-Motorized Plan
- 2. Expand Transit** – Strategically expand public transit options in FNSB to better meet the needs of residents. *(Objective 1)*
 - a. Increase public transit and carpool options, including service to military bases.
 - b. Offer reduced fare transit options to college students.
 - c. Develop new Transit plan, to include consideration of new routes to better connect user groups with services
- 3. Support Transportation Innovation** – Support efforts to establish Fairbanks as a destination for transportation innovation. Strategy. *(Objective 1)*
 - a. Establish Fairbanks International Airport as an unmanned aircraft system hub.
 - b. Attract businesses to conduct cold weather transportation product testing in FNSB.
 - c. Implement transportation-related strategies to address air quality issues.

- 4. Explore New Connections** – Explore opportunities to build new transportation connections that strategically support development. (*Objective 1*)
- Support Alaska Railroad 18-mile extension so natural gas can be transported by rail.
 - Participate in planning efforts for an Alaska to Alberta connection rail connection.

Key	★	Priority (TBD)		Capital Project		Military-related
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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).** Fairbanks Area Surface Transportation (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.](#)

3. Action Plans

The following priority actions will support implementation of the priority strategies identified in the sector summaries.

The action plans consider existing and anticipated resources and provide direction to FNSB leadership, staff, regional organizations, businesses, and partners. Each action plan includes the following:

Capital Project: Identifies whether the action includes an infrastructure or facility component. This is especially relevant considering the extensive current and anticipated federal funding opportunities available that could support implementation of capital projects.

Lead: The lead organization responsible for the action.

Support: Partners, allies, and other entities that can support implementation.

Example (from Energy action plan)

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
✓	a. Invest in electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure. Learn more about current efforts at the Alaska Energy Authority (AEA)’s Alaska Electric Vehicle Working Group page here .	Alaska Energy Authority	Golden Valley Electric Association, Alaska Electric Vehicle Association, UAF Alaska Center for Energy and Power, FNSB, Fairbanks Climate Action Coalition, state agencies, electric vehicle drivers and industry representatives	EV fast-charging network phase 1: \$1.52 M (Kenai Peninsula to Fairbanks)	Phase 1: Summer 2022

Actions: Near-term steps that organizations, businesses, and partners can take to help move a strategy forward.

Estimated Resources: Estimated costs to implement the action steps over the next five years, when identified.

Target Completion: Estimated year when the action will be complete.

A list of possible funding sources to support implementation will be released in a future appendix.

Agriculture

See Appendix A for a list of acronyms.

Strategy #1: Promote Local – Promote locally grown agriculture products.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Encourage residents to buy local, including expanding the Golden Heart Grown program (FEDC), distribution of the Interior Agriculture Directory, and Buy Alaska (SBDC).	FEDC, SBDC	Interior Alaska Food Network (IAFN), The Grange	TBD	ongoing
	b. Encourage event organizers, restaurants, and schools to increase reliance on locally grown foods.	FEDC	The Grange, Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce, IAFN	TBD	ongoing
	c. Expand education and awareness around local farmer's markets.	Alaska Farm Bureau Fairbanks Chapter (AFB Fairbanks)	FEDC, Explore Fairbanks, Tanana Valley Farmer's Market (TVFM), Alaska Farmer's Market Association (AFMA)	TBD	ongoing
	d. Promote community supported agriculture.	AFB Fairbanks	FEDC, IAFN	TBD	ongoing
	e. Establish farmer's markets on military bases.	TVFM	Alaska Farm Bureau Fairbanks Chapter (AFB Fairbanks), AFMA	TBD	2023
	f. Strengthen social media campaigns around locally grown products, including identifying local influencers.	FEDC	AFB Fairbanks, The Grange, IAFN	TBD	ongoing
	g. Better promote the ability to use SNAP and WIC resources at farmer's markets.	TVFM	Case managers, food banks, AFMA	TBD	2022

Strategy #2: Recruit Workers – Educate, train, and support new farmers and agricultural workers.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Support the establishment of a statewide farming training/certification program.	University of Alaska, Alaska Food Policy Council	AFB Fairbanks, Alaska Association of Agriculture & Natural Resource Educators (AAANRE)	TBD	2026
	b. Advocate for the removal of state-level barriers so volunteer farm workers can be covered by worker's compensation insurance.	Alaska Food Policy Council	AFB Fairbanks, IAFN	TBD	2023
	c. Increase agricultural education at all levels of schooling, including hands-on learning experiences and adding high school coursework on farming, canning, and preserving.	UAF Cooperative Extension	Alaska Future Farmers Association (Alaska FFA), Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District, FNSB School District	TBD	Ongoing
	d. Add an agricultural certification program to UAF.	UAF	IAFN, Alaska FFA, AAANRE	TBD	2026

Strategy #3: Land Policies – Establish and implement land use policies that protect farmland.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Put agricultural lands into agricultural trust lands.	Alaska Farmland Trust	Interior Alaska Land Trust	Varies	Ongoing
	b. Designate new agricultural areas and prepare land sales of state land for agricultural uses.	State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources	FNSB	TBD	Ongoing

Strategy #4: Support Farmers – Existing and new farmers in Interior Alaska have the resources, workforce support, and tools needed to succeed and grow.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Better connect farmers to existing trainings and resources.	Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District	UAF Cooperative Extension, AFB Fairbanks, IAFN, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service	TBD	Ongoing
	b. Increase access to start-up funds and financial support, including funding for basic infrastructure and start up equipment, establish tax exemptions, and offer forgivable loans.	Alaska Farm Bureau	Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR), USDA Alaska Farm Service Agency, Alaska Rural Rehabilitation Corporation	TBD	Ongoing
✓	c. Support infrastructure, programming, and funding recommendations identified in the 2020 Fairbanks Experiment Farm Long-Range Plan.	UAF Cooperative Extension	AFB Fairbanks, IAFN	TBD	Varies
	d. Support emerging industries such as hemp.	Alaska Food Policy Council	AFB Fairbanks, IAFN	TBD	Ongoing
	e. Improve collaboration between farmers, retailers, and policy makers to cross-pollinate ideas and make progress on shared objectives.	Alaska Food Policy Council	AFB Fairbanks, IAFN	TBD	Ongoing
	f. Expand 4H and Future Farmers of America programs in FNSB and connect growers with landowners.	UAF Cooperative Extension	AIFN, Alaska FFA, AAANRE	TBD	Ongoing
	g. Advocate for changes in State statutes to support farming land/uses.	Alaska Food Policy Council	FNSB	TBD	Ongoing
	h. Connect local meat/fish processors waste products with local farmers to produce local nutrients on farms.	TBD		TBD	Ongoing

