

# Other Relevant Planning Efforts & Recommendations

This section includes 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 cover these topics in more depth. To avoid duplication, this CEDS does not identify detailed action plans for these focus areas, and instead references these related plans and offers broad support for implementation of identified actions in referenced plans.

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

## 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

## Other 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.



4. 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 objectives & targets.

Icon Key:  Capital Project  Military-related

**1. Construct Appropriate Housing** – Construct quality, energy efficient, affordable housing to meet community needs. (*Objective 1*)

- Conduct housing needs assessment and plans for annual updates.
- 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.
- 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.
- h. Support implementation of the Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness and strategic plans by the Fairbanks Housing and Homeless Coalition and other community partners to prevent and reduce homelessness in Fairbanks.

**2. 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<sub>2.5</sub>.
- c. Consider long term storage/treatment solutions for hazardous substances, such as PFAS (e.g., landfill).

**3. 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, including to underserved areas such as Ballaine Lake.
- c. Use utility and land use planning to support air quality solutions.
- d. Explore options to expand recycling programs/facilities in the community, including composting.

**4. 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 in downtown Fairbanks and other designated areas.
- 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).

**5. 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).

**6. Implement Transportation Plans** – Implement recommendations identified in regional transportation plans: *(Objective 4)*

- 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

**7. Expand Transit** – Strategically expand public transit options in FNSB to better meet the needs of residents. *(Objective 4)*

- a. Increase public transit and carpool options, including service to military bases.
- b. Offer reduced fare transit options to college students, service members, and seniors.
- c. Develop new Transit plan, to include consideration of new routes to better connect user groups with services

**8. Support Transportation Innovation** – Support efforts to establish Fairbanks as a destination for transportation innovation. Strategy. *(Objective 4)*

- 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.

**9. Explore New Transportation Connections** – Explore opportunities to build new transportation connections that strategically support development. *(Objective 4I)*

- a. Support Alaska Railroad extension so natural gas can be transported by rail.
- b. Participate in and support planning efforts for a rail extension to Canada.

## 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.](#)
- **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.](#)
- **Alaska Moves 2050: Alaska Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan & Freight Plan.** Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities. In progress. [View here.](#)
- **Alaska Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.** Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities. March 2022. [View here.](#)
- **Fairbanks Road/Rail Crossing Reduction/Realignment Plan.** FAST Planning. August 2021. [View here.](#)
- **FAST Transportation Improvement Program.** FAST Planning. June 2021. [View here.](#)
- **Connect Fairbanks: Non-Motorized Plan.** FAST Planning. May 2021. [View here.](#)
- **Fairbanks International Airport Terminal Ground Access Study.** Fairbanks International Airport. January 2020. [View here.](#)
- **Eastside Master Plan.** Fairbanks International Airport. August 2019. [View here.](#)
- **Green Streets Plan.** FAST Planning. June 2019. [View here.](#)
- **Freight Mobility Plan.** Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System (now FAST Planning). January 2019. [View here.](#)
- **Interior Alaska Transportation Plan.** Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities. November 2010. [View here.](#)