



Photo: Agnew::Beck Consulting

Yukon-Kuskokwim Region

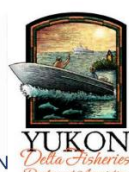
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

2018 – 2023

Prepared for the Yukon-Kuskokwim Region with funding from the United States Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration



CALISTA CORPORATION



Yunt 'Elitnaurviat

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all the Y-K residents, communities, businesses, organizations and other local, state and federal partners who contributed to this 2018-2023 Y-K Region Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Update, including Y-K Region CEDS survey respondents.

Key contributors include:

Y-K Region CEDS Committee

NOTE: consider adding additional CEDS Committee members during CEDS implementation, to potentially include municipal, tribal and village corporation representatives.

Name	Organization	Cluster/Focus	Sub-region
Jennifer Hooper	Association of Village Council Presidents	Subsistence	Regional
Mark Charlie	AVCP Regional Housing Authority	Housing	Regional
Clarence Daniel	AVCP Transportation	Transportation	Regional
Carolyn Kuckertz	Azachorok Incorporated	Multiple	Lower Yukon
Donna Bach	Calista Corporation	Multiple	Regional
Michelle Humphrey	Coastal Villages Region Fund	Fisheries	Coastal, Lower Kuskokwim
Colleen Laroux	Donlin Gold	Mining	Regional
Bob Walsh	GCI	Communications	Regional
Robert Kelley	Grant Aviation	Transportation	Regional
Colin Stewart	Lower Kuskokwim School District	Education	Coastal, Lower Kuskokwim
Mark Leary	Native Village of Napaimute	Timber	Middle Kuskokwim
Natalie Hanson	Nuvista	Energy	Regional
William Naneng	Sea Lion Corporation	Multiple	Coastal
Jon Cochrane	Wells Fargo	Finance	Regional
Jennifer Williams	Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association	Fisheries	Lower Yukon (partial)
Dan Winkelman	Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation	Health Care	Regional
Jeremy Osborne	Yuut Elitnaurviat	Workforce Development	Regional

Regional Partners Core Planning Group

- Vivian Korthuis, Association of Village Council Presidents
- Brent Latham, Association of Village Council Presidents
- Roberta Charles, Association of Village Council Presidents
- Donna Bach, Calista Corporation
- Jennifer Williams, Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association

- Jeremy Osborne, Yuut Elitnaurviat
- Michelle Humphrey, Coastal Villages Region Fund
- Mitchell Forbes, Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation
- Peter Evon, formerly AVCP Regional Housing Authority (now Orutsaramiut Native Council)

The U.S. Economic Development Administration

- Shirley Kelly
- Bill O'Neil

2018 Y-K Economic Summit

- Y-K Economic Summit participants, presenters and panelists
- Location host: Yupiit Piciryarait Cultural Center
- Summit sponsors: GCI, Alaska Commercial Company, Donlin Gold, Grant Aviation, Ravn Alaska



The CEDS was developed by Y-K regional partners, communities, tribes, businesses and residents, with the assistance of Agnew::Beck Consulting.

List of Acronyms

A+P	Airframe and power plant
ADF+G	Alaska Department of Fish and Game
AEA	Alaska Energy Authority
AHFC	Alaska Housing Finance Corporation
AIDEA	Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority
AVCP	Association of Village Council Presidents
ANSEP	Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program
ANTHC	Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
AVCP RHA	Association of Village Council Presidents Regional Housing Authority
AVEC	Alaska Village Electric Cooperative
AVTEC	Alaska Vocational Technical Center
BBNA	Bristol Bay Native Association
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CDQ	Community Development Quota
CEDS	Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
CEMAI	Calista Energy Management Assistance Initiative
CVRF	Coastal Villages Region Fund
DCCED	Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
DOE	U.S. Department of Energy
DOLWD	Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development
DOT+PF	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
EDA	Economic Development Administration
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
GED	General education diplomas
IGAP	Indian Environmental General Assistance Program
IRS	Internal Revenue Service
IRT	Innovation Readiness & Training
LEO	Local Environmental Observer (ANTHC program)
LNG	Liquefied natural gas
MSA	Middle School Academy (ANSEP program)
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
PCE	Power Cost Equalization
PFD	Permanent Fund Dividend
RHA	Regional Housing Authority
STEM	science, technology, engineering and math
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
TERO	Tribal Employment Rights Ordinances
TIGER	Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (federal grant opportunity)
UAF	University of Alaska Fairbanks
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture

USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
VPSO	Village Public Safety Officer
YDFDA	Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association
YE	Yuut Elitnaurviat
Y-K	Yukon-Kuskokwim
YKEDC	Yukon Kuskokwim Economic Development Council
YKHC	Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation

Table of Contents

Y-K Region Economic Vision.....	7
Y-K Region Economic Development Goals and Strategies.....	7
1. Introduction	9
What is a CEDS?	9
Who developed this CEDS?	10
Development of the CEDS	10
Structure of the CEDS.....	11
About the Project Area: the Yukon-Kuskokwim (Y-K) Region	12
2. Regional Socioeconomic Data.....	15
Demographics	17
Industries	24
Employment and Income.....	29
3. Cluster Descriptions	39
Communications.....	39
Education, Workforce Development and Training.....	40
Energy	44
Commercial Fishing	45
Health Care.....	47
Housing.....	47
Mining	48
Subsistence and Harvesting.....	49
Timber.....	51
Tourism.....	51
Transportation (includes Aviation and Maritime)	52
4. SWOT Analysis	55
Strengths	56
Weaknesses/ Constraints	59
Opportunities	62
Threats.....	65
5. Regional Future Direction	67

Y-K Region: Economic Vision..... 67
Goals and Strategies 67
6. Action Plan and Performance Measures73
Appendices

Executive Summary

Y-K Region Economic Vision

A strong, innovative, self-reliant Yukon-Kuskokwim economy supported by our resilient culture and regional collaboration.

Y-K Region Economic Development Goals and Strategies

Goal A – Grow Our Own: Develop an educated and well-trained regional workforce and group of future leaders

1. Encourage businesses, communities and organizations to engage youth earlier and more often: bring young residents to conferences, meet with them in classrooms, invite to board meetings; encourage them to vision for their future and engage them in career conversations earlier.
2. Connect regional corporations with local school districts on a regular basis to inform school boards of workforce needs and increase recruitment of local graduates.
3. Improve college readiness of local students by supporting Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program (ANSEP) pre-college components (middle and high school).
4. Grow the local aviation workforce.
5. Work with children and youth, potentially ages three to 25, to develop basic skills to operate within workplace culture.
6. Identify and meet training needs for local people to be prepared to work during construction and operation of Donlin Gold mine.

Goal B – Address Critical Housing Needs

7. Expand regional water and sewer infrastructure projects; allow regional housing authorities to be eligible for water and sewer infrastructure funds to help offset installation costs for new homes.
8. Construct 3,000 homes in the Y-K region to address the housing shortage.
9. Support local lumber, sawmill, and home manufacturing efforts such as a truss manufacturing plant to reduce the cost of building materials and increase local employment opportunities.
10. Develop programs to educate residents and local agencies on how to finance a new home.

Goal C – Support and Grow Local Business Development and Entrepreneurship

11. Conduct finance, business basics, and life management skills education in communities to help residents understand credit, loans, insurance and banking opportunities, starting with youth in junior and senior high schools, and including young and older adults.
12. Collectively invest in regional community and economic development.
13. Promote farm-to-table and seafood-to-table commercial and export opportunities for locally grown and harvested goods, including value-added processing.
14. Establish a tanning operations company or factory in the region to process harvested furs for export, local use and arts/crafts.

Goal D – Expand and Improve Regional Communications, Energy and Transportation Infrastructure

15. Construct the Yukon-Kuskokwim Freight Corridor (connect communities along the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers via a 44-mile overland route).
16. Construct the Lower Yukon River Regional Port Development Project in Emmonak.
17. Implement needed upgrades at airports around the region, including resurfacing, taxiways, airport lighting and other infrastructure.
18. Bring natural gas from Cook Inlet to the region, either in bulk shipments or via pipeline.
19. Increase connectivity in the region by connecting Bethel to other parts of the state via a fiber optic telecommunications cable.
20. Construct a gravel pit at Pilcher Mountain, along with a road and port for exporting gravel.
21. Complete upgrades to the City of Bethel dock.
22. Construct a new Petroleum Port/Cargo Dock in Bethel.

Goal E – Improve the Health, Wellness and Safety of the Region’s People and Communities

23. Improve success of those reentering communities from correctional facilities by providing treatment for addictions, increasing education, job training, and life skills, to increase workforce and improve public safety.
24. Address substance abuse challenges (including alcohol, opioids and methamphetamine) through increased programs and treatment options.
25. Replace village health clinics, including replacements in Kongiganak, Quinhagak, and Akiachak, and clinic expansion in Kwigillingok.
26. Continue to support YKHC’s clinic and hospital expansion, including identifying funding to meet YKHC staffing needs.
27. Design and construct a Regional Family Services Center.
28. Expand the Yukon-Kuskokwim Qavartarvik Hostel, YKHC’s lodging facility for patients.

Goal F – Create Resilient and Prepared Communities

29. Establish a Western Alaska Emergency Response Center in Bethel.
30. Participate in Adapt Y-K action planning to identify community-supported responses to climate change to protect natural resources for subsistence and environmental integrity.

Goal G – Cultivate Regional Coordination and Planning

(no priority strategies associated with this goal, but this CEDS effort, and the associated infrastructure priorities developed Fall 2017, is a clear demonstration of regional coordination and planning happening today)

Goal H – Protect Natural Resource Harvests and Subsistence

(see strategy #30)