Strategy #5: Food Security – Increase local food storage capacity.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
✓	a. Establish a community cooperative processing center and storage facility.	TBD	Peony growers	TBD	TBD
✓	b. Support the creation of food forests.	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

Energy

See Appendix A for a list of acronyms.

Strategy #1: Expand Natural Gas – Secure and implement more low-cost natural gas in the Interior.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
✓	a. Support continued efforts for homeowners to convert their homes to accept natural gas, including funding FNSB's Oil to Gas Conversion Program.	FNSB	Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA)	\$3.2 million	2023
✓	b. Increase liquefaction capacity.	IGU	TBD	TBD	2026
✓	c. Implement Phase 2 of the Interior Gas Utility buildout.	IGU	TBD	TBD	TBD
✓	d. Continue to build out main line extensions (e.g., Pearl Creek); include natural gas in new subdivisions.	IGU	FNSB, developers	~\$1 million annually	Ongoing
✓	e. Support long-term planning for a natural gas pipeline, with Fairbanks connector.	Alaska Gasline Development Corporation	AIDEA, IGU	TBD	TBD

Strategy #2: Energy Innovation – Promote Interior Alaska as a site for energy innovation.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
✓	a. Support safe installation of the Air Force's first microreactor on Eielson Air Force Base. Learn more here .	DoD	GVEA, Department of Energy, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission	TBD	Select vendor 2022, begin construction 2025, begin operations 2027
✓	b. Support microgrid research and development.	UAF Alaska Center for Energy and Power (ACEP)	National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), Renewable Energy Alaska Project (REAP); Intelligent Energy Systems; UA Institute for Social & Economic Research (ISER)	Varies	Ongoing
✓	c. Support other pilot projects that advance and test new energy technologies in the Interior.	NREL/CCHRC	REAP, GVEA, UAF Arctic Energy Office, DoD, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC), entrepreneurs, UAF ACEP	Varies	Varies
✓	d. Expand weatherization and energy efficiency initiatives.	NREL/CCHRC	Fairbanks Climate Action Coalition (FCAC), Solarize Fairbanks, Interior	Varies	Ongoing

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
			Weatherization, REAP, ANTHC, Interior Regional Housing Authority (IRHA), Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC), UAF ACEP		
✓	e. Invest in electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure. Learn more about current efforts at the Alaska Energy Authority (AEA)'s Alaska Electric Vehicle Working Group page here .	AEA	GVEA, Alaska Electric Vehicle Association, UAF ACEP, FNSB, FCAC, state agencies, electric vehicle drivers and industry representatives	EV fast-charging network phase 1: \$1.52 M (Kenai Peninsula to Fairbanks)	Phase 1: Summer 2022
✓	f. Explore and invest in carbon capture/reduction technologies, including the Fairbanks Carbon Reduction Fund .	UAF ACEP, UAF Alaska Center for Climate Assessment & Policy (ACCAP)	FCAC, Alaska Native Corporations, Alaska Village Corporations	Varies	Ongoing
	g. Support research and implementation of value-added uses of energy sources, such as for coal and waste heat.	UAF ACEP	REAP, GVEA, UAF Arctic Energy Office, DoD, ANTHC, entrepreneurs, UAF ACEP, NREL/CCHRC	Varies	Ongoing

Strategy #3: Resilient Power Grid – Collaborate with other Railbelt utilities to achieve a resilient, efficient power grid that can better integrate future renewable energy sources for power generation.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
✓	a. Add an additional 45-50 MW of battery storage to help regulate variable power load from renewables and create backup power during outages/disruptions.	GVEA	AEA	\$70-\$75 million	2025
✓	b. Upgrade existing Railbelt intertie from 138 kV to 230 kV.	Railbelt utilities	AEA, Denali Commission	\$170 million	TBD
✓	c. Complete planning for and construct the Roadbelt intertie, a 230kV line connecting Healy to Nikiski. (see the Denali Commission Roadbelt Intertie Project Report here for more information).	Roadbelt Electric Reliability Organization (ERO)	AEA, utility providers, municipalities, Denali Commission, Tribes	\$1 billion (\$566 M for Sutton to Delta Junction)	2025
✓	d. Identify opportunities to collaborate with other sectors (e.g., shared utility easements with telecommunications).	GVEA	IGU, broadband providers, permitting departments of state and federal agencies, Denali Commission	Varies	Ongoing

Strategy #4: Plan for Renewables – Integrate renewables into Interior Alaska’s long-range energy portfolio.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
✓	a. Support geothermal projects in areas with geothermal potential (e.g., Chena Hot Springs).	Chena Hot Springs	REAP, AEA, FCAC	Varies	Ongoing
✓	b. Support wind farms in Interior Alaska.	GVEA	FCAC, REAP, AEA, UAF ACEP	Varies	Ongoing
✓	c. Collaborate with other Railbelt utilities to develop renewable energy projects (e.g., Bradley Lake Hydroelectric Project) that can reliably meet shared energy needs, reduce carbon output, and lower energy costs.	GVEA	FCAC, Other Railbelt utilities	Varies	Ongoing
✓	d. Continue to expand and encourage participation in GVEA’s SNAP Plus net metering system, where members can install renewable generation that is connected to the grid.	GVEA	Solarize Fairbanks/ FCAC, FNSB	Varies	Ongoing

Strategy #5: Increase Collaboration – Improve collaboration between Interior Alaska energy stakeholders.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Convene utility providers and local policymakers to develop an Interior Alaska Energy Plan.	AEA	Utilities, FNSB, UAF, DoD, FEDC, FCAC	TBD	2023
	b. Encourage greater Department of Defense participation in regional energy planning.	FNSB, FEDC	DoD	n/a	Ongoing
	c. Encourage regional stakeholder participation in the Alaska Nuclear Energy Working Group.				
	d. Continue to participate in conversations with regional Railbelt partners such as the Roadbelt Electric Reliability Organization, Bradley Lake Management Committee, and Railbelt Utility Managers groups.	GVEA	AEA	Varies	Ongoing
	e. Work with education and workforce development providers to expand outreach about and availability of training opportunities to support the needs of the energy sector.	UAF	Alaska Works Partnership, Alaska Job Center Network, Doyon Foundation, FNSB School District	Varies	Ongoing

Forestry Action Plan

See Appendix A for a list of acronyms.

Strategy #1: Collaborative Management – Forestry stakeholders collaborate on management decisions.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Ensure that forest management activities are not excluded from the array of permitted uses within FNSB boundaries, including state forests.	FNSB	Alaska Division of Forestry, TVSF Citizens Advisory Committee	n/a	Ongoing
	b. Encourage collaboration between user groups, including involving recreation user groups when planning logging access roads.	Alaska Division of Forestry	TVSF Citizens Advisory Committee, Alaska Division of Forestry	n/a	Ongoing
	c. Support continuation of existing partnerships including the Tanana Valley State Forest (TVSF) Citizens Advisory Committee.	Alaska Division of Forestry	TVSF Citizens Advisory Committee	n/a	Ongoing
	d. Complete the update to the TVSF Management Plan. Learn more here .	Alaska Division of Forestry	TVSF Citizens Advisory Committee, FNSB, Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC), Doyon	unknown	Fall 2022
	e. Coordinate management of fire risk.	Alaska Division of Forestry	FNSB, TCC, Doyon	n/a	Ongoing
	f. Support protection efforts such as educating visitors on Leave No Trace principles.	Alaska Division of Forestry	Explore Fairbanks, TVSF Citizens Advisory Committee, TCC	n/a	Ongoing
	g. Incorporate traditional ecological knowledge into management decisions.	Alaska Division of Forestry	TVSF Citizens Advisory Committee, TCC	n/a	Ongoing
	h. Encourage neighborhood-clustered development that provides open spaces for recreation, agriculture, fire protection, and efficient provision of services.	FNSB	Alaska Division of Forestry	n/a	Ongoing
	i. Use FNSB platting authority to develop a rural road platting process to create legal emergency access to remote areas and subdivisions in FNSB.	FNSB		n/a	Ongoing

Strategy #2: Biomass – Manage local forests to maximize productivity of local biomass for heating and construction materials and to reduce threats from wildfires.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Encourage Interior Alaska communities to explore wood-fired heat by conducting pre-feasibility studies, with	Alaska Wood Energy Development Task Group	Municipalities, Tribes, Department of Energy (DOE)	Varies	Ongoing

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	support from the Alaska Wood Energy Development Task Group.				
✓	b. Support communities with wood-fired heating systems with ongoing training and professional development for operators.	Alaska Wood Energy Development Task Group	UAF, ANTHC, TCC, Doyon, Village Corporations	Varies	Ongoing
	c. Proactively identify areas with high wildfire risk and support strategic fuel removal.	Alaska Division of Forestry	TCC, Doyon, Village Corporations	Varies	Ongoing
	d. Increase biomass education and awareness.	Alaska Wood Energy Development Task Group	FEDC, Alaska Division of Forestry	Varies	Ongoing
	e. Update the FNSB Community Wildlife Protection Program.	FNSB	TBD	TBD	TBD

Strategy #3: Local Products – Develop and promote local wood products (e.g., furniture manufacturing and forest products).

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Update the 2007 publication, “New Growth: Prospectus for Forest Products Industry of Interior Alaska,” summarizing the region’s timber potential and sale details for potential investors.	FEDC	Alaska Division of Forestry, Alaska Resource Development Council	TBD	TBD
	b. Create a Buy Local wood program.	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
	c. Develop a wood grading system for local materials.	CCHRC	TBD	TBD	TBD
✓	d. Increase food forests and commercial research into forest resources.	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
✓	e. Increase sawmills in the region by providing education and training for sawmill operators, creation of a directory of local sawmills, and the establishment of a community sawmill.	TBD	Alaska Resource Development Council, FEDC	TBD	TBD
	f. Review liability insurance policies and facilitate a FNSB timber sale.	FNSB		TBD	TBD

Health Care Action Plan

See Appendix A for a list of acronyms.

Strategy #1: Community Health – Implement the goals and strategies identified in the 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and the 2020-2022 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Mental Health: Improve access to and sustainability of services and housing for individuals with mental health needs in order to support safe, stable living in the least restrictive environment.	Foundation Health Partners	Alaska Division of Public Health, Veterans Administration (VA), Assisted Living Facilities, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA), UAF, TCC, Fairbanks Native Association (FNA), Fairbanks Community Mental Health Services (FCMHS), other mental health service providers	Varies	Ongoing
	b. Senior Care: Ensure our rapidly growing senior-age population is able to live safely in the least restrictive environments for as long as possible.	Foundation Health Partners	North Star Council on Aging, Alaska Division of Public Health, FNSB, AMHTA, TCC	Varies	Ongoing
	c. Adverse Childhood Experiences/Trauma: Reduce numbers of Interior Alaskans experiencing preventable trauma, and increase numbers of Interior Alaskans with protective factors.	Foundation Health Partners	Alaska Division of Public Health, TCC, FNSB School District, Alaska Office of Children’s Services, Family Centered Services of Alaska	Varies	Ongoing
	d. Physical Health/Healthy Behaviors: Reduce the incidence and long-term impacts of chronic health conditions such as cardiovascular disease, stroke, cancer, and diabetes.	Foundation Health Partners	Alaska Division of Public Health, TCC, Interior Community Health Center, DoD, American Lung Association of Alaska	Varies	Ongoing
	e. COVID-19: Interior Alaska prepared to respond to outbreaks of the COVID-19 virus and other emergencies.	Foundation Health Partners	Alaska Division of Public Health, FNSB, TCC, other health care providers	Varies	Ongoing

Strategy #2: Collaboration – Convene health care providers on a regular basis to identify shared priorities.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Maintain joint planning and cooperation among military and civilian health planners and health and social service providers serving the region. Consider conducting a joint assessment of health needs and resources on a regular basis.	Foundation Health Partners	FEDC, TCC, DoD, other health care providers	Varies	Ongoing
	b. Implement the Open Minds service model to serve consumers with chronic and complex conditions.	UAF	Foundation Health Partners, TCC, other health care providers	TBD	TBD
	c. Create shared data collection and tracking tools to identify workforce and specialty needs/gaps.	TBD	Foundation Health Partners, TCC, DoD, FEDC	Varies	Ongoing
	d. Create a shared recruitment and retainment plan to attract health care workers to FNSB.	TBD	Foundation Health Partners, TCC, DoD, FEDC	Varies	Ongoing

Strategy #3: Filling the Gaps – Identify and address gaps in specialty care.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Address and recruit for known gaps in medical specialty care (Otolaryngology and potentially orthopedics), behavioral health services, geriatric specialties, dermatology.	Foundation Health Partners, TCC, DoD	Health care providers	TBD	Ongoing
	b. Reopen the dental hygiene program at UAA.	UAA	Alaska Dental Society	TBD	TBD
	c. Expand and improve the RN program statewide.	UAA	Health care providers	TBD	TBD
	d. Establish a LPN program at UAF.	UAF	Health care providers	TBD	TBD
	e. Increase the availability of senior and elder services, especially for dementia-related disease; advocate for improved reimbursement options to provide senior care.	Foundation Health Partners	North Star Council on Aging, Alaska Division of Public Health, FNSB, AMHTA, TCC, VA	TBD	Ongoing
	f. Expand in-home nursing care options, including CNAs.	Foundation Health Partners	North Star Council on Aging, Alaska Division of Public Health, FNSB, TCC	TBD	Ongoing
	g. Expand 24/7 outpatient care.			TBD	Ongoing
	h. Increase secondary school career paths in health care fields.	FNSB School District	Foundation Health Partners, TCC, UAF	TBD	Ongoing
	i. Advocate for Medicare and Medicaid revisions, including price transparency and reimbursable rates.	TBD		TBD	Ongoing

Strategy #4: Healthy Families – Support households moving to our community by ensuring there is access to high quality of life in the FNSB community.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Ensure adequate availability of family support services to build on strengths of military families and mitigate risks.	DoD	Foundation Health Partners	TBD	Ongoing
	b. Recruit and retain mental health clinicians and behavioral health providers.	Foundation Health Partners	Alaska Division of Public Health, VA, AMHTA, UAF, TCC, FNA, FCMHS, other mental and behavioral health service providers	Varies	Ongoing
	c. Implement recommendations identified in the Fort Wainwright Behavioral Health Epidemiological Consultation (EPICON) to improve quality of life in the community.	DoD	Foundation Health Partners, Alaska Division of Public Health, VA, AMHTA, UAF, TCC, FNA, FCMHS, other mental and behavioral health service providers	TBD	TBD

Mining

See Appendix A for a list of acronyms.

Strategy #1: Workforce Development – Create and maintain a highly trained workforce that supports mining and geology needs across the spectrum, from exploration through permitting and production.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Create natural resources curriculum in public schools and universities.	Alaska Resource Education	FNSB School District, UAF	Varies	Ongoing
	b. Support and expand mining and geology related degree programs in Alaska, including expanding the UAF Mining and Geologic Engineering program.	UAF	Mining companies	Varies	Ongoing
	c. Expand vocational training programs that address workforce needs, such as millwright education and internships, through public private partnerships.	Mining and Petroleum Training Service	Hutchinson High School, Alaska MEP, Alaska Works Partnership, Doyon, UAF	Varies	Ongoing
	d. Expand the availability of commercial driver's license training and licensing.	Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF)	TBD	TBD	TBD
	e. Increase awareness of career opportunities and job skill requirements in the mining industry, including opportunities for professional growth and advancement.	Alaska Resource Education	Alaska Works Partnership, Alaska Job Center Network, Doyon, Doyon Foundation, FNSB School District	Varies	Ongoing

Strategy #2: Increase Production – Support responsible exploration, permitting, remediation, and restoration for potential new mines in Interior Alaska.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
✓	a. Support exploration and permitting phases for large projects in Interior Alaska.	Mining companies	FNSB	Varies	Varies
✓	b. Address potential transportation concerns associated with the Tetlin (Manh Choc) Project.	Cantango Ore, DOT&PF	FNSB, DNR	TBD	TBD
	c. Encourage robust public outreach and opportunities for public input during permitting phases.	DNR	Mining companies, FNSB, Doyon	Varies	Varies
✓	d. Perform cost/benefit analysis for expansion of transportation network to access sites in the exploration phase.	DOT&PF, Alaska Railroad, DNR	Mining companies	Varies	Varies

Strategy #3: Fair Policies – Ensure local, regional, and state policies balance environmental, economic, and community needs while supporting a competitive environment for exploration and investment.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Review regional and state taxation policies to ensure mining is taxed at rates that benefit communities without placing an uneven burden on the industry, and that creates stability and certainty for mining investors.	Alaska Department of Revenue, FNSB	ISER	TBD	TBD
	b. Encourage local, state, and federal agencies to create and follow consistent, predictable timelines for project permitting.	DNR, FNSB		Varies	Varies
	c. Ensure adequate environmental protections and regulations are in place and consistently followed, including mining reclamation.	DNR, FNSB	Environmental organizations	Varies	Varies
	d. Use land use planning tools to mitigate conflict.	FNSB		Varies	Ongoing
	e. Update FNSB Comprehensive Plan for mining and actively notice non-compatible use.	FNSB		TBD	TBD

Strategy #4: Outreach – Increase communications and education with the public on modern mining practices and implement long-term engagement with communities around active and potential deposits.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Increase public education on modern mining and the safety measures that are taken.	Mining companies		Varies	Ongoing
	b. Launch a public relations campaign around how minerals (including rare earth minerals) are required to manufacture essentials such as smart phones, renewables, and electric vehicles.	U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Alaska Mining Association		TBD	TBD
	c. Educate mining operators on the benefits of engagement beyond the permitting phase.	FEDC, Alaska Mining Association		Varies	Ongoing
	d. Increase tours to active mines.	Mining companies		Varies	Ongoing

Research & Innovation

See Appendix A for a list of acronyms.

Strategy #1: Enhance Research Institutions – Position UAF and other Interior Alaska institutions as global leaders in research and innovation.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
✓	a. Achieve Tier 1 Research University status for UAF.	UAF		TBD	2026
	b. Establish Fairbanks International Airport as an unmanned aircraft system hub.	DOT&PF	UAF, DoD	TBD	TBD
	c. Leverage the collaboration between CCHRC and NREL to further grow renewable energy research and energy conservation facilities and programs; use as a model for other partnerships.	CCHRC, NREL	UAF	Varies	Ongoing
	d. Identify sector needs and create workforce pipelines to fill needed “middle ground” research roles, including the vocational and trade skills needed to support research projects.	UAF	Alaska Job Center Network, industry partners	Varies	Ongoing
	e. Better retain UAF students in the community after graduation.	UAF	Alaska Job Center Network, unions	Varies	Ongoing

Strategy #2: Expand Research and Development – Celebrate, promote, and expand research efforts that support economic development, resiliency, and quality of life in Alaska communities.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
✓	a. Research of agricultural and mariculture technologies and harvesting potential.	UAF	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Southeast Conference, coastal communities, IAFN, Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District	Varies	Ongoing
✓	b. Research aimed at climate change documentation, adaptation, and carbon capture/ storage.	UAF	NREL, REAP; FCAC, ANTHC, DoD	Varies	Ongoing
✓	c. Research energy solutions including renewable energy technologies, microgrids, nuclear, energy efficiency.	NREL	REAP, GVEA, UAF, DoD, ANTHC, FCAC, Solarize Fairbanks, GVEA, AEA	Varies	Ongoing
✓	d. Military-relevant research, including cold weather testing, unmanned aircraft systems, satellite remote sensing, aerospace, natural hazards, and Arctic-relevant topics like infrastructure, emergency response, transportation.	DoD	UAF, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), state agencies	Varies	Ongoing

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
✓	e. Biomedical and public health research efforts such as the One Health concept.	UAF	Foundation Health Partners, DoD, TCC, Alaska Division of Public Health	Varies	Ongoing
✓	f. Geologic and mineral research.	UAF	DNR, Alaska Mining Association, mining companies, USGS	Varies	Ongoing
✓	g. Research that identifies solutions to meet Alaska's unique housing needs including design techniques, water-sewer improvements, and increasing utilization of local materials.	CCHRC	UAF, ANTHC, TCC, IRHA	Varies	Ongoing
✓	h. Fisheries and oceans research that supports coastal communities and ocean-based economic activities.	UAF	NOAA, Southeast Conference, coastal communities, fish harvesting and processing companies, community development quota organizations, Alaska Marine Conservation Council	Varies	Ongoing
✓	i. Develop an Arctic Emergency Services Center of Excellence.	UAF	FAA, BLM Alaska Fire Service, Alaska Division of Forestry	TBD	TBD

Strategy #3: Support Entrepreneurs – Assist innovators in building on their discoveries and pivoting into private sector and business opportunities.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Promote and expand Center ICE's new Innovation Accelerator program and Students2Startups internship program.	UAF	SBDC, FEDC	TBD	TBD
✓	b. Create a dedicated community space for early-stage innovators to collaborate and share resources.	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
	c. Establish network of entrepreneurial mentors who can connect with new entrepreneurs.	UAF Center ICE	SBDC, FEDC	TBD	TBD
	d. Expand networking and engagement between entrepreneurs, Center ICE, and other relevant programs.	UAF Center ICE	SBDC, FEDC	TBD	TBD

Strategy #4: Build Community Partnerships – Engage communities and Tribes as critical partners in research efforts.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Collaborate with Tribes to elevate the role of traditional ecological knowledge in research efforts.	UAF	Tribes, Regional Corporations, state and federal agencies	Varies	Ongoing
	b. Support greater community participation and diverse local hire in research efforts and ensure community-based research is communicated back to communities in	UAF		Varies	Ongoing

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	stakeholders in accessible and usable formats, including the potential creation of a database of UAF research projects and outcomes.				
	c. Involve communities in the design phases when crafting research proposals.	UAF	Tribes and Tribal organizations, municipalities	Varies	Ongoing
	d. Create a research communications strategy for better reporting and updating the community on research achievements, priorities, and projects, and to solicit industry research needs.	UAF	FEDC, DoD, FNSB	TBD	TBD
	e. Actively address the lack of diversity in the research field and identify strategies for improvement.	UAF	Fairbanks Diversity Council	Varies	Ongoing

Visitor Industry

See Appendix A for a list of acronyms.

Strategy #1: Coordinated Marketing/Planning – Fund destination marketing and planning efforts.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Promote Fairbanks as an in-state destination for Alaskans.	Explore Fairbanks	ATIA	TBD	Varies
	b. Promote Interior Alaska as a road trip destination for Canadians (currently 10% of visitors), and Lower 48 visitors.	Explore Fairbanks	ATIA	TBD	Varies
	c. Collaborate with neighboring destinations (Denali Borough, Nenana, Tok) on marketing.	Explore Fairbanks	Denali Chamber of Commerce, Alaska Public Lands Information Centers, Interior Trails & Parks Foundation, Nenana Native Council North Pole Chamber of Commerce, Tok Chamber of Commerce	Varies	Varies
	d. Advocate to ATIA to conduct the AVSP annually and better capture winter visitation trends.	ATIA	Explore Fairbanks	TBD	Annual
	e. Create a local data collection strategy to gain insight about visitor trends.	Explore Fairbanks		TBD	TBD
	f. Conduct visitor capacity planning to determine realistic targets for future visitation based on local resources and to ensure visitors enjoy quality visits without negative impacts to local quality of life or the environment.	Explore Fairbanks	FNSB	TBD	TBD

Strategy #2: Top-Ranked Meeting Hub – Develop a world class convention and arts center in the FNSB.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
✓	a. Construct a convention and arts center.	Explore Fairbanks	FNSB, Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce, Fairbanks Arts Association	TBD	TBD
✓	b. Maintain the Carlson Center as a community event space.	FNSB	Explore Fairbanks, Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce	TBD	Ongoing

Strategy #3: International Destination – Promote Interior Alaska as an international destination for Arctic and aurora tourism.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Create a collective marketing strategy for aurora viewing, including promotion in international markets.	Explore Fairbanks	ATIA	TBD	Ongoing
	b. Promote summer solstice travel.	Explore Fairbanks	ATIA	TBD	Ongoing
	c. Work with neighboring regions to promote Arctic tourism.	Explore Fairbanks	North Slope Borough, Tundra Tours, Ukpeagvik Iñupiat Corporation, Simon Paneak Memorial Museum, Inuit Circumpolar Council	Varies	Ongoing
	d. Identify long-term placement for Ice Alaska venue.	Ice Alaska	Explore Fairbanks	TBD	TBD

Strategy #4: Better Access – Advocate for reliable, regularly scheduled transportation services to Fairbanks.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
✓	a. Increase rail service in winter months.	Alaska Railroad	Explore Fairbanks	TBD	TBD
	b. Support long-term rail connectivity to the Lower 48. Learn more here .	Alberta Railway Development Corporation	Alaska Railroad	\$17 billion (\$5.5 billion in Alaska)	TBD
	c. Expand cooperative marketing programs with airlines to gain access to new visitor markets.	Explore Fairbanks	Airlines, ATIA	Varies	Ongoing
	d. Expand flight options in winter.	Explore Fairbanks	Airlines, ATIA	Varies	Ongoing
	e. Increase transportation options to destinations near Fairbanks (e.g., Denali National Park).	Explore Fairbanks	Denali Chamber of Commerce, Tok Chamber of Commerce, Alaska Railroad, transportation providers	TBD	Ongoing

Strategy #5: Recreation Opportunities – Expand indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities that appeal to residents and visitors alike.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
✓	a. Complete and implement the FNSB Recreational Trails Plan.	FNSB	Interior Trails & Parks Foundation, Alaska Trails	TBD	Plan to be completed in 2022
✓	b. Support establishment of the Alaska Long Trail. Learn more here .	Alaska Trails, Long Trail Coalition	Interior Trails & Parks Foundation, Explore Fairbanks, state and federal agencies, landowners	\$13.2 million for phase 1	TBD

Strategy #6: Quality Infrastructure & Effective Policies – Implement infrastructure and policy recommendations from regional plans that help create livable, vibrant communities and destinations.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Maintain and implement the Chena Riverfront Plan.	FNSB	Downtown Association of Fairbanks	TBD	TBD
	b. Complete and implement the Fairbanks Downtown Plan.	FNSB	Downtown Association of Fairbanks	TBD	TBD

Small Business Development & Entrepreneurship

See Appendix A for a list of acronyms.

Strategy #1: Promote Local – Expand promotion and marketing of local businesses and products.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Encourage Interior Alaska businesses to join BuyAlaska.com.	SBDC	FEDC	TBD	Ongoing
	b. Assist local businesses with trainings on digital and online effectiveness and networking topics.	SBDC	FEDC	TBD	Ongoing
	c. Increase events, advertising, and services associated with the Fairbanks First: Shop Local program to encourage greater business participation; expand military discount participation and promotion through Explore Fairbanks.	FEDC, Explore Fairbanks		TBD	Ongoing
	d. Host a community event during the annual Small Business Saturday activities in November.	SBDC	FEDC, GFCC	TBD	Ongoing

Strategy #2: Build Knowledge & Capacity – Connect business owners and entrepreneurs with information and training.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Promote existing online resources, including the extensive existing library of online workshops from the SBDC and Alaska Manufacturers Extension Partnership (MEP); create a one-stop shop for resources, trainings, and funding.	BDC	FEDC, Alaska MEP, GFCC	TBD	Ongoing
	b. Encourage those interested in starting a small business to connect with advisors at the SBDC, FEDC, and the Job Training Center.	BDC, FEDC	Job Training Center, Center ICE	TBD	Ongoing
	c. Hold trainings and job fairs, including potentially a small business-focused job fair.	FEDC	SBDC	TBD	Ongoing
	d. Assist small businesses with the trademark and copyright process, promotional tools.	SBDC	FEDC, Center ICE	TBD	Ongoing
	e. Partner with the Veterans Administration (VA) to connect veterans with business startup resources.	FEDC	SBDC, VA, DoD	TBD	Ongoing
	f. Offer trainings to entrepreneurs on how to use AirBnB and other online tools to promote activities and tours.	Explore Fairbanks	FEDC, SBDC	TBD	Ongoing

Strategy #3: Address Barriers – Identify and address barriers to small business success.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Address challenges in the child care sector, including advocating for a child care licensing specialist in Fairbanks and for child care providers to use alternative (non-state) services for background checks for new employees.	Thrivalaska	Alaska Child Care Assistance Office, child care providers, state legislators	TBD	Ongoing
	b. Reduce barriers in the marijuana industry, including supporting statewide tax reform, revision of license caps, address banking challenges, and revisiting prohibition of children at retail sites.	Alaska Marijuana Industry Association, Fairbanks Chapter	State legislators, Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce	TBD	Ongoing
	c. Support regulatory updates and licensing improvements to reduce barriers for breweries, bars, and other establishments.	Alaska Cabaret, Hotel, Restaurant and Retailers Association	Local and state legislators, local businesses	TBD	Ongoing

Strategy #4: Fund Entrepreneurs – Connect entrepreneurs with startup funding.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Better promote and utilize the Kiva crowd-funded microfinance program (FEDC as Trustee).	FEDC	SBDC, Center ICE	TBD	Ongoing
	b. Continue to advocate for relief funding for businesses impacted by the pandemic.	FEDC		TBD	Ongoing
	c. Facilitate networking and connections between investors and entrepreneurs (e.g., Alaska Angel Conference).	FEDC, SBDC	Center ICE	TBD	Ongoing

Strategy #5: Identify Opportunities – Promote and encourage small business opportunities for services and goods with high demand and unmet needs in the community.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Identify areas where existing businesses are not meeting community needs and promote small business development opportunities.	UAF, Center ICE	SBDC, FEDC, Alaska MEP	TBD	Ongoing

Communications

See Appendix A for a list of acronyms.

Strategy #1: Collaboration – Encourage partnerships between public, private, and Tribal entities to collaborate on needed infrastructure projects.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Support implementation of the Governor’s Task Force on Broadband recommendations to establish a State Office of Broadband Deployment, a State Broadband Advisory Board, and a Regional Broadband Planning Committee.	Governor’s Task Force on Broadband	State agencies, FNSB, service providers, Tribes	Varies	Varies
	b. Advocate for improved data and maps to ensure data-driven decision making.	FCC	State agencies, FNSB, service providers, Tribes	Varies	Ongoing
	c. Ensure all shareholders can participate in decision making, with resident needs a top priority.	FCC, state agencies	FNSB, service providers, Alaska Tribal Broadband	Varies	Ongoing
	d. Ensure infrastructure planning efforts are transparent with clear lines of accountability.	FCC, FNSB, state agencies	Service providers	Varies	Ongoing

Strategy #2: Installation – Install and sustainably operate and maintain infrastructure that will better serve the region with reliable phone and internet service.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Create a plan to address unserved communities in Alaska.	UAF Alaska Center for Energy and Power, Alaska Energy Authority, Regulatory Commission of Alaska (RCA)	Service providers, Tribes, municipalities, Alaska Tribal Broadband	TBD	TBD
	b. Review land use policies to ensure they are supporting current telecommunication needs.	FNSB, RCA	State and federal agencies, service providers	TBD	TBD
	c. Advocate for streamlined state and federal permitting for broadband projects and reduced permitting fees and collaborate with other utilities to share easements where appropriate (e.g., transmission lines).	RCA	Service providers, Tribes, municipalities State and federal agencies	TBD	TBD
	d. Support leasing of FNSB facilities for small communication system technology (e.g., small cell towers), including school locations.	FNSB		Varies	Varies

Strategy #3: Affordability and Access – Ensure all residents can afford quality internet.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Better promote the Federal Communications Commission’s Emergency Broadband Benefit, which provides discounts on internet service for qualifying households.	FCC	FNSB, service providers	TBD	Ongoing
✓	b. Support communities with ongoing operation and maintenance funding by establishing an Alaska Universal Service Fund and a Federal Grant-Matching Fund, as recommended by the Governor’s Task Force on Broadband.	State of Alaska	Service providers	TBD	TBD
✓	c. Establish community-level broadband access by configuring community facilities with public internet, especially in communities that lack affordable and reliable connectivity to homes.	Municipalities, Tribes, School Districts	Service providers	Varies	Varies
✓	d. Support investment of communication facilities and upgrades in FNSB.	Service providers	FNSB	Varies	Varies

Education and Workforce Development

See Appendix A for a list of acronyms.

Strategy #1: Support Industry-Specific Employment Needs – Continue to develop relevant career and technical education training programs to fill industry gaps and improve recruitment for existing programs.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Develop programs to fill employment gaps in the following industries: educators, health care professionals, mining workers, telecommunication workers, utility operators, agriculture workers, leisure and hospitality employment, construction workers, and aviation.	FNSB School District	UAF, Alaska Works Partnership, Alaska MEP, Foundation Health Partners, TCC, FNA, industry trade groups, Alaska Job Center	Varies	Ongoing
	b. Expand the availability of local training and employment events (including job fairs) for residents, university students, and incoming military families to learn about education, training and employment opportunities available in FNSB.	FEDC, SBDC, UAF, FNSB School District	Eielson Airman & Family Readiness Center (A&FC), Alaska Job Center		
	c. Support implementation of Alaska’s five workforce development plans, including the Maritime Workforce Plan, Teacher Education Plan, Oil & Gas Workforce Plan, Mining Workforce Plan and Health Workforce Plan.	University of Alaska	Varies by sector	Varies	Ongoing

Strategy #2: Educational Foundations – Increase support of quality public education from birth to age 16.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Continue to expand STEAM education.	FNSB School District		TBD	Ongoing
	b. Expand career and technical pathways programming in middle and high schools.	FNSB School District		TBD	Ongoing
	c. Advocate to increase K-12 education funding.	FNSB		TBD	Ongoing
	d. Increase the teaching of critical soft skills in schools.	FNSB School District		TBD	Ongoing
	e. Support art and creative programming in schools.	FNSB School District		TBD	Ongoing
	f. Expand early childhood programs and universal pre-K throughout the FNSB and advocate for publicly funded pre-K education.	FNSB		TBD	Ongoing
	g. Advocate for improved benefits for teachers and public sector workers to improve retention.	State legislators	FNSB School District	TBD	Ongoing

- h.** Increase one-on-one career counseling with high school seniors.

FNSB School District

TBD

Ongoing

Strategy #3: Remove Barriers to Employment – Address barriers to employment (identified in the Eielson Regional Growth Plan).

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Remove barriers for military spouses to obtain occupational licenses, including in health care; this could include establishing a nurse licensure compact.	State legislators	FNSB, FEDC, health care providers	TBD	Ongoing
	b. Coordinate with the DoD to supplement existing information sharing with Air Force and Army families before they arrive in the area.	FEDC	DoD	TBD	Ongoing
	c. Encourage FNSB-located job centers, workforce development program representatives, and large employers to participate in military family welcoming programs.	Alaska Job Network, SBDC, FEDC, UAF	Large employers	TBD	Ongoing
	d. Prior to departure, conduct debrief/departure interviews or focus groups with military families regarding experience with FNSB employment and workforce development.	FEDC		TBD	Ongoing
	e. Expand access to affordable child care services for military households.	DoD	Thrivalaska, Alaska Child Care Assistance Office	TBD	Ongoing
	f. Establish a rideshare program to help DoD household members commute to job centers.	DoD	Transportation providers, FNSB	TBD	TBD

Recreation & Entertainment

See Appendix A for a list of acronyms.

Strategy #1: Support Gathering Spaces & Events – Ensure Fairbanks has the facilities needed to host year-round gatherings and large community events.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
✓	a. 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, and promoting development in the park.	FNSB	TBD	TBD	TBD
	b. Better promote and connect residents with Tribal events; improved integration between Tribal planning and other community planning.	TCC, FEDC, GFCC	Other Tribal organizations, Explore Fairbanks	TBD	TBD
✓	c. Create and expand designated spaces for food trucks and local vendors in summer; potentially in partnership with First Friday.	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
✓	d. Create safe spaces for transient residents to spend time during the day (e.g., day shelter with operator).	Fairbanks Housing and Homeless Coalition	FNSB	TBD	TBD

Strategy #2: Enhance Outdoor Recreation Opportunities – Expand outdoor recreation opportunities that appeal to residents and visitors alike.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
✓	a. Maintain and modernize existing FNSB outdoor facilities, including athletic fields, Pioneer Park, and improvements to Chena Lake Recreation Area.	FNSB	Interior Trails & Parks Foundation	TBD	TBD
	b. Better promote existing events such as Equinox activities, World Eskimo Indian-Olympics, and the Yukon Quest.	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
✓	c. Identify ways to better support the missing middle recreationist through improved facilities, signage, information, guides, gear rentals, and reduced or subsidized fees.	Interior Trails & Parks Foundation	TBD	TBD	TBD
✓	d. Adopt and implement the Comprehensive Recreational Trails Plan.	FNSB	Interior Trails & Parks Foundation	Varies	Ongoing

✓	e.	Improve signage and wayfinding throughout the community, including both online and onsite tools.	Interior Trails & Parks Foundation	FNSB	TBD	TBD
✓	f.	Create a checklist of landmarks around the community for visitors to “check off,” with QR codes and photo opportunities.	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
	g.	Revitalize the bike share program in downtown Fairbanks.	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

Strategy #3: Expand Indoor Recreation Opportunities – Expand indoor recreation opportunities that appeal to residents and visitors alike.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
✓	a.	Remodel and expand the Noel Wien Public Library and consider expanding operating hours.	FNSB	TBD	TBD
✓	b.	Maintain and modernize existing indoor recreation facilities, including pools & recreation centers.	FNSB	TBD	TBD
✓	c.	Construct the North Star Athletics Complex.	FNSB	TBD	TBD
	d.	Create a cultural tourism plan to better integrate and connect visitors and residents with cultural learning and retail opportunities in the community.	TBD	TBD	TBD

Strategy #4: Enhance Retail – Implement the following quality of life strategies, as identified in the Eielson Regional Growth Plan Quality of Life chapter.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
	a. Continue progress on commercial re-district rezoning efforts in the City of North Pole.	FNSB	City of North Pole	Varies	Ongoing
	b. Create policies to attract businesses to North Pole, including creating a database of commercial real estate opportunities.	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
	c. Encourage commercial and retail operations located near public recreation spaces that enhance the resident and visitor experience (e.g., equipment and facility rentals, dining, etc.).	FNSB		Varies	Ongoing

Strategy #5: Connect with Military – Implement the following quality of life strategies, as identified in the Eielson Regional Growth Plan Quality of Life chapter.

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
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	a. Increase the dissemination of information to military families to increase awareness of local activities and events.	FEDC	DoD	TBD	TBD
	b. Increase distribution of Explore Fairbanks' list of businesses who offer military discounts.	Explore Fairbanks	DoD	TBD	TBD
	c. Expand promotion and use of the Volunteer Action Center list of volunteer opportunities in the FNSB for military spouses and civilian residents. View here .	United Way of Tanana Valley	DoD	TBD	TBD
	d. Provide bus transportation options from EAFB and FWW to North Pole and Fairbanks during large events and festivals to increase military engagement in community activities.	FNSB	DoD	TBD	TBD
	e. Develop guided programs to introduce newcomers to Alaska's outdoor recreation opportunities.	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
✓	f. Investigate options for developing a community center in the Greater North Pole area.	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
	g. Establish a military community liaison to coordinate information-sharing with EAFB and FWW personnel.	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD