



CITY OF BETHEL

FINANCE COMMITTEE

MONDAY, MARCH 27, 2023, 6:30 PM

LOCATION: 300 CHIEF EDDIE HOFFMAN HIGHWAY, BETHEL, ALASKA

ZOOM MEETING LINK: [HTTPS://ZOOM.US/J/99674371849?pwd=NWTUNURHC1EVOE15DUVONFJ3NKP.UT09](https://zoom.us/j/99674371849?pwd=NWTUNURHC1EVOE15DUVONFJ3NKP.UT09)

ZOOM MEETING ID: 996 74371849 ZOOM PASSCODE: 507255

877 853 5257 US TOLL-FREE

888 475 4499 US TOLL-FREE

833 548 0276 US TOLL-FREE

833 548 0282 US TOLL-FREE

MEMBERS

John Hamilton , Chair

Robert Rey, Vice Chair

Farah Sears

Rose Henderson, Council Rep.

Carol Ann Willard

Vacancies (4)

STAFF

Xavier Mason, Ex Officio Member

Alexandra Batchelor, Ex Officio Member

abatchelor@cityofbethel.net

907-543-1381

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. PEOPLE TO BE HEARD – FIVE MINUTES PER PERSON

- A. Please submit written public comments to finance@cityofbethel.net by 4:00 p.m. the day of the meeting.

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- A. 03/27/2023

V. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

- A. 02/27/2023

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Continued discussion on adding Late Filing Fee to B.M.C. 04.14.150 (Xavier Mason)
- B. Continued discussion of adding late filing fees to B.M.C 05.04.050

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Finance Department Functions (Rose Henderson)
- B. Comprehensive Plan Review (City Clerk)

VIII. EX OFFICIO REPORT

- A. January's Report
- B. February's Report

IX. MEMBER COMMENTS

X. ADJOURNMENT

Updated Posted 03/23/2023 at City Hall, AC Co., Swanson's, and the Post Office.

Alexandra Batchelor, Ex-Officio Staff

City of Bethel, Alaska

Finance Committee Minutes

February 27th, 2023

Regular Meeting

Bethel, Alaska

I. CALL TO ORDER

A Regular Meeting of the Finance Committee was held on February 27th, 2023, at 6:30 PM in-person and via zoom.

II. ROLL CALL

Comprising a quorum of the Committee, the following were present: Rose Henderson (City Council – Mayor), Carolann Willard, John Hamilton, and Robert Rey via Zoom.

Also in attendance: Xavier Mason (Ex-Officio), and Alexandra Batchelor (Recorder)

Unexcused Absences:

Excused Absences: Farah Sears

III. PEOPLE TO BE HEARD: NONE

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

02/27/2023

MOVED BY	Rose Henderson	Motion to approve
SECOND BY	Robert Rey	
VOTE ON MOTION	All in favor	4-0

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

01/23/2023

MOVED BY	John Hamilton	Motion to approve
SECOND BY	Rose Henderson	
VOTE ON MOTION	All in favor	4-0

12/26/2022

MOVED BY	John Hamilton	Motion to approve
SECOND BY	Rose Henderson	
VOTE ON MOTION	All in favor	4-0

11/28/2022

MOVED BY	John Hamilton	Motion to approve
SECOND BY	Rose Henderson	
VOTE ON MOTION	All in favor	4-0

10/24/2022

MOVED BY	John Hamilton	Motion to approve
SECOND BY	Rose Henderson	
VOTE ON MOTION	All in favor	4-0

VI. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS –

A. Election of new Chair and Vice – Chair.

NOMINATED CHAIR	John Hamilton	Accepted
NOMINATED VICE - CHAIR	Robert Rey	Chose to continue
VOTE ON MOTION	All in favor	4-0

VII. NEW BUSINESS -

A. Proposed Changes to B.M.C. 04.16.430 (H) (Farah Sears)

MOVED BY	Rose Henderson	Motion to approve
SECOND BY	Carolann Willard	
VOTE ON MOTION	All in favor	4-0

B. Approval of the Committee Regular Meeting Calendar

MOVED BY	Carolann Willard	Motion to approve
SECOND BY	Rose Henderson	
VOTE ON MOTION	All in favor	4-0

C. Discuss adding a Late Filing Fee to B.M.C. 04-14 (Xavier Mason)

MOVED BY	Robert Rey	Discuss Only no Voting
SECOND BY	Carolann Willard	

D. Discuss adding interest, penalties, and late filing fees to Quarterly Gaming Taxes B.M.C. 05.04.050 (Xavier Mason)

MOVED BY	Rose Henderson	Discuss Only no Voting
SECOND BY	Carolann Willard	

E. Review of Committee Duties and Responsibilities

MOVED BY	Carolann Willard	Discuss Only no Voting
SECOND BY	Robert Rey	
VOTE ON MOTION	All in favor	4-0

VIII. EX OFFICIO MEMBER REPORTS

IX. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS:

John Hamilton – Thank you for the opportunity. I look forward to being something can help improve all of us. With my experience in finance, help move in the right direction.

Rose Henderson – I want to reassure you; we plan to help you in your new position (spoken to John Hamilton).

Robert Rey: Welcome to the chair position; I look forward to working with you.

Farah Sears – No Comments

Carolann Willard – I appreciate John and Robert for stepping up to be the Chair and Vice-Chair; we are always here to help each other out. I thank you. Make a note to excuse Farah Sears for attempting to call in; but call was dropped. Add vacancies added to the agenda.

IX. MOTION TO END MEETING:

MOVED BY	Rose Henderson	Motion to approve
SECOND BY	Carolann Willard	
VOTE ON MOTION	All in Favor	4-0

The chair called the meeting to an end at 7:19 pm.

John Hamilton, Chair

ATTEST:

Alexandra Batchelor, Recorder

Introduced by: City Manager Herron
Date: October 27, 1998
Public Hearing: November 24, 1998
Action: Enacted
Vote: Unanimous

**CITY OF BETHEL, ALASKA
ORDINANCE #98-29**

**AN ORDINANCE REVISING THE CITY OF BETHEL BUSINESS LICENSING CODE
ESTABLISHING BIENNIAL LICENSING, REVISING FEES, CHARGES AND PENALTIES
AND MAKING OTHER CHANGES**

BE IT ORDAINED by the Bethel City Council that:

Section 1. Classification. This ordinance is permanent in nature and shall become a part of the Bethel Municipal Code.

Section 2. Repeal and Readoption of Chapter Chapter 5.04, the business code of the City of Bethel, is repealed in its entirety and is reenacted to read:

**CHAPTER 5.04
BUSINESS LICENSE CODE**

- 5.04.010 Business defined.
- 5.04.020 Other regulatory provisions.
- 5.04.030 Required -- Application.
- 5.04.040 Fee.
- 5.04.045 License Fees for Businesses Selling Games of Skill and Chance.
- 5.04.048 Insurance Required.
- 5.04.050 Term and Classification.
- 5.04.060 Renewal.
- 5.04.070 Regulations.
- 5.04.080 Failure to obtain.
- 5.04.090 Offenses.
- 5.04.100 False statements.
- 5.04.110 Violation -- Penalty.

5.04.010 Business defined.

In this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires, "business" includes all activities or acts, personal, professional or corporate, engaged in or following or engaging in a trade, profession or business (including receipts from advertising services, rental of personal or real property, construction, processing manufacturing, fisheries businesses, liquor license, insurance businesses, mining and coin operated amusement and gaming machines, but excluding fishermen), calling or vocation, with the object of financial or pecuniary gain, profit or benefit, either direct or indirect, and not exempting sub-activities producing marketable commodities or services used or consumed in the main business. The giving or supplying of services as an employee to an employer does not constitute "business" under this chapter. The selling of games of skill and chance, even if done by a nonprofit organization, does constitute "business" this chapter.

5.04.020 Other regulatory provisions.

A person engaging in a business subject to licensing provisions of a regulatory nature must, in addition to filing the regular application required by this chapter, comply with any other regulatory provisions before being entitled to a license.

5.04.030 Required --Application.

For the privilege of engaging in business in the city, a person shall first apply upon forms prescribed by the Director of Finance and obtain a license to do so, and pay the license fee provided in Section 5.04.040.

5.04.040 Fee.

The license fee for each business including the business of selling games of skill and chance is fifty dollars for the biennial license. The fee for a license issued to a new business that commences after the beginning of the biennial period applicable to the applicant, shall be 25% of the biennial fee times the number of full and partial semesters remaining in the biennial period. No proration may be given for seasonal or other part year operations. A replacement license may be issued for a fee of \$25.

5.04.045 Additional Fees for Businesses Selling Games of Skill and Chance.

A. Each business selling games of skill and chance shall pay an additional fee equal to 5.0 per cent of the gross revenues from sales of games of skill and chance. Gross revenues from a sale is the total cost to the player for the right to each single chance or play, whether paid to the operator or qualified organization in cash or by relinquishment of winnings or in exchange for other things of value.

B. Operators of games of skill and chance licensed by the State of Alaska pursuant to AS 5.15.010, et seq., shall pay the fee on a monthly basis on or before the last day of the following month. The fee shall be accompanied by a copy of the report submitted to the authorized permittee pursuant to AS 5.15.087 or any successor statute or regulation.

C. Qualified organizations authorized to conduct games of skill and chance by the State of Alaska pursuant to AS 5.15.010, et seq. who do not make use of a licensed operator shall pay the fee on a quarterly basis by the 45th day following each calendar quarter in which their gross receipts equaled \$50,000 or more. If gross receipts do not exceed \$50,000 for any quarter the fee shall be paid on an annual basis on or before March 15 of each year. Payment of the fee shall be accompanied by a copy of the quarterly or annual report filed with the State of Alaska pursuant to AS 5.15.080 or any successor statute or regulation.

D. The Finance Director shall have the same right to examine and audit the records of operators and qualified organization as are given to the Finance Director under BMC 4.16 to examine and audit the records of persons required to collect the city sales tax. The penalties, interest and charges applicable under BMC 4.16 to late or incomplete filing of reports or returns or payment of sales tax and the failure to keep or produce records, as well as the right to protest or appeal a decision of the Finance Director, shall apply to the late or incomplete filing of reports or returns, the late or incomplete payment of the additional fee under this chapter and the failure to keep or produce adequate records.

5.04.048 Insurance Required.

A. For purposes of this section, "transient lodging business" includes, but is not limited to, hotel compensation.

B. No person may operate a transient lodging business unless there is in effect during the period of such operation a commercial general liability insurance policy in an amount of not less than \$1,000,000 per person and a combined aggregate amount of not less than \$2,000,000 per occurrence. The deductible or self-retained coverage may not exceed \$10,000.

Such insurance must include coverage for the business for liability arising out of the negligence of the business, its owners, employees and agents.

C. Each application for a business license by a transient lodging business must be accompanied by a copy of the insurance policy required by this section. No business license may be granted to a transient lodging business that does not provide a copy of a current policy required by this section. Provided, the clerk may, in the exercise of discretion, accept a certificate of insurance provided to the Finance Director by an insurance agent or broker licensed to do business in the State of Alaska in lieu of the policy itself.

D. The transient lodging business shall provide the Finance Director with a copy of each confirmation provided by the insurer of renewal of the required policy. Such confirmation must be provided to the City before the date of expiration of the policy that is provided to meet the requirements of this section.

E. Within seven (7) days of the receipt of the written demand from the City, a transient lodging business shall provide to the City for inspection, copying and review the policy of insurance meeting the requirements of this section. The failure of a transient lodging business to provide the policy as required by this subsection invalidates the transient lodging business license issued to such business under this chapter. A license invalidated under this subsection may be renewed by filing a complete application and payment of the late license fee under Section 060 of this Chapter.

F. A transient lodging business may not operate if it has failed or refused to produce the policy of insurance as required under subsection (e) or has failed to provide confirmation of renewal prior to the expiration date, including any grace period allowed for the policy.

5.04.050 Term and Classification.

Licenses issued to one half of the businesses shall expire on December 31 of the even numbered years and the licenses issued to the other half of the businesses shall expire on December 31 of the odd numbered years. The Finance Director shall establish the method of allocating business to the odd and even years and may establish and implement such classifications of businesses as may be useful in administering the sales tax or other city programs.

5.04.060 Renewal.

Application for renewal of a license and payment of the biennial fee shall be made before December 31st of the license expiration year. Any renewal application made after December 31st of the license expiration year shall be subject to a fee for the business license of twice the fee set out in BMC 5.04.040A. By December 10 of each year, the Finance Department shall mail a written notice of renewal to each licensed business whose license will expire that year; provided, neither the failure of the city to mail the notice or the failure of a business to receive the notice shall have the effect of extending the December 31 renewal deadline nor of waiving any penalty or additional or increased fee for the late filing of a renewal application.

5.04.070 Regulations.

The Finance Director may promulgate regulations necessary to determine and collect fees imposed and to otherwise enforce the provisions of this chapter. The regulations become effective, with such changes as may be made by the city council, on the day following the city council meeting at which the proposed regulations are submitted to the council for review unless the regulations are rejected by the council.

5.04.080 Failure to obtain.

A person who engages in business before filing a business license application, or who fails to file any report or to pay the fee as prescribed by this chapter, or who fails to file a license renewal application before February 1, shall, in addition to payment of the required fee, be subject to a penalty of \$100.00 that shall be paid before the license may be issued.

5.04.090 Offenses.

It is unlawful for a person to:

- A. Willfully evade the licensing provisions of the chapter;
- B. Fail to make an application for license or fail to keep or produce any records required hereunder or by regulation;
- C. Make a false or fraudulent return or false statement with intent to defraud the city or evade payment of the fee; or
- D. Aid or abet another in an attempt to evade payment of the fee.
- E. Fail to pay the required fee.
- F. Engage in or operate a business without a license issued pursuant to this chapter.
- G. Engage in or operate a business for which insurance is required under this chapter without a policy of such insurance in effect.
- H. Fail or refuse to produce a policy of insurance required by this chapter within seven (7) days of the delivery by the clerk of a written request to produce such a policy.

5.04. 100 False statements.

It is unlawful for an executive officer, manager or agent of a corporation or agent of a person to provide false information or documents or to make or permit to be made for his principal or employer a false statement in connection with an application for a business license or in answer to an inquiry from the city clerk with an intent or purpose to evade the payment of the fee or to obtain, continue, or renew a license without fully complying with the requirements of this chapter.

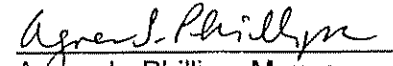
5.04. 110 Violation - Penalty.

A person who is found guilty of a violation of any provision of this chapter, or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto, is subject to a fine of up to \$200; provided, the person is subject to a fine of up to \$500 for a violation that occurs within three years of a conviction of a prior violation of any provision of this chapter.

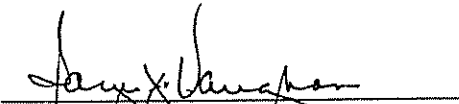
Section 3. Effective date and transition. This ordinance shall become effective immediately upon adoption; provided all current validly issued licenses shall remain in effect until December 31, 1998. All license renewal applications shall be submitted by no later than December 31, 1998. One half of the license renewals shall be for one year and the remainder shall be for two years, as determined by the Finance Director. The fee for licenses that are renewed for one year shall be one half of the biennial license fee. Licenses issued for one year shall expire on December 31, 1999 and shall be issued thereafter for two-year terms. The Finance Director may implement such procedures and rules as may be necessary to provide for the transition into the biennial licensing. The Finance Director shall send written notice to all license holders informing them of the new registration period, license fees and penalties. The Finance Director shall also insure the public notice is posted and published informing businesses of the changed date by which business license renewal applications must be filed.

ENACTED this 17th day of NOVEMBER, 1998, by a vote of 6 Yea, 0 Nay, and 0 Abstaining.

CITY OF BETHEL


Agnes L. Phillips, Mayor

ATTEST:


Gaye J. Vaughan, City Clerk

Introduced by: City Manager Foley
Date: June 23, 2009
Public Hearing: July 14, 2009
Action: Passed
Vote: 7-0

CITY OF BETHEL, ALASKA

Ordinance #09-17

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 5.04.050A OF THE BETHEL MUNICIPAL CODE, TO AMEND THE ADDITIONAL FEES FOR GAMES OF SKILL AND CHANCE

WHEREAS, the City of Bethel ("City") charges a current sales tax of six (6) percent; and

WHEREAS, the City provides clear notice to businesses engaged in games of skill and chance of the exact percentage of the gross revenues from sales that will be required; and

WHEREAS, the City's Finance Committee resolves that section 5.04.050A of the Bethel Municipal Code should be amended;

THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of Bethel, Alaska, that the Bethel Municipal Code shall be amended and revised as follows:

SECTION 1. Classification. This ordinance is of a permanent nature and shall become a part of the Bethel Municipal Code.

SECTION 2. Amending BMC 5.04.040A. The Bethel Municipal Code section 5.04.050A, is amended as follows (new language is underlined and ~~old language is stricken out~~):

5.04.050A Additional Fees for Games of Skill and Chance.

- A. Each business selling games of skill and chance shall pay an additional fee equal to five (5) ~~six~~ **(6)** percent of the gross revenues from sales of games of skill and chance. Gross revenues from a sale is the total cost to the player for the right to each single chance or play, whether paid to the operator or qualified organization in cash or by relinquishment of winnings or in exchange for other things of value.

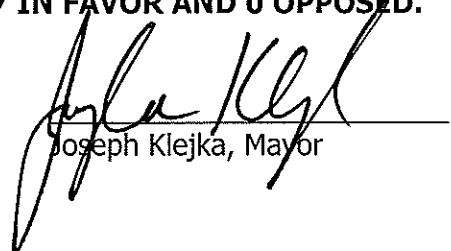
SECTION 6. Effective Date. This section shall become retroactive to January 1, 2008, as stipulated in Ordinance 08-01.

ENACTED THIS 14 DAY OF JULY 2009, BY A VOTE OF 7 IN FAVOR AND 0 OPPOSED.

ATTEST:


Lori Strickler, City Clerk

City of Bethel, Alaska


Joseph Klejka, Mayor

Ordinance #09-17
1 of 2

Introduced by: Finance Committee
Introduction Date: August 8, 2017
Public Hearing Date: August 22, 2017
Action: Passed
Vote: 5-1

CITY OF BETHEL, ALASKA

Ordinance #17-41

AMENDING THE BETHEL MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 5.04.050(A), ADDITIONAL FEES FOR BUSINESSES SELLING GAMES OF SKILL AND CHANCE

Whereas, the Finance Committee has been working on the updated sales tax code for nearly a full year;

Whereas, prior to the updated sales tax code, the local charitable organizations have come to the Finance Committee seeking relief from the high fees imposed on gaming;

Whereas, attendance at gaming events has decreased significantly over the years while costs have increased;

Whereas, as a result, the charitable organizations are finding it difficult to break even;

Whereas, the difficult financial situation has forced some gaming operations to close their doors permanently;

Whereas, pursuant to Alaska law, all profits earned from gaming operations within the City are used to provide charitable donations to persons in need;

Whereas, in order to continue providing the much needed services, the charitable organizations desperately need a reduction in the fees collected by the City so that there are sufficient monies left over to distribute to those who need it the most;

Now, Therefore Be It enacted by the City Council of Bethel Alaska as follows:

Section 1. Classification. This ordinance is of permanent nature and shall be codified within the Bethel Municipal Code.

Section 2. Amendment: Bethel Municipal Code 5.04.040 is amended, new language is underlined, removed language is stricken.

Introduced by: Finance Committee
Introduction Date: August 8, 2017
Public Hearing Date: August 22, 2017
Action: Passed
Vote: 5-1

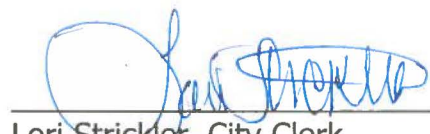
5.04.050(A) ADDITIONAL FEES FOR BUSINESSES SELLING GAMES OF SKILL AND CHANCE

Each business selling games of skill and chance shall pay an additional fee equal to ~~six~~ ~~three~~ four (~~6~~ ~~3%~~ 4%) percent of the gross revenues from sales of games of skill and chance. Gross revenues from a sale is the total cost to the player for the right to each single chance or play, whether paid to the operator or qualified organization in cash or by relinquishment of winnings or in exchange for other things of value.

SECTION 3. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective upon passage by the Bethel City Council.

ENACTED THIS 22 DAY OF AUGUST, 2017, BY A VOTE OF 5 IN FAVOR AND 1 OPPOSED.

ATTEST:


Richard Robb, Mayor
Lori Strickler, City Clerk



CITY OF BETHEL

P.O. Box 388 Bethel, Alaska 99559-0388
907-543-2047
FAX # 543-4171

Sponsored by: Mayor Phillips
Introduced: November 11, 1997
Public Hearing: November 25, 1997
Action: Adopted
Vote: Unanimous

ORDINANCE NO. 97-22

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BETHEL ADOPTING A TRANSIENT LODGING BUSINESS TAX.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BETHEL:

Section 1. Classification. This ordinance is permanent in nature and shall become a part of the Bethel Municipal Code.

Section 2. Addition of new Title. The Bethel Municipal Code is amended by adding a new Chapter 4.14 reading:

TITLE 4 FINANCE AND REVENUE

Chapter 4.14 TRANSIENT LODGING BUSINESS TAX

4.14.010	Definitions.
4.14.020	Levy, payment, collection and distribution of tax revenues
4.14.030	Excluded receipts.
4.14.040	Operators exempt from the tax.
4.14.050	Tax returns and remittance.
4.14.060	Involuntary return.
4.14.070	Cessation of doing business.
4.14.080	Application of payments.
4.14.090	Confidentiality of records.
4.14.100	Maintenance and inspection of records.
4.14.105	Administrative costs.
4.14.110	Tax avoidance.
4.14.120	Tax lien.
4.14.130	Collection of taxes.
4.14.140	Interest.
4.14.150	Penalties.
4.14.160	Remedies for a person aggrieved.
4.14.170	Administrative regulations.
4.14.180	Refunds.
4.14.190	Interpretation.

4.14.010 Definitions.

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this chapter, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

1. "Department" means the City of Bethel Finance Department.
2. "Director" means the Director of the City of Bethel Finance Department or the Director's designee.
3. "Knowingly" includes the state of mind of a person when the person knows of or is aware of the existence of this chapter or of the tax imposed by this chapter.
4. "Operator" means a person who owns, operates or controls any facility in which any transient lodging is offered for occupancy for compensation.
5. "Person" means all persons, both natural and artificial.
6. "Quarter" means one of the four consecutive three-month periods in a calendar year, the first beginning on January 1 each year.
7. "Room" means any room, suite of rooms, facility or structure, or any part thereof, whether temporary or permanent, which is rented or offered for rent for use as a residence, dwelling, sleeping place, place of lodging or other use auxiliary to such residential, dwelling, sleeping or other lodging use and includes bed-and-breakfast operations; provided however, pursuant to BMC 4.14.030 A(2) and (3), "room" does not include any such room used exclusively as part of a substantially different business, such as a hospital room, patient treatment room or a university dormitory room, where the primary purpose of the business is other than providing meals, lodging, adventures, entertainment or recreation.
8. "Tax" means the lodging business tax levied under this chapter.
9. "Tax return" means the quarterly report to be submitted to the department as required by BMC 4.14.050.
10. "Transient lodging" means rooms offered or made available to persons for occupancy on a daily basis or for a shorter or longer period of time, but does not include rooms that are available only for occupancy of 42 or more continuous days under a written rental agreement.

11. "Violates" and "violation" include any failure of a person for any reason to comply with a requirement or duty imposed by this chapter.

4.14.020 Levy, payment, collection and distribution of tax revenues.

Subject to the provisions of this chapter, there is levied a transient lodging business tax on all operators in an amount equal to three percent of the gross receipts of the operator from the rental of rooms.

4.14.030 Excluded receipts.

A The receipts from the following occupancies and rentals are excluded in the computation of gross receipts for purposes of the tax:

1. Rental of rooms in facilities of a non-profit, charitable organization when the occupancy is provided as part of a charitable event or function. An entity is not a charitable organization if the charitable benefits are provided primarily to members or on a basis more beneficial to members than to non-members. A charitable, non-profit organization must be registered as a 501(c)(3) organization under the Internal Revenue Code and none of its income from any use of its transient lodging rooms may be unrelated taxable business income.

2. Patient occupancies of hospital or other rooms when the occupancy is required by the health care provider and the room is held, controlled and operated by the health care provider for patient treatment and recovery.

3. Student occupancies of dormitory or other student housing owned and operated by an educational institution accredited or licensed by the State of Alaska when the student is registered in a regular course of classes that leads to a degree, a license or qualification to obtain a license or to take a test for a license and the classes are being taken and attended on substantially a full time basis.

4. Occupancies exclusively by one or more individuals specifically named in a written agreement for an occupancy for a period of 42 or more continuous days where the rent for the initial period is paid in advance and is paid not less frequently than monthly in advance thereafter. This exemption does not include rooms rented by an employer or other persons for use by different individuals over the period of the agreement, nor does it include an occupancy that met the requirement of the first sentence but that is terminated before the end of

the initial 42 day period and the occupant or the person who paid for the room is refunded any part of the pre-paid rent for the part of the occupancy period that follows the termination.

B. An operator whose status entitled them to exempt status under A(1), (2) or (3) of this section shall immediately notify the City of any change in that status. An operator whose operations become taxable because of a loss of exempt status shall pay the tax based on receipts from or allocable to occupancies that occurred after the loss of the status or condition upon which the tax exemption was based.

4.14.040 Operators exempt from the tax.

A. The following operators are exempt from the tax.

1. State and federal agencies that are exempt from the tax as a matter of state or federal law.
2. Political subdivisions of the State of Alaska or the United States that are exempt from the tax by statute or constitution.
3. Persons that are chartered, incorporated or organized pursuant to state or federal statutes that are exempt from the payment of the tax by statute or constitution.

B. A person who rents or leases a transient lodging facility from an owner or operator who is exempt under BMC 4.14.040A(1), (2) or (3) or enters into a management agreement for the transient lodging facility of such an exempt owner or operator under which the lessee or the manager receives compensation dependent in any way upon the occupancy or income from the facility is not an exempt operator.

C. A person whose status entitled them to exempt status under this section shall immediately notify the City of any change in that status. An operator whose operations become taxable because of a loss of exempt status shall pay the tax based on the receipts from or allocable to occupancies that occurred after the loss of the status or condition upon which the tax exemption was based.

4.14.050 Tax returns and remittance.

A. Within 10 business days after the end of each calendar quarter, every operator not exempt under this chapter shall deliver to the department a tax return, signed by the operator(s), on a form provided by the department for each registered place of business regardless of whether taxes are due for the quarter. Each operator shall remit therewith the entire amount of the tax due from such operator pursuant to this chapter for the immediately preceding calendar quarter. Tax returns and the tax due under this chapter must be actually received by the department within the time required by this section. A tax or report actually received by the department at any time following the tenth business day of the month following the calendar quarter for which the tax is due is delinquent and subject to penalty and interest under this chapter.

B. The tax return shall set forth or include:

1. The number of transient lodging rooms in each separate facility operated by the operator and the address or location of each facility
2. The gross receipts from each facility, including all receipts that are excluded under BMC 4.14.030A(1), (2) or (3).
3. Receipts from each facility that are exempt under BMC 4.14.030A(1), (2) or (3).
4. Penalties and interest due.
5. Such other relevant information and supporting documents as the department may require.

4.14.060 Involuntary return.

A. If an operator fails to file a tax return as required by this chapter or if the Director finds that a tax return is not supported by the records required to be submitted with the return or to be maintained under this chapter by the operator filing the tax return, the Director may prepare and file an involuntary tax return on behalf of the operator. Taxes estimated on a tax return filed on behalf of an operator under this section may be premised upon any information that is available to the Director including, but not limited to, comparative data for similar businesses and prior returns of the operator. An operator for whom an involuntary tax return is filed under this subsection shall be liable for the taxes stated on the tax

return, as well as all administrative costs, penalties and interest provided for in this chapter.

B. The department shall notify the operator of determinations made under subsection (A) and include in such notice the basis of the department's calculations determining the operator's liability together with a notice of the operator's rights under section BMC 4.14.160, that payment is due immediately and that interest and penalties on taxes due continue to accrue from the date taxes were originally due under this chapter for each period covered by the involuntary tax return.

C. Unless otherwise determined by the Director in a decision under subsection (A), taxes, costs, interest and penalties due under this section shall be payable immediately.

D. Interest on administrative costs shall accrue from the date the City incurred or paid the cost unless the Director provides as a part of the determination or notice under subsections (A) or (B) for a later date for commencement of interest on administrative costs.

4.14.070 Cessation of doing business.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter to the contrary, within ten calendar days after ceasing to be an operator, the operator shall:

1. Notify the Director in writing of the date on which, and the name, telephone and address of any person to whom, the transient lodging business has been leased, conveyed or otherwise relinquished or transferred together with the date on which the person ceased doing business as an operator; and

2. File a final tax return for the period subsequent to the operator's last tax return covering the period through the operator's last day of operation together with the tax due and other sums due under this chapter in the manner required for filing tax returns. If the operator who is ceasing business transfers accounts receivables from transient lodging to another person the transferring operator shall include the principal amount of such accounts as his receipts for the purpose of computing the tax under this chapter.

4.14.080 Application of payments.

Any payment submitted to the department for taxes, interest, penalties or costs due under any tax return, provision of this chapter, or any finding or

determination by the department under this chapter shall be credited first to the payment of all interest due beginning with the oldest quarter for which interest is due, and then similarly to the payment of all penalties, administrative costs, and taxes due, in that order beginning for each category with the oldest quarter for which such expenses are due.

4.14.090 Confidentiality of records.

A. All tax returns filed under this chapter, all data obtained from such tax returns, and all financial information obtained from an inspection of records in accordance with this chapter are confidential and may not be released except upon court order, when necessary to enforce the provisions of or to collect the taxes due under this chapter and except for inspection by the Manager, the Director, the municipal attorney, the City's auditor in the performance of their official duties, or by a state or federal agency in the enforcement of a state or federal law.

B. Except when necessary to the performance of their official duties to enforce the provisions of or to collect taxes due under this chapter, no person may divulge to another any information, data or financial information of an operator, an operator's records or a tax return filed under this chapter unless the person receiving such information, data or financial information is a person authorized by this chapter or in writing by the operator to inspect the tax return, information, data or financial information.

C. It is the duty of the Director to keep tax returns, all data taken therefrom, and all financial information obtained from an inspection of the operator's records secure from public and private inspection except as provided by this chapter.

D. This section does not prohibit the City from compiling and publishing statistical information concerning the data submitted provided no identification of particular tax returns or operator information, data or financial information is made.

4.14.100 Maintenance and inspection of records.

A. It shall be the responsibility of the operator to obtain and preserve evidence sufficient to support all taxes owed, returns filed or required to be filed and exclusions or exemptions claimed under this chapter. Specification in this chapter of the records to be kept by an operator does not relieve the operator of its responsibility to keep sufficient records. As a minimum an operator shall keep and preserve in Bethel, Alaska for two calendar years after the end of the calendar year

in which created all occupancy registers and accounting records reflecting the rental and occupancy of each transient lodging room available during each quarter and the rents received therefor including, but not limited to, the following:

1. The room rate charged and room occupied for each guest, as recorded on the guest folio, register or registration card or otherwise;

2. Agreements or other documents or material relied upon by an operator to support the operator's determination that the receipts from an occupancy were not required to be included for purposes of the tax;

3. All reservations and accounting records reflecting the rents collected;

4. Such other records, documents and information as the department may require by regulation or notice to the operator reasonably necessary and convenient to its administration and enforcement of this chapter.

B. During normal business hours, the Director or his designee may, upon presentation of proper identification, inspect the records an operator is required to maintain under subsection (A) of this section, or inspect the records of a person whom the Director has probable cause to believe is an operator to determine whether that person is an operator.

C. Upon notice of the department's intent to inspect records, an operator, and a person the Director has probable cause to believe is an operator, shall retain such records and preserve their availability to the department until released by the department in writing, regardless of whether such retention and preservation continues beyond the two-year period specified in this section.

D. The operator shall make available for inspection within the City, all records required to be kept and preserved by this chapter. The Director may apply to the appropriate court for subpoena duces tecum and the court shall issue the subpoena upon a showing that demand has been made by the City upon an operator to make such records available for inspection and that the operator has failed or refused to do so.

E. If the Constitution of the United States or of the State so requires, the Director shall obtain an administrative search warrant authorizing an inspection and exhibit the warrant to the person in charge of the premises before conducting the inspection. The Director shall apply to the trial courts of the state to obtain an inspection warrant, stating in the application the name and address of the premises

to be inspected, the authority to conduct the inspection, the nature and extent of the inspection, and the facts and circumstances justifying the inspection. Warrants issued under this section shall be returned within ten days.

4.14.105 Administrative costs.

If, upon an audit or other examination of the books and records of an operator, the Director determines that additional taxes are due, the cost of the audit or examination shall be paid to the City by the operator. If the audit or examination is part of a random audit, the operator shall pay a pro rata share of the audit cost based on the number of operators audited, but not to exceed an amount equal to the amount of tax, interest and penalty found to be owing. If the audit or examination is in connection with a disputed return or a return not filed, or if the auditor determines that the condition or availability of the records of an operator are such that substantially more time to audit the records will be required than should be, the operator shall bear the entire cost of the audit or examination, but not to exceed an amount that is ten times the tax, interest and penalty found owing.

4.14.110 Tax avoidance.

If the department has reasonable cause to believe that an operator has structured room rentals or occupancy to avoid the inclusion of receipts of an occupancy in the computation of the tax levied under this chapter, the department may so declare. Such a declaration creates a rebuttable presumption that the substance of a specific room rental or occupancy is includable in the computation of the tax under this chapter. The Director shall proceed to determine and collect the tax together with costs, penalties and interest by filing an involuntary return as provided in BMC 4.14.060.

4.14.120 Tax lien.

A. Taxes due and not paid on the date required by this chapter together with all interest, penalties and administrative costs accruing thereafter, immediately after the date such taxes become due and unpaid shall become a lien in favor of the City upon all of the operator's real and personal property including rights to property. Such lien shall continue until all taxes, penalties, interest and administration costs due the City have been paid or the lien released in whole or in part.

B. A separate notice of such lien shall be given each taxpayer liable for the taxes by certified mail and shall be recorded in the Bethel Recording District,

State of Alaska and any other recording district in which the City finds the operator's property. Upon the filing of the notice, the lien shall be prior and paramount to all subsequently filed liens and liens arising out of subsequently incurred obligations except as otherwise specifically provided in statute. Notice of the lien shall specify the operator(s) liable for payment of the tax, the amount of taxes and the date they were due, a statement of the interest, penalties and administration costs accrued and which may thereafter accrue, the tax period for which the taxes were due and such other information as the department may determine or as may be required by law.

C. No failure of a notice of lien to meet all the requirements of this section, except as to amount if different from the recording thereof, adversely affects the existence or priority of the lien created under this section to the extent of the correct amount which is the same or less than that stated in the recorded lien.

4.14.130 Collection of taxes.

Taxes, interest, penalties, and administration costs due and unpaid may be collected by a civil action for the collection of a debt or by foreclosure of the tax lien in accordance with AS 09.45.170 through 09.45.220 or similar statutes in substitution thereof or by both.

4.14.140 Interest.

In addition to any penalties imposed by this chapter, interest at the rate of 15 percent per annum shall accrue and be due from the operator on the unremitted balance of taxes after the date on which their remittance was due and upon administrative costs assessed against the operator.

4.14.150 Penalties.

A. An operator who fails to file a tax return when due shall incur a civil penalty for each tax return not filed when due equal to six percent of the tax actually due the City. An operator who fails to remit the full amount of tax due by its due date incurs and shall pay a civil penalty of six percent of the actual amount of taxes due but remaining unpaid after such date. If an operator fails to pay the full amount of the tax due or file a tax return or report required under this chapter within 16 calendar days after its due date, the six percent penalties incurred above are increased automatically to 15 percent.

1. The penalty shall be computed on the unpaid balance of the tax liability as determined by the department.

2. Notice of the penalties incurred and to be incurred shall be given to the operator when such tax payment or tax return or report is delinquent for seven calendar days after its due date. Interest and penalties apply and shall accrue whether or not notice in accordance with this subsection A(2) is given.

3. The penalties provided for in this subsection shall be in addition to all other penalties and interest provided for under this chapter.

B. Any person who violates any provision of this chapter shall be liable for a civil penalty of \$50.00 for each separate violation. Where a violation continues for more than one day, each day upon which the violation continues is a separate violation. The Director shall levy the penalty and notify the operator of the penalty.

C. Except an operator who fails to file a tax return and remit taxes when due, but does so within seven calendar days thereafter, a person who knowingly violates any provision of this chapter or who fails to comply with the provisions of this chapter for seven or more calendar days after delivery of written notice to the operator setting out the operator's failure to comply is guilty of a misdemeanor. Each day upon which a violation or failure to comply continues is a separate misdemeanor violation of this chapter.

D. Civil and criminal penalties shall be cumulative and independent remedies. The imposition of a penalty under this chapter shall not relieve an operator of the duties imposed under this chapter or liability for any other penalty or the tax or interest imposed under this chapter.

4.14.160 Remedies for a person aggrieved.

A. Any person aggrieved by any action or determination of the department or the Director under this chapter may apply to the department and request a hearing before the Director on the department's action or determination if filed within 30 days of the date the department mails notice of the department's action or determination.

1. An application for a hearing must notify the department of the specific action or determination complained of and the amount of tax, interest, cost or penalty contested and the reason for such contest.

2. The uncontested portion of any tax and interest thereon due under this chapter shall be paid when due regardless of any application for a hearing. Payment of the amount contested must be made with the application for a hearing and shall be received by the City as being paid under protest. The Director, for good cause shown, may waive, in part, or in whole, the requirement that the contested amount be paid with the application, but the full amount of the tax and interest contested must be paid by the first scheduled date for the hearing. Failure to pay the contested tax and interest by the date or dates required constitutes a withdrawal of the appeal by the applicant.

3. The uncontested portion of any administrative cost, interest thereon, or penalty due under this chapter shall be paid when due regardless of any application for a hearing. Payment of the amount contested must be made in accordance with the decision of the hearing officer.

B. Upon timely application for a hearing under subsection (A) of this section, the Director, acting as the hearing officer, shall hold a hearing and render a decision or determination in accordance with procedures adopted by the Director to determine whether a correction or reversal of the department's action or determination is warranted.

1. The person aggrieved shall be given access to the unprivileged documents in the department's file in the matter for preparation for the hearing.

2. If a person requesting a hearing fails to appear at the hearing, the hearing officer may issue a decision without taking evidence from that person, unless within seven days after the date scheduled for the hearing the person shows reasonable cause for failure to appear.

C. Hearings before the Director under this chapter may, at the option of the Director, be conducted by an administrative hearing officer designated by the Director. If the Director refers such matter to an administrative hearing officer, the administrative hearing officer shall conduct the hearing and prepare findings and conclusions. These findings and conclusions shall be forwarded to the Director for adoption, rejection or modification and issuance of a final order or decision by the Director.

D. The final order or decision of the Director may assess all or any part of the cost of the hearing against an appellant who does not prevail on all issues raised.

E. Taxes, costs, penalties, and interest declared to be due in the decision of the hearing officer and not previously paid must be paid within 30 days of the date of the decision or a supersedeas bond guaranteeing their payment must be filed with the court in accordance with Alaska Rules of Appellate Procedure if the decision has been appealed to the Superior Court. If not paid or bonded within 30 days of the date of the decision, the total amount due under the decision shall accrue interest at a rate equal to the rate set out in section 140 of this chapter plus five percent.

F. Within 30 days after receipt of the written Director's decision a person aggrieved by the decision may appeal the decision to the Superior Court. The appeal shall be heard on the record made at the hearing before the hearing officer.

4.14.170 Administrative regulations.

The Director may adopt regulations providing for the application and interpretation of this chapter. The Director may provide methods, and shall provide forms, for reporting and collecting the tax imposed by this chapter.

4.14.180 Refunds.

A. If the department determines after audit that a remittance exceeds the actual amount due, the department, upon written request by the operator, shall refund the excess amount to the operator without interest.

B. The operator shall apply for a refund in writing not later than two years from the earlier of the date the payment was due or was transmitted to the department. Refund applications shall be made on a form provided by the department. Applications filed after such two year period are forever barred and except for amounts ordered refunded by the Superior Court on an appeal, no refund may be made of any amount paid prior to the expiration of the two year period.

4.14.190 Interpretation.

The exemptions and exclusions under this chapter from consideration in the computation of the tax levied under this chapter shall be interpreted narrowly.

Section 3. Effective Date. This ordinance becomes effective on January 1, 1998. The tax shall be based on receipts for occupancies on and after January 1, 1998, without regard to the date an occupancy began.

ADOPTED THIS 25TH DAY OF NOVEMBER, 1997.

CITY OF BETHEL

By: Agnes L. Phillips
Agnes L. Phillips, Mayor

ATTEST:

L J Warren
L J Warren, City Clerk

Introduced by: City Manager Herron
Date: October 27, 1998
Public Hearing: November 24, 1998
Action: Enacted
Vote: Unanimous

**CITY OF BETHEL, ALASKA
ORDINANCE #98-29**

**AN ORDINANCE REVISING THE CITY OF BETHEL BUSINESS LICENSING CODE
ESTABLISHING BIENNIAL LICENSING, REVISING FEES, CHARGES AND PENALTIES
AND MAKING OTHER CHANGES**

BE IT ORDAINED by the Bethel City Council that:

Section 1. Classification. This ordinance is permanent in nature and shall become a part of the Bethel Municipal Code.

Section 2. Repeal and Readoption of Chapter Chapter 5.04, the business code of the City of Bethel, is repealed in its entirety and is reenacted to read:

**CHAPTER 5.04
BUSINESS LICENSE CODE**

- 5.04.010 Business defined.
- 5.04.020 Other regulatory provisions.
- 5.04.030 Required -- Application.
- 5.04.040 Fee.
- 5.04.045 License Fees for Businesses Selling Games of Skill and Chance.
- 5.04.048 Insurance Required.
- 5.04.050 Term and Classification.
- 5.04.060 Renewal.
- 5.04.070 Regulations.
- 5.04.080 Failure to obtain.
- 5.04.090 Offenses.
- 5.04.100 False statements.
- 5.04.110 Violation -- Penalty.

5.04.010 Business defined.

In this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires, "business" includes all activities or acts, personal, professional or corporate, engaged in or following or engaging in a trade, profession or business (including receipts from advertising services, rental of personal or real property, construction, processing manufacturing, fisheries businesses, liquor license, insurance businesses, mining and coin operated amusement and gaming machines, but excluding fishermen), calling or vocation, with the object of financial or pecuniary gain, profit or benefit, either direct or indirect, and not exempting sub-activities producing marketable commodities or services used or consumed in the main business. The giving or supplying of services as an employee to an employer does not constitute "business" under this chapter. The selling of games of skill and chance, even if done by a nonprofit organization, does constitute "business" this chapter.

5.04.020 Other regulatory provisions.

A person engaging in a business subject to licensing provisions of a regulatory nature must, in addition to filing the regular application required by this chapter, comply with any other regulatory provisions before being entitled to a license.

5.04.030 Required --Application.

For the privilege of engaging in business in the city, a person shall first apply upon forms prescribed by the Director of Finance and obtain a license to do so, and pay the license fee provided in Section 5.04.040.

5.04.040 Fee.

The license fee for each business including the business of selling games of skill and chance is fifty dollars for the biennial license. The fee for a license issued to a new business that commences after the beginning of the biennial period applicable to the applicant, shall be 25% of the biennial fee times the number of full and partial semesters remaining in the biennial period. No proration may be given for seasonal or other part year operations. A replacement license may be issued for a fee of \$25.

5.04.045 Additional Fees for Businesses Selling Games of Skill and Chance.

A. Each business selling games of skill and chance shall pay an additional fee equal to 5.0 per cent of the gross revenues from sales of games of skill and chance. Gross revenues from a sale is the total cost to the player for the right to each single chance or play, whether paid to the operator or qualified organization in cash or by relinquishment of winnings or in exchange for other things of value.

B. Operators of games of skill and chance licensed by the State of Alaska pursuant to AS 5.15.010, et seq., shall pay the fee on a monthly basis on or before the last day of the following month. The fee shall be accompanied by a copy of the report submitted to the authorized permittee pursuant to AS 5.15.087 or any successor statute or regulation.

C. Qualified organizations authorized to conduct games of skill and chance by the State of Alaska pursuant to AS 5.15.010, et seq. who do not make use of a licensed operator shall pay the fee on a quarterly basis by the 45th day following each calendar quarter in which their gross receipts equaled \$50,000 or more. If gross receipts do not exceed \$50,000 for any quarter the fee shall be paid on an annual basis on or before March 15 of each year. Payment of the fee shall be accompanied by a copy of the quarterly or annual report filed with the State of Alaska pursuant to AS 5.15.080 or any successor statute or regulation.

D. The Finance Director shall have the same right to examine and audit the records of operators and qualified organization as are given to the Finance Director under BMC 4.16 to examine and audit the records of persons required to collect the city sales tax. The penalties, interest and charges applicable under BMC 4.16 to late or incomplete filing of reports or returns or payment of sales tax and the failure to keep or produce records, as well as the right to protest or appeal a decision of the Finance Director, shall apply to the late or incomplete filing of reports or returns, the late or incomplete payment of the additional fee under this chapter and the failure to keep or produce adequate records.

5.04.048 Insurance Required.

A. For purposes of this section, "transient lodging business" includes, but is not limited to, hotel compensation.

B. No person may operate a transient lodging business unless there is in effect during the period of such operation a commercial general liability insurance policy in an amount of not less than \$1,000,000 per person and a combined aggregate amount of not less than \$2,000,000 per occurrence. The deductible or self-retained coverage may not exceed \$10,000.

Such insurance must include coverage for the business for liability arising out of the negligence of the business, its owners, employees and agents.

C. Each application for a business license by a transient lodging business must be accompanied by a copy of the insurance policy required by this section. No business license may be granted to a transient lodging business that does not provide a copy of a current policy required by this section. Provided, the clerk may, in the exercise of discretion, accept a certificate of insurance provided to the Finance Director by an insurance agent or broker licensed to do business in the State of Alaska in lieu of the policy itself.

D. The transient lodging business shall provide the Finance Director with a copy of each confirmation provided by the insurer of renewal of the required policy. Such confirmation must be provided to the City before the date of expiration of the policy that is provided to meet the requirements of this section.

E. Within seven (7) days of the receipt of the written demand from the City, a transient lodging business shall provide to the City for inspection, copying and review the policy of insurance meeting the requirements of this section. The failure of a transient lodging business to provide the policy as required by this subsection invalidates the transient lodging business license issued to such business under this chapter. A license invalidated under this subsection may be renewed by filing a complete application and payment of the late license fee under Section 060 of this Chapter.

F. A transient lodging business may not operate if it has failed or refused to produce the policy of insurance as required under subsection (e) or has failed to provide confirmation of renewal prior to the expiration date, including any grace period allowed for the policy.

5.04.050 Term and Classification.

Licenses issued to one half of the businesses shall expire on December 31 of the even numbered years and the licenses issued to the other half of the businesses shall expire on December 31 of the odd numbered years. The Finance Director shall establish the method of allocating business to the odd and even years and may establish and implement such classifications of businesses as may be useful in administering the sales tax or other city programs.

5.04.060 Renewal.

Application for renewal of a license and payment of the biennial fee shall be made before December 31st of the license expiration year. Any renewal application made after December 31st of the license expiration year shall be subject to a fee for the business license of twice the fee set out in BMC 5.04.040A. By December 10 of each year, the Finance Department shall mail a written notice of renewal to each licensed business whose license will expire that year; provided, neither the failure of the city to mail the notice or the failure of a business to receive the notice shall have the effect of extending the December 31 renewal deadline nor of waiving any penalty or additional or increased fee for the late filing of a renewal application.

5.04.070 Regulations.

The Finance Director may promulgate regulations necessary to determine and collect fees imposed and to otherwise enforce the provisions of this chapter. The regulations become effective, with such changes as may be made by the city council, on the day following the city council meeting at which the proposed regulations are submitted to the council for review unless the regulations are rejected by the council.

5.04.080 Failure to obtain.

A person who engages in business before filing a business license application, or who fails to file any report or to pay the fee as prescribed by this chapter, or who fails to file a license renewal application before February 1, shall, in addition to payment of the required fee, be subject to a penalty of \$100.00 that shall be paid before the license may be issued.

5.04.090 Offenses.

It is unlawful for a person to:

- A. Willfully evade the licensing provisions of the chapter;
- B. Fail to make an application for license or fail to keep or produce any records required hereunder or by regulation;
- C. Make a false or fraudulent return or false statement with intent to defraud the city or evade payment of the fee; or
- D. Aid or abet another in an attempt to evade payment of the fee.
- E. Fail to pay the required fee.
- F. Engage in or operate a business without a license issued pursuant to this chapter.
- G. Engage in or operate a business for which insurance is required under this chapter without a policy of such insurance in effect.
- H. Fail or refuse to produce a policy of insurance required by this chapter within seven (7) days of the delivery by the clerk of a written request to produce such a policy.

5.04.100 False statements.

It is unlawful for an executive officer, manager or agent of a corporation or agent of a person to provide false information or documents or to make or permit to be made for his principal or employer a false statement in connection with an application for a business license or in answer to an inquiry from the city clerk with an intent or purpose to evade the payment of the fee or to obtain, continue, or renew a license without fully complying with the requirements of this chapter.

5.04.110 Violation - Penalty.

A person who is found guilty of a violation of any provision of this chapter, or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto, is subject to a fine of up to \$200; provided, the person is subject to a fine of up to \$500 for a violation that occurs within three years of a conviction of a prior violation of any provision of this chapter.

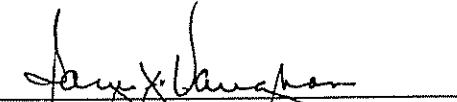
Section 3. Effective date and transition. This ordinance shall become effective immediately upon adoption; provided all current validly issued licenses shall remain in effect until December 31, 1998. All license renewal applications shall be submitted by no later than December 31, 1998. One half of the license renewals shall be for one year and the remainder shall be for two years, as determined by the Finance Director. The fee for licenses that are renewed for one year shall be one half of the biennial license fee. Licenses issued for one year shall expire on December 31, 1999 and shall be issued thereafter for two-year terms. The Finance Director may implement such procedures and rules as may be necessary to provide for the transition into the biennial licensing. The Finance Director shall send written notice to all license holders informing them of the new registration period, license fees and penalties. The Finance Director shall also insure the public notice is posted and published informing businesses of the changed date by which business license renewal applications must be filed.

ENACTED this 17th day of NOVEMBER, 1998, by a vote of 6 Yea, 0 Nay, and 0 Abstaining.

CITY OF BETHEL


Agnes L. Phillips, Mayor

ATTEST:


Gaye J. Vaughan, City Clerk

4.14.050 Tax returns and remittance.

A. Tax returns are required to be filed for the calendar quarters ending on March 31st due before or on April 30th, June 30th due before or on July 31st, September 30 due before or on October 31st, and December 31st due before or on January 3rd the following year. ~~Not later than the last day of the month following the quarter a tax return is required to be submitted.~~ Every operator under this chapter shall deliver to the city finance department a tax return, signed by the operator(s), on a form provided by the city finance department for each registered place of business regardless of whether taxes are due for the quarter. Each operator shall remit therewith the entire amount of the tax due from such operator pursuant to this chapter for the immediately preceding calendar quarter. Tax returns and the tax due under this chapter must be actually received by the department within the time required by this section. A tax or report actually received by the department at any time following the ~~tenth (10th)~~ seven (7th) business day of the month following the calendar quarter for which the tax is due is delinquent and subject to penalty and interest under this chapter.

B. The tax return shall set forth or include:

1. The number of transient lodging rooms in each separate facility operated by the operator and the address or location of each facility;
2. The gross receipts from each facility, including all receipts that are excluded under BMC [4.14.030\(A\)\(1\)](#), (2), (3) or (4);
3. Receipts from each facility that are exempt under BMC [4.14.030\(A\)\(1\)](#), (2), (3) or (4);
4. Penalties, interest due; and late filing fee of \$25.00 per month the tax return is overdue.
5. Such other relevant information and supporting documents as the department may require. [Ord. 01-28 § 2; Ord. 97-22 § 2.]

The Bethel Municipal Code is current through Ordinance 23-01, and legislation passed through January 10, 2023.

Disclaimer: The city clerk's office has the official version of the Bethel Municipal Code. Users should contact the city clerk's office for ordinances passed subsequent to the ordinance cited above.

[City Website: www.cityofbethel.org](http://www.cityofbethel.org)
[Code Publishing Company](#)

4.16.270 Penalties and interest for late filing.

A. A late filing fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25) per month or partial month shall be added to all late-filed sales tax reports in addition to interest and penalties.

B. Delinquent sales tax bears interest at the rate of fifteen (15) percent per annum until paid.

C. In addition, delinquent sales tax shall be subject to an additional penalty as follows:

If Payment Made:	Additional Penalty (Percentage of Tax)
Within seven (7) calendar days after delinquency date	One (1) percent
More than seven (7) calendar days but less than thirty (30) calendar days after delinquency date	Seven (7) percent
Thirty (30) calendar days or more but less than sixty (60) calendar days	Fifteen (15) percent
Sixty (60) calendar days or more	Twenty (20) percent

The penalty does not bear interest. Penalties and interest shall be assessed and collected in the same manner as the tax is assessed and collected.

D. The filing of an incomplete return, or the failure to remit all taxes, shall be treated as the filing of no return.

E. A penalty assessed under this section for the delinquent remittance of sales tax or failure to file a sales tax return may be waived by the finance director, upon written application of the seller accompanied by a payment of all delinquent sales tax, interest and penalty otherwise owed by the seller to the city, within forty-five (45) business days after the date of delinquency. A seller may not be granted more than one (1) waiver of penalty under this subsection in any period of twenty-four (24) consecutive months. The finance director shall report all such waivers of penalty to the council in writing, at least once each calendar quarter. [Ord. 17-39 § 2.]

The Bethel Municipal Code is current through Ordinance 23-01, and legislation passed through January 10, 2023.

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[Code Publishing Company](#)

5.04.050 Additional fees for businesses selling games of skill and chance.

- A. Each business selling games of skill and chance shall pay an additional fee equal to four (4) percent of the gross revenues from sales of games of skill and chance. "Gross revenues from a sale" is the total cost to the player for the right to each single chance or play, whether paid to the operator or qualified organization in cash or by relinquishment of winnings or in exchange for other things of value.
- B. Operators of games of skill and chance licensed by the state pursuant to AS [5.15.010](#), et seq., shall pay the fee on a monthly basis on or before the last day of the following month. The fee shall be accompanied by a copy of the report submitted to the authorized permittee pursuant to AS [5.15.087](#) or any successor statute or regulation.
- C. Qualified organizations authorized to conduct games of skill and chance by the state pursuant to AS [5.15.010](#), et seq., who do not make use of a licensed operator shall pay the fee on a quarterly basis not later than the last day of the month following the quarter a tax return is required to be submitted. A copy of the quarterly report filed with the state pursuant to AS [5.15.080](#) or any successor statute or regulation shall accompany payment of the fee.
- D. The finance director shall have the same right to examine and audit the records of operators and qualified organizations as are given to the finance director under Chapter [4.16](#) BMC to examine and audit the records of persons required to collect the city sales tax. The penalties, interest and charges applicable under Chapter [4.16](#) BMC to late or incomplete filing of reports or returns or payment of sales tax and the failure to keep or produce records, as well as the right to protest or appeal a decision of the finance director, shall apply to the late or incomplete filing of reports or returns, the late or incomplete payment of the additional fee under this chapter and the failure to keep or produce adequate records. [Ord. 17-41 § 2; Ord. 09-17 § 2; Ord. 01-28 § 12; Ord. 8-29 § 2.]

The Bethel Municipal Code is current through Ordinance 23-01, and legislation passed through January 10, 2023.

Disclaimer: The city clerk's office has the official version of the Bethel Municipal Code. Users should contact the city clerk's office for ordinances passed subsequent to the ordinance cited above.

[City Website: www.cityofbethel.org](http://www.cityofbethel.org)
[Code Publishing Company](#)



BETHEL 2045 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

DRAFT FOR STAKEHOLDER REVIEW

1529.50109.13

FEB 2023

Prepared for:

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300 State Highway
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Appendix 9: Police Department Action Items

Appendix 10: Port of Bethel Action Items

Appendix 11: Public Works Department Action Items

Appendix 12: Transit Manager Action Items

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1.0 CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW

1.1 Vision Statement

Bethel is the hub that connects the communities of the rural Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region.

Bethel is a growing, diverse community that strives to improve quality of life, affordability, and opportunities through strategic development that responds to Bethel's remote location.

This vision statement was developed through workshops with the City of Bethel and the Bethel community. It is the foundation for the updated Comprehensive Plan's goals, strategies, and action items – the guiding idea as Bethel looks towards how it will grow and change in the future.

1.2 Purpose of this Plan

A comprehensive plan guides the long-term physical, social, and economic development of a community. It can be difficult to keep long-term community goals in sight while a city is working on its day-to-day functions and meeting the needs of its residents. That is where the Comprehensive Plan comes in – it is intended to be a tool that shows how to bridge the gap between community goals and the strategies and specific actions that are needed to work towards those goals.

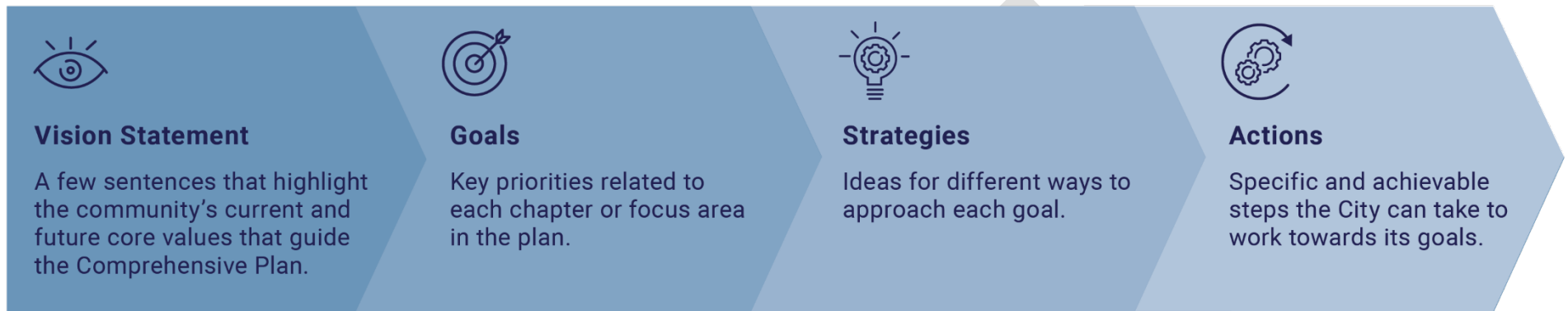
Per Alaska state law, as an incorporated city, Bethel is required to prepare a Comprehensive Plan that is reviewed and updated approximately every ten years. The plan should be adopted by ordinance and may be reviewed and revised as needed – it is a “living document” that should continually grow and change along with the City. Bethel's Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 2011 and set goals for the City looking towards 2035. Using the 2035 plan as a starting point, the updated plan was developed to work towards the community's vision for Bethel in 2045.

While the Comprehensive Plan guides the City's decisions, it is not policy or law. However, it may include ideas for policies or laws that the City could create in order to help reach its goals and meet the community's current and future needs. The ideas in the Comprehensive Plan should serve as a guide for development, zoning, and other regulatory actions, while still being flexible enough to respond to different circumstances.

1.3 Elements of a Comprehensive Plan

A comprehensive plan includes some background information about how a city has been working and what changes the community wants to see. This is used as a basis for the most important parts of the plan: the Vision Statement, Goals, Strategies, and Actions (as defined in the following graphic). Together, these elements form a strategic “to-do list” that the City can follow.

How does a Comprehensive Plan work?



The chapters in this plan are split up by topic, and each has several goals associated with it. Goals are high-level priorities, so strategies start bridging the gap between the goals and the actions needed to achieve those goals. The actions make up a suggested “to-do list” for the City to work towards its goals and vision. Actions can include a variety of methods, such as coordination the City should initiate or new policies the City could consider enacting. To help the City track progress towards its goals, the Appendices of this plan include checklists of action items and additional notes split up by City departments responsible for leading each list of action items.

A significant amount of background information about past efforts and future needs was gathered as part of the plan development process. This plan seeks to strike a balance between capturing this large body of information while helping readers readily find information that is the most useful to them. For example, the summaries, figures, and simplified lists of action items in the chapters give a broader overview for users, while the appendices provide checklists of department-specific actions along with additional clarifications, ideas, and notes that are not included in the main chapters. When relevant, different actions may refer to other sections of the plan to help provide more context or show overlap between strategies.

Most importantly, the purpose of the Plan is to inspire action and to move towards the community’s goals. Hopefully, the Comprehensive Plan will continually play an active role in community planning and discussions.

1.4 Plan Development Process

To update the Comprehensive Plan, the project team reviewed each section from the past plan and conducted research on changes within the community and its priorities, including extensive discussions with City staff, committees, commissions, stakeholder organizations, and community members. The goal is to have an updated plan with action items that are concise, implementable, and in line with City goals for 2045.

Community input was critical to the update process. A Stakeholder Working Group was formed with representatives from various organizations in Bethel, including Bethel Native Corporation (BNC), the Lower Kuskokwim School District (LKSD), Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP),

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT), and the Yukon Kuskokwim Fitness Center. Two Community Meetings to collect public input were held in March of 2022 and April of 2023. Presentations or work sessions were completed with most of the City Commissions and Committees, as well as City Council. The project team created a public project website with information and a Public Comment Map to collect place-specific input, and other feedback was gathered through direct communication from community members.

Upon reaching final draft form, the plan will be presented to the City Planning Commission and City Council. Per AS 29.40.030(b), City Council, after receiving the recommendations of the Planning Commission, will review and adopt by ordinance the Comprehensive Plan.

1.5 Chapter Summaries

The chapter summaries below discuss what is contained in each chapter and the goals associated with each one. In the electronic version of this plan, each goal contains a link to the relevant section of the plan for easy access.

Chapter 1: Overview

This chapter provides an overview of why the updated Comprehensive Plan was created, the elements it contains, and how the elements of the plan work together; the intent is that this introduction will help set the stage for the effective and wide-spread use of the plan.

Chapter 2: Existing Conditions

This chapter provides an overview of the history of Bethel; demographic information; current land use, transportation, and economic patterns; and key challenges for which the City must plan looking towards the future.

PLAN BODY:

Chapters 3 through 8 contain background information, goals, strategies, and action items. Each chapter focuses on a different area of focus for the City. The goals from each chapter are listed below.

Chapter 3: Housing & Land Use

1. Address potential barriers to housing development.
2. Facilitate more affordable housing development and access to affordable housing.
3. Reserve space to accommodate community needs and desired development.
4. Identify areas that are good candidates for infill development and take steps to facilitate their development.
5. Using the Future Land Use Plan Map and its land use designations, shape future development to ensure an organization of uses that is logical and compatible.

6. Make spatial information and maps available to the public online using GIS.

Chapter 4: Local Transportation

1. Use the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) to guide all local transportation facility planning.
2. Plan for an organized, proactive approach to surface transportation facility maintenance.
3. Develop the surface transportation network to reduce travel times, alleviate congestion, and support future development.
4. Design new and reconstructed streets with a focus on providing safe and comfortable routes for all transportation modes and all users.
5. Improve and expand the trail system.
6. Strategically seek funding for transportation facility construction and maintenance.
7. Improve the public transit system to be more convenient and responsive to the community's needs.
8. Evaluate site development codes to better support safe access for all transportation modes.

Chapter 5: Regional Transportation

1. Create a well-functioning airport area for travelers and businesses.
2. Support DOT&PF in airport operations and planning.
3. Study and plan for potential changes to the river's course that may impact port operations.
4. Maintain adequate port infrastructure to support shipping operations.
5. Maintain infrastructure to support the use of small boats and float planes for transportation, commerce, subsistence, and recreation.
6. Support the improvement and expansion of other modes of regional transportation.

Chapter 6: Utility Infrastructure

1. Advance projects in Bethel to increase electricity production from alternative energy sources to reduce both costs and generation of greenhouse gases.
2. Based on the results of the Preliminary Engineering Report (2022), transition Bethel's water and sewer utilities to fully-piped systems serving all residences and businesses by 2035.

3. Facilitate broadband development within the City of Bethel to advance community access to reliable internet service.
4. Prolong the life of the existing landfill.

Chapter 7: Public Facilities & Services

1. Enhance the City's staff recruitment efforts.
2. Communicate regularly and effectively with the community through various channels.
3. Optimize the management of City revenue and spending.
4. Manage City lands in an efficient, cost-effective, and forward-thinking manner.
5. Manage updates to City facilities and equipment in an efficient, cost-effective, and forward-thinking manner.
6. Improve public safety facilities and services in Bethel.
7. Target specific public safety concerns within Bethel.
8. Enhance the role of parks in the Bethel community.
9. Enhance recreational facilities and programs in Bethel.
10. Enhance the network of trails and open spaces in Bethel.

Chapter 8: People & Economy

1. Promote high-quality education and career training in Bethel, so that there are opportunities for locals and newcomers to access training and become employed in Bethel.
2. Minimize potential negative impacts to Bethel from the Donlin Mine efforts and maximize potential benefits.
3. Support subsistence rights and access to resources for Bethel residents and Alaska Natives throughout the region.
4. Support locally-specific cultural activities and attractions in Bethel.
5. Foster a thriving local business community.
6. Support and expand tourism and visitation to Bethel.

APPENDICES:

The appendices repeat the goals, strategies, and action items based on each City leader or department. Each Action proposed throughout Chapters 3-8 is repeated only once in the Appendices based on which party is assigned to lead the City's efforts on that Action. As such, each Appendix can serve as a "to-do list" for a separate party, including extra context or ideas gathered during plan development that are not included in the chapters.

Appendix 1: Administration Department (AD)

Appendix 2: City Clerk (CC)

Appendix 3: City Manager (CM)

Appendix 4: Finance Department (FI)

Appendix 5: Fire Department (FD)

Appendix 6: Grant Manager (GM)

Appendix 7: Landfill Manager (LM)

Appendix 8: Planning Department (PL)

Appendix 9: Police Department (PD)

Appendix 10: Port of Bethel (PO)

Appendix 11: Public Works Department (PW)

Appendix 12: Transit Manager (TM)

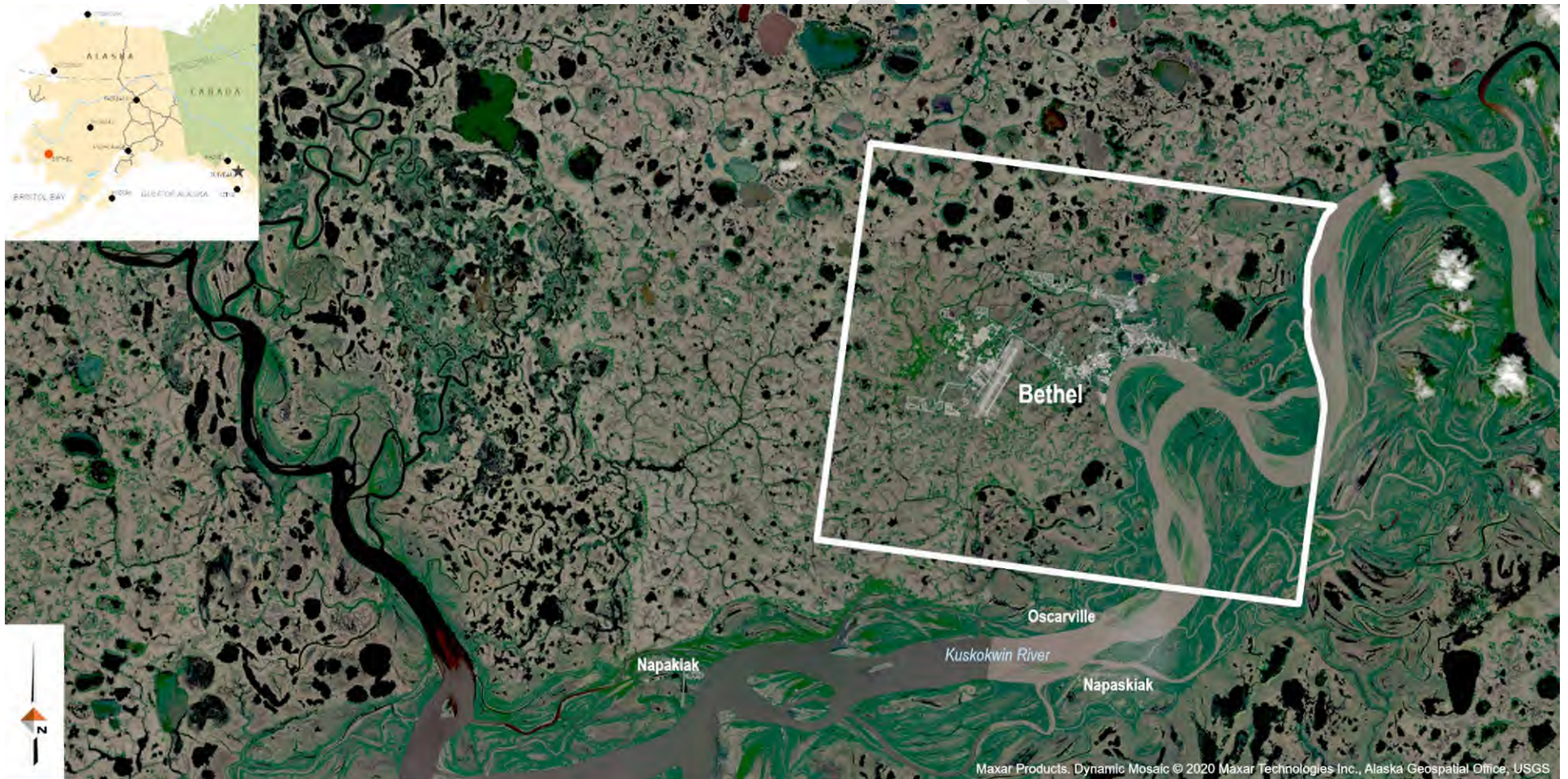
Appendix 13: To-Be-Determined Responsibility Action Items (TBD)

Commented [KS1]: QUESTION FOR THE CITY AND STAKEHOLDERS:
We would like to find assignments for all of the action items currently included in the TBD list. Please help us recommend which party should be responsible, or if a new appendix should be created for a party not currently included.

2.0 CHAPTER 2: EXISTING CONDITIONS

The City of Bethel is the regional hub of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. The city is situated on the outer bank of a bend in the Kuskokwim River, approximately 40 miles inland from the Bering Sea. Much of Bethel's 44 square miles is undeveloped land within the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge, and the city is remotely located off the Alaskan road network, about 400 air miles from Anchorage.

The delta region stretches across 59,000 square miles and is the historic home of the Yup'ik people; 56 villages across the region rely on Bethel as a major source for transportation, government, education, health services, and commerce.



Aerial view of Bethel, its city limits, and the locations of a few of the surrounding communities.

2.1 History of Bethel

The Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region has been home to Native cultures, including Yup'ik, Siberian Yup'ik, and Cup'ik people, for thousands of years. Several Yup'ik settlements were located near present-day Bethel's location. In 1867, shortly after the United States purchased Alaska from Russia, the Alaska Commercial Company opened three trading posts on the Kuskokwim River. In 1885, the Moravian Church established a mission, store, and school near one of these trading posts and a Yup'ik village called "Mumtrekhlogamute" or "Mamterillermuit" (translated to "smokehouse people" or "village of many fish caches").

In the early twentieth century, Bethel began to emerge as the hub it is today, with the establishment of a post office, the mapping of a key deep-water channel for freight, the opening of federal and state agency offices, and the establishment of schools to serve families moving to the region. After a series of epidemics in the area, many native children from villages across the region were placed in orphanages in Bethel, further expanding the Bethel population. Building on existing aviation and government activities, the U.S. Military had a presence in Bethel since World War II and the Cold War era.

Bethel was incorporated as a second-class city in 1957. A regional high school was built in the early 1970s. By the 1980s, Bethel had grown to be the largest town in western and arctic Alaska; public and private industry increased, and subdivision development boomed. Today, Bethel is the eighth most populous city in Alaska.

2.2 Population and Demographic Information

Per U.S. Census Bureau data for 2020, the population of Bethel is approximately 6,325 people. The table below shows a general trend of population growth over the decades of the past century, as well as an increasing percent of the census area living within Bethel city limits. However, Bethel's population and percentage of the census area population decreased between 2009 and 2020. Recent acceleration of migration out of villages and rural Alaska is likely the result of high energy and food costs and changing generational expectations. This trend is both drawing people from villages to regional hubs like Bethel, and from regional hubs like Bethel to Anchorage.

Bethel is a growing and diverse community. According to the 2020 American Community Survey, 79 percent of the population identify as people of color; 63 percent of the population in Bethel is Alaska Native. Alaska Native organizations in the area include tribal government Orutsararmiut Native Council (ONC), village corporation Bethel Native Corporation (BNC), and regional corporation Calista Corporation. As of 2019, only six percent of Bethel residents were born outside of Alaska (down from 30 percent in 2000).

The median age of the Bethel region is 29, with people 17 years and under contributing to 31 percent of the population. According to the ONC and City of Bethel 2010 Long Range Transportation Plan, two important and fast-growing population subgroups in Bethel are seniors and youth. It is anticipated that Bethel will continue to evolve as a center for education and workforce development for area youth, and as a center for specialized facilities and services for the region's elderly residents, further accelerating the growth of these population subgroups.

Per the 2020 American Community Survey, there are approximately 1,618 households in Bethel, with an average of 3.3 people per household (significantly above the U.S. average of 2.51 people per household). The median household income in Bethel is \$86,624 (including income outside of work such as Alaska Permanent Fund or Native corporation dividends) and the median household earnings for work is \$42,247.

Table 1: City of Bethel and Bethel Census Area Population over Time

Year	City of Bethel	Bethel Census Area	Bethel as % of Census Area
1920	221	-	-
1930	178	-	-
1939	376	4,026	9.3
1950	651	4,670	13.9
1960	1,258	6,360	19.8
1970	2,416	8,917	27.1
1980	3,576	10,999	32.5
1990	4,674	13,656	34.2
2000	5,471	16,006	34.2
2009	6,522	17,352	37.6
2020	6,325	18,666	33.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. The Y-K Delta includes the approximately 37 villages of the Bethel Census Area and 19 additional villages of the Wade Hampton Census Area at the north end of the Delta. The data above does not include the population of the Wade Hampton Census Area.

2.3 Economy

Bethel's status as a regional hub has driven the growth of its population over the city's history. For this to continue, available local opportunities will need to be able to support residents in the face of a very high cost of living. The cost of fuel increases the cost of heating, electricity, transportation, and shipping; most goods must be shipped to the city by barge or plane.

According to the American Community Survey 2020 data, just over 30 percent of the employed population in Bethel works in educational services, health care, and social assistance. Other prominent employment sectors include transportation, warehousing, and utilities (about 10 percent of the working population) and professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services (another approximately 10 percent). While there is some overlap with the previously mentioned industries, it is also notable that almost 30 percent of the workforce is classified as government workers. There are currently over 500 businesses licensed in Bethel.

While more difficult to officially document, subsistence activities including fishing, hunting, and berry picking are an important part of life in Bethel and supplement residents' incomes. There are a number of local artisans who produce artwork, jewelry, clothing, and other items for sale locally, in

Anchorage, and worldwide. Some of the economy is also supported by a small visitor industry, mostly including people visiting friends and relatives and business travelers, but also some bird watching and sport fishing visitors.

According to 2022 labor statistics from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the Bethel unemployment rate has recently been hovering around 10 to 11 percent, while the statewide unemployment rate is currently closer to approximately 4 or 5 percent. The City has noted shortages of certain types of skilled workers, such as for jobs in the Public Works department. This indicates an opportunity to improve local career training and help connect people with work, which would also help with retaining homegrown talent in the Bethel workforce.

2.4 Land Use and Transportation Patterns

Historically, Bethel grew up around its port, so it is no surprise that the City's land use patterns continue to follow the Kuskokwim River. The center of Bethel extends along a portion of the Chief Eddie Hoffman Highway and 1st Avenue, which run parallel to the river. The post office, hospital, movie theater, cultural center, government and Native corporation offices, University of Alaska-Fairbanks Kuskokwim Campus, grocery store, and several churches and restaurants all lie along this "downtown corridor," which extends approximately from the post office to Browns Slough. Several primarily residential subdivisions are located adjacent to the core. Some of the City's key parks fall in this area (the waterfront park and trail and Lomack Beach, with Pinky's Park and the Fitness Center not far to the north), and the port and small boat harbor are just past Browns Slough. This area is the major employment, civic, cultural, and social center for the City.

People use a variety of modes of transportation, including personal vehicle; public transportation (City bus service); foot transportation along roads, trails, and boardwalks; bicycle; four-wheeler or snowmachine; or taxicab. Regional connections to and from villages and out of the Bethel region are made via boat, seasonal ice road, trails through the tundra, and airplane.

From the core, the City spreads out in two primary directions. Ridgecrest Drive curves north towards the Lower Kuskokwim School District campus and public works facilities including the sewage lagoons and landfill; extending west from the schools is a significant portion of the residential development in Bethel extending from Ptarmigan Street. West on the highway is the airport and a few other residential subdivisions.

There was not always a formal connection between the western terminus of Ptarmigan Street to the north of H-Marker Lake and the highway down to the south. Tundra Ridge Road is being completed to help connect the road network and decrease travel times. There will still be a large undeveloped area between Tundra Ridge Road to the west, the part of town along Ridgecrest Drive to the east, Ptarmigan Street to the north, and the highway to the south; this is often referred to as the "Donut Hole." Future development may fill in parts of this area rather than extend further from the core area of Bethel; the City plans to support this infill opportunity with a new north-south road through the Donut Hole.

To influence future land use and transportation development, the City can plan how to use City-owned property or property it may acquire or sell, in some cases pursuing partnerships with private property owners. Property ownership patterns and different development goals of different owners (whether organizations or individuals) have influenced development patterns over the years and will continue to do so in the future. Many areas of Bethel, including many undeveloped areas, are owned by Bethel Native Corporation (BNC) or are designated native allotments. Some native allotment owners have developed their properties, but other native allotments remain undeveloped. In the past, the City has collaborated with BNC on projects or worked with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to collaborate with native allotment owners and assist with development.

2.5 Environmental Challenges

Climate Change and Thawing Permafrost

Weather and climate in Bethel are characterized by “high humidity, frequent fogs, considerable cloudiness and many periods of rain or snow (ONC LRTP, 2020).” Summer temperatures typically range from 40 to 62 degrees Fahrenheit, and winter temperatures typically range from -2 to 19 degrees. Frost in Bethel averages from around early September to the end of May. According to a 2011 study of communities in the surrounding region by Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC), annual temperatures in the region are expected to get warmer and wetter. For example, annual temperatures are expected to rise by five to eight degrees, and four to twelve degrees in the winter. Residents have reported an earlier spring breakup season with more rain in the summers.

The warming climate is already having an impact on the built environment in Bethel. Permafrost in the area is characterized as “warm” permafrost, averaging around 31.2 degrees Fahrenheit, according to the City. Community members are now observing permafrost at 4 to 6 feet below ground surface. This poses a problem to local construction and increases maintenance cost as the permafrost continues to thaw, which can lead to maintenance needs for building foundations, roads and utility infrastructure. With the soil types already posing challenges to development, the changing permafrost may only make construction and maintenance more complicated in the future.

Winter travel on frozen lakes and the river is also becoming more challenging as annual temperatures rise. The Kuskokwim River is freezing later and breaking up earlier. Ice conditions throughout the winter are becoming more variable, which prevents reliable and safe ice road routes. Recent winters have brought less snow, so road surfaces have been exposed and dry, causing dust problems which were typically only an issue during the summer.

Erosion and Flooding

Bethel has had erosion along the river since the community was originally founded. The community was once protected by a series of small islands in the main channel of the Kuskokwim River. As of 1939, the river eroded these protective islands. Bethel has a steep riverbank, made up of easily erodible materials, often exacerbating the erosion problem. Other factors contributing to erosion are direct sunlight in the southeast portion of the bank which causes melting of permafrost as well as high foot traffic, destroying protective vegetation.

Bethel experiences seasonal flooding due to ice jams during “break up,” the springtime melting season. This has led to the riverbank adjacent to Bethel eroding over the last 40 years. A historic flood in 1995 created a cove measuring 350 feet wide and 200 feet inland, which posed a danger to structures within the city. A rock seawall was placed along 600 linear feet of the dock and riverbank by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1995. To combat further erosion, the Corps initiated a \$24 million project which included an 8,000-foot bank stabilization. The City reports there is always more work to be done to improve and maintain the critical seawall infrastructure.

With changes in the river’s course expected and the eroding riverbank, there may be impacts to the deep water channel and port Bethel and the region rely on for the delivery of fuel and other cargo. Further study is needed to plan for potential mitigation needs.

Subsistence Resource Impacts

Bethel is situated in a generally flat area of the tundra. Vegetation includes low-growing shrubs, herbs, grasses, and sedges rooted in a mat of mosses and lichens. Commonly found plants include sphagnum moss and Labrador tea, crowberry, birch, willow, and berries, such as currants, blueberries, cranberries, blackberries, and salmonberries – the environment is rich with foods that can be harvested. There are abundant waterfowl and other bird habitats around Bethel. Moose is one of the most common subsistence land mammals (comprising of over half of land mammals harvested), followed by caribou. Commonly harvested furbearers include rabbits, beaver, fox, wolves, and mink.

No federally listed endangered species or critical habitats currently exist in Bethel. However, Bethel is among many coastal Alaskan communities being impacted by decreasing fish populations. Bethel's rivers and lakes are home to several types of fish: arctic char, all five salmon species, lake trout, dolly varden, rainbow trout, arctic grayling, northern pike, sculpin, whitefish, burbot, stickleback, blackfish. Fish have been less abundant, and those who rely on fish for their livelihood or supplementing their diet are subject to sometimes unpredictable closures in order to protect fish populations.

2.6 Public Facilities and Services

The city is governed by a Mayor, City Manager, and seven-member City Council. All council members are elected at large for 2-year terms. The Mayor is elected by the City Council, and the City Manager oversees the daily operations of the City.

Commissions and Committees include the Board of Ethics, Community Action Grant Committee, Finance Committee, Port Commission, Planning Commission, Public Safety and Transportation Commission, Public Works Committee, and Community Parks and Recreation Committee.

Administrative services for the City of Bethel are provided by the City Manager, City Clerk, Grants Manager, and Finance Department; this includes operations, records, and legal affairs like contracts and ordinances. Other departments focus on specific City facilities and/or services.

Administration:

The City Manager serves as the chief executive officer of the City and oversees City leases and contracts with the assistance of a contracted attorney. The City Manager also directs day-to-day operations through the other focused departments.

The City Clerk is appointed by City Council and acts as their parliamentary advisor, also conducting research and processing of Council requests and actions. Other duties include maintaining and managing City records, conducting municipal elections, serving as notary public, managing and writing City ordinances and resolutions, public relations, and working with other governmental representatives and agencies.

The Grants Manager obtains grant funding for various City capital and operating needs.

The Finance Department prepares and administers the annual City budget and manages City accounts, payments, taxes and other revenue, grants, and records.

The Administration Department provides general information to the public and directs inquiries to appropriate city personnel, as well as organizing City hiring and human resources.

City Departments:

The Planning Department provides guidance and reviews for all new development and redevelopment in the City to ensure code compliance. The department also manages permit records and makes recommendations for changes to code when needed to better promote health, safety, and responsible development in the community.

The Port of Bethel oversees shipping, receiving, and distribution of petroleum products and barged freight for the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. Port infrastructure includes the Cargo Dock, Petro Port, Small Boat Harbor, Float Plane Beach, and Seawall.

The Fire Department oversees emergency fire, hazardous materials, and medical response.

The Police Department oversees public safety and law enforcement, in collaboration with regional and state law enforcement and safety entities. The Police Department also oversees animal care and control (including in collaboration with the non-profit organization **Bethel Friends of Canines** (BFK9)).

The Public Works Department oversees City services (water, wastewater, and solid waste), transportation and other infrastructure, buildings, vehicles, equipment, and Parks and Recreation.

Other utilities and services provided by other public agencies or private entities include:

Fuel: Crowley, Delta Western, and Vitus currently supply fuel to Bethel.

Electricity: provided by the Alaska Village Electric Cooperative (AVEC), a member-owned rural electric cooperative that provides electricity for Bethel and nearby villages.

Telephone: In-state telephone services are provided by United Utilities, Inc., a GCI company. GCI provides long-distance service.

Internet: GCI is the only local internet provider.

Health services: Health services are provided by the Yukon Kuskokwim Health Center (YKHC), and the Bethel Family Clinic (a federally funded community health center).

Homelessness services: Bethel Winter House is a non-profit organization that provides services for individuals and families at-risk of or experiencing homelessness.

Other human services: Bethel Community Services Foundation (BCSF) is a non-profit organization that provides other community-based programs and services across the YK Delta region.

Post office: The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) operates a full post office in Bethel.

Education: Bethel is home of the Kuskokwim Campus of the University of Alaska- Fairbanks, Adult Basic Education, the Lower Kuskokwim School District (LKSD), Bethel Regional High School, Mikelnguut Elitnaurviat School, Bethel Alternative Boarding School, a Yupik Immersion School (Ayaprun Elitnaurvik), Involved Parents Preschool, Headstart, and Junior ROTC. Yuut Elitnaurviat (People's Learning Center) provides vocational training, and Bethel also has a flight school.

Museum and community center: The Yupiit Piciryarait Cultural Center and Museum provides a gathering space for community-wide events in Bethel. The museum was founded in 1965 as the "Bethel Museum" by the City and transferred to the Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) in 1995. Galleries display exhibits of Yup'ik, Cup'ik, and Athabascan people of the YK Delta in ancient and contemporary times.

Library: In conjunction with the University of Alaska, Bethel operates the Kuskokwim Consortium Library.

Fitness Center: The YK Fitness Center is a community multipurpose gym and swimming pool facility operated and managed by the City.



Bethel City Hall.

3.0 CHAPTER 3: HOUSING & LAND USE

3.1 Introduction

As discussed in Chapter 2: Existing Conditions, land use in Bethel has been shaped by a variety of factors including the changing riverfront and the location of “less difficult” areas for development, whether based on soil conditions or ownership such as native allotments. These factors have helped shape Bethel’s development, with a mixed-use core and a small number of major roads spreading out in different directions to serve primarily residential development further out.

Any development is challenging and expensive. Materials must be shipped in, buildings must be constructed on piles to respond to permafrost and wetlands, and there are not always enough people available locally who have skills to design and/or construct buildings and the infrastructure to serve them. Due to the spread-out development pattern, roads and utilities must travel farther, further increasing construction and maintenance cost.

This can create insurmountable challenges for potential developers, homeowners, renters, and business owners. The City’s vision for 2045 focuses on easing the high cost of living and improving quality of life; facilitating land use development that is more efficient will play a significant role in this effort. This plan seeks to identify ways the City can streamline land use processes, lessen barriers that the City code may pose, provide helpful land use information, and shape development patterns to move the City towards its goals.

3.2 Housing

Bethel homes are in short supply and are difficult to afford for buyers and renters. Finding way to assist with the development of more (and particularly more affordable) housing is a major priority for the City.

In 2021, a team including Orutsararmiut Native Council (ONC), NeighborWorks America and Alaska, Enterprise Community Foundation, the City of Bethel, Cook Inlet Housing Authority and Cook Inlet Lending Center, Agnew::Beck, DOWL, and SALT published “Clean Water Makes a Healthy Home: A Concept Paper for an Innovative Approach to Infrastructure Investment in Rural Alaska.” This concept paper included a study of housing needs in Bethel and the infrastructure needed to support more housing. The project focused on how to reduce costs and expand revenue sources for housing development, developing partnerships, and providing adequate water and sewer infrastructure. The water and sewer findings are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6: Utility Infrastructure.

Per the study, 11 percent of households are severely overcrowded, and there is a potential demand for an additional 577 units of housing over the next 10 to 20 years. This will need to include both new housing and replacing aging and substandard units. The rental market is limited, and approximately 38 percent of households pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing.

Denser housing costs less for developers and residents, whether the housing is owned or rented. Smaller homes require less materials to build and require less energy to heat. Denser housing may also mean residents don’t have to travel as far to get to work, school, healthcare, food, or other destinations. To provide more affordable and workforce housing in Bethel, there should be a focus on facilitating multifamily developments such as

apartment buildings or townhomes, as well as opportunities to build smaller homes on smaller lots. To maximize the benefits of denser residential development and allow more people access to affordable living, these developments should be encouraged closest to the center of Bethel.

Increasing the supply of housing is no small feat, but there are some strategies the City can employ to help make it happen, especially through Planning Department actions. This could include making relevant information more accessible, streamlining development and permitting processes, ensuring compliance with code to avoid complications in the future, and altering code and procedures if opportunities to improve them arise.

GOAL 1: Address potential barriers to housing development.

Strategy 1: Streamline the land use approval process.

Action A: Every five years, audit the Planning Department website and application forms used for land use processes and revise for clarity and ease of use. **PL**

Action B: If an element of the code or process repeatedly causes unnecessary difficulty or undue delay for housing developers, the City Planner should consider whether it would be of public benefit to make a change to the code and bring the suggested change forward to the Planning Commission and City Council. **PL**

Strategy 2: Ensure that subdivision, development, and design standards are enforced.

Action A: Require compliance with all subdivision standards for approval, including the standard subdivision agreement process. **PL**

Action B: Consider changes to the subdivision approval and agreement process to improve clarity and efficiency. **PL**

Action C: Develop a position description to potentially hire a code enforcement officer. **PL**

Action D: Examine code sections related to non-conformance and coming closer to compliance to determine if changes may be needed. **PL**

Strategy 3: Encourage development by working with developers collaboratively to install public infrastructure, including piped water and sewer systems and roads.

Action A: As part of the subdivision agreement process, consider designing a standardized “impact fee” mechanism to have developers participate in funding when their development will impact the overall system (water and sewer or other infrastructure such as roads). **CM**

Action B: Create a guide for infrastructure development grants or other funding assistance programs, in order to assist developers with finding information. **GM**

Action C: The City can encourage and/or assist subdivision developers to seek and apply for infrastructure grants. **PL**

GOAL 2: Facilitate more affordable housing development and access to affordable housing.

Strategy 1: Use zoning to encourage multifamily and more dense housing development.

Action A: Develop a working group to assist the City Planner to study and create code changes and zoning map changes for a new Multifamily Residential zoning district that can be brought forward to the Planning Commission and City Council for approval. **PL**

Action B: Encourage the implementation of the new Multifamily Residential zone and existing Downtown Commercial and Neighborhood Commercial zones through the Future Land Use Plan Map. **PL**

Action C: Consider rezoning some City land to Multifamily Residential where recommended in the Future Land Use Plan Map. **PL**

Action D: Encourage use of the Planned Unit Development model, which allows increased flexibility on some dimensional aspects of multifamily development and can create open spaces that are shared with a neighborhood feel. **PL**

Strategy 2: Support access to information on housing assistance programs.

Action A: Work with various community partners, potentially including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC), ONC, or BNC, to gather and share educational programming or information to assist people in accessing economic housing assistance. **PL / TBD**

Commented [KS2]: QUESTION FOR THE CITY AND STAKEHOLDERS:
Whose responsibility should this be?

3.3 Strategic Development

Housing is a priority, but the organization of land uses within Bethel must be strategically coordinated to ensure that the City works well as it continues to grow. The available land and varying constraints must be considered alongside what land uses the community will need in the future.

As discussed in the Housing section above, denser development has many benefits. Development costs less; less utility and road infrastructure are needed to connect that development; and access is quicker, easier, and cheaper for Bethel residents.

Yet, development in Bethel must respond to a variety of constraints, including complicated ownership and soil types. So far, it has spread along a curved spine, with a largely undeveloped area nicknamed the “Donut Hole” in the middle. The community has expressed a desire to reserve valuable areas as open space (providing areas for recreation or berry picking, for example), but other properties might be better suited for development to continue.

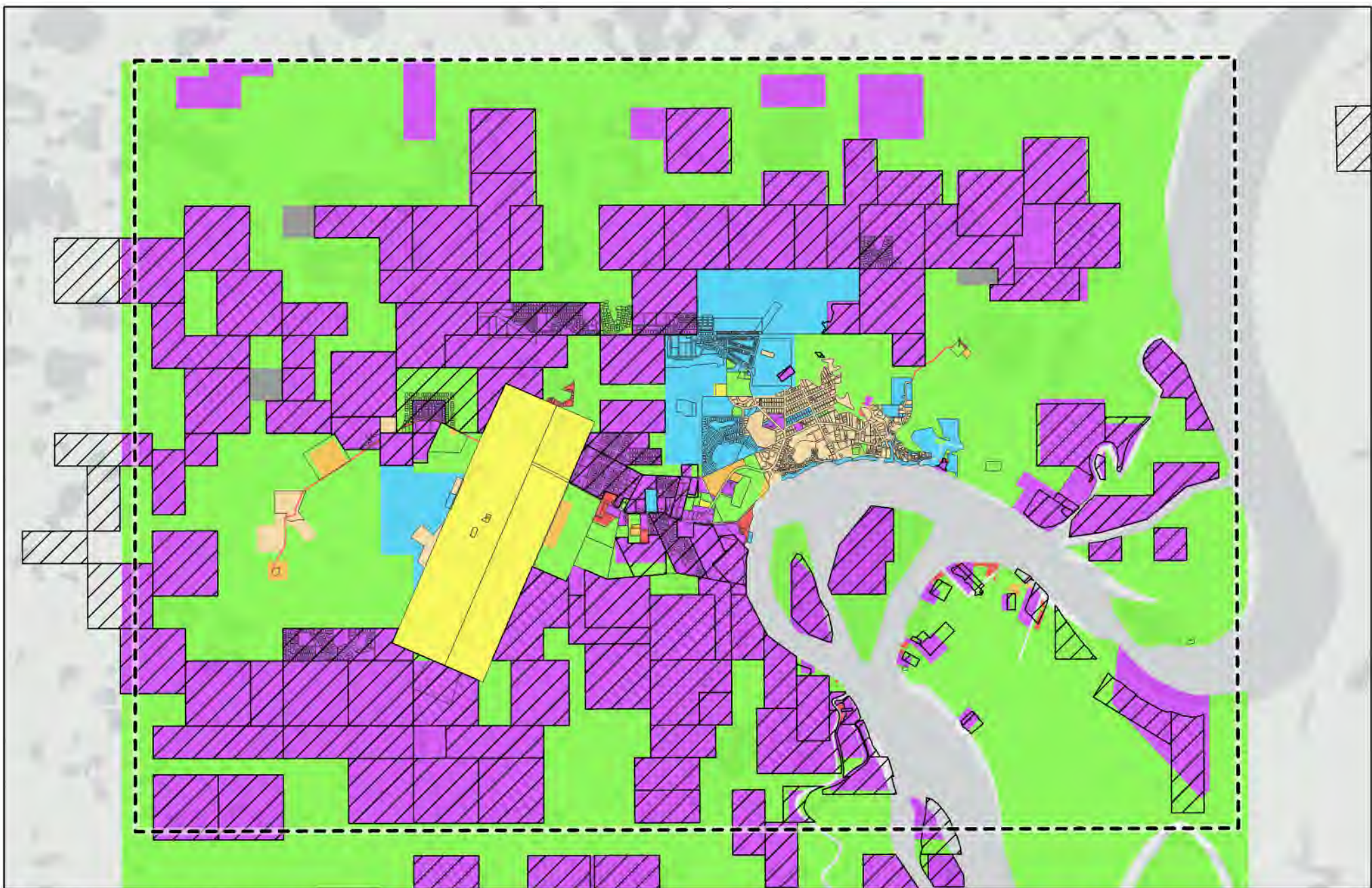


Given the high cost of development in Bethel, along with the expense associated with expanding and maintaining infrastructure such as roads, infill development should be the goal whenever possible. The City should apply this principle to projects on land it owns or might seek to purchase, and the City should also seek ways to shape private development along these lines.

On the next page is a map of land ownership in Bethel. Areas of existing development can be identified as denser concentrations of property lines in gray – primarily along the bend in the Kuskokwim River and extending west in two sections: along the Chief Eddie Hoffman Highway (CEHH) towards the airport to the south and along Ptarmigan Road to the north. H-Marker Lake and the area that is planned to have the future Tundra Ridge Road connection form the western boundary of the “Donut Hole” of undeveloped land. As shown in the color coding on the map, this area consists of a mix of City land, Bethel Native Corporation (BNC) land, and private native allotments.

Aerial view of the “Donut Hole” in Bethel.

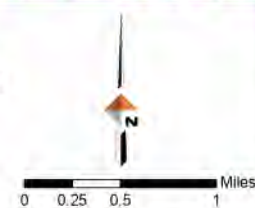
**** It is important to note that the ownership data in the map is primarily sourced from a 1997 map. Some areas did not have ownership information readily available at the time the map was created (marked “Information Unavailable”), and some areas have likely changed ownership since 1997. Most cities track property ownership as part of property tax collection efforts, but since Bethel does not collect property taxes, ownership is not regularly tracked. It would require extensive title research to map all property ownership in Bethel, which may be explored further by the City in the future. This map is not intended to show all current property ownership, but rather to provide a general sense of land ownership patterns in Bethel.*



General Ownership (1997 City of Bethel Comprehensive Plan)

- | | |
|---|---|
| ■ ANCSA^ | ■ State Selected |
| ■ Bethel Native Corporation* | ■ State of Alaska |
| ■ City of Bethel | ■ Information Unavailable |
| ■ Federal | <i>*includes ANCSA 14c1/c2 and ANCSA c3</i> |
| ■ Private | <i>*a small number of properties are also part federal or private ownership</i> |

- | | |
|--|---|
| | Conveyed Native Allotment
(BLM Published: 4/25/2020) |
| | City of Bethel Parcel
Boundary |
| | City of Bethel Boundary |



General Ownership

City of Bethel Comprehensive Plan



Date: January 20, 2023

Figure 1

GOAL 3: Reserve space to accommodate community needs and desired development.

Strategy 1: Inventory City-owned properties and information that may impact how they can be used.

Action A: Inventory all City-owned properties, including their current use or any use requirements/restrictions or other encumbrances associated with original BLM conveyance to the City. **PL**

Strategy 2: Create and regularly maintain a list of community facility and infrastructure needs that will require land.

Action A: Create and maintain a list of community facility and infrastructure needs, in order of priority and including specific spatial needs such as location and approximate area of land required. **PW CM**

Action B: As applicable, identify and initiate coordination with entities that need to be involved in implementation (such as the Public Works department for wastewater facilities, or AVEC for alternative energy generation sites). **PW CM**

Action C: Using the list and the guidance of relevant entities as coordinated by Public Works, the Planning Department research and identify if there are specific City-owned sites that should be reserved for each based on spatial needs. **PL**

Action D: As needed, create a plan to obtain land or lease a property to satisfy each priority community infrastructure space need. **CM**

Strategy 3: Use the Future Land Use Plan Map to designate priority areas for residential and commercial development.

See Future Land Use Plan Map section and Goal 5 below.

Strategy 4: Sell, trade, or lease City-owned properties that the City does not need in the future so that more private development can occur.

Action A: Evaluate City-owned properties that should be considered to sell or lease for private development. **CM**

Action B: Create a plan for how the City will dispose of (sell or lease) certain properties over time. **CM**

Action C: Initiate the process to dispose of these properties according to the plan. **CM**

GOAL 4: Identify areas that are good candidates for infill development and take steps to facilitate their development.

Strategy 1: Identify the best areas for infill development.

Action A: Create a map that highlights a “priority development area” including the best / most likely areas for infill development as Bethel grows. **PL**

Strategy 2: Investigate how private landowners within the priority development area identified above might be interested and able to participate in community development goals.

Action A: Explore partnership opportunities to achieve desired development, such as with BNC. **CM**

Action B: Compile and share information from BIA about how native allotment owners can coordinate towards development. **CM**

Action C: Coordinate with the Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) Realty Department to learn more about potential land exchanges between BNC and native allotment owners for “in-town” native allotments. **CM**

Strategy 3: Decrease barriers to additional commercial development and incentivize development patterns that support more commercial activity.

Action A: Revise zoning code to clarify how shopping centers could be permitted. **PL**

Action B: Consider setting aside a space to host “markets” where small businesses (such as artisans may otherwise work out of their homes) can rent booths and sell goods or services. **PL**

Strategy 4: Facilitate redevelopment of properties that are underutilized, dilapidated, or abandoned.

Action A: Compile a list of sites that appear to be underutilized, dilapidated, or vacant / abandoned. **PL**

Action B: Implement a vacant building registration ordinance. **PL**

Action C: Examine and revise the Public Nuisance Abatement code (BMC 9.36) to improve its effectiveness and efficiency. **PL**

Action D: Consider funding available for the purchase of dilapidated or abandoned properties, potentially for use in partnership developments. **GM**

3.4 Future Land Use Plan Map

The Future Land Use Plan Map is a key component of every Comprehensive Plan for every city. It is a tool used to help shape what types of land uses and neighborhoods develop in different part of town in the future. It is important to note that land use designations in the Future Land Use Plan Map are not the same as zoning, though these designations are related to zoning. The table below outlines their differences.

Table 2: Zoning versus Future Land Use

Zoning Map	Future Land Use Map
Areas are called zoning districts .	Areas are called future land use designations .
Part of Bethel Municipal Code, which is law .	Part of the Comprehensive Plan, which is a planning document (not law) .
Shows current conditions .	Shows the community's vision for the future .
Dictates what land uses are currently legal on each property.	Guides what zoning would be generally suitable in different areas, based on current conditions and expectations for how the City could change over time.
Sets requirements for lot sizes, setbacks, and whether other specific design elements or permits are required, based on which land use is being proposed in which zoning district.	Implies a general type of neighborhood.
Not flexible – a rezone or code change is required for changes.	Flexible – this document can suggest what zoning districts and land uses fit the spirit of each future land use designation, and projects can demonstrate how they are compatible in their site plan review applications.
Both: Considered as part of every planning application review in the City, and used to provide compatibility amongst land uses.	
The Future Land Use Plan Map is especially important in reviewing rezone applications; changes to the Zoning Map must be supported by the Future Land Use Plan Map and the contents of this section in order to be approved.	

It is important to note that the Future Land Use Plan Map is not intended or able to dictate what development occurs. It is still up to individual landowners to decide what they would like to do with their properties. Instead, the Future Land Use Plan Map serves to show community goals for land use patterns in different areas. Since the Comprehensive Plan itself is not law, it is not capable of rezoning areas, but it can and should be used to guide rezones.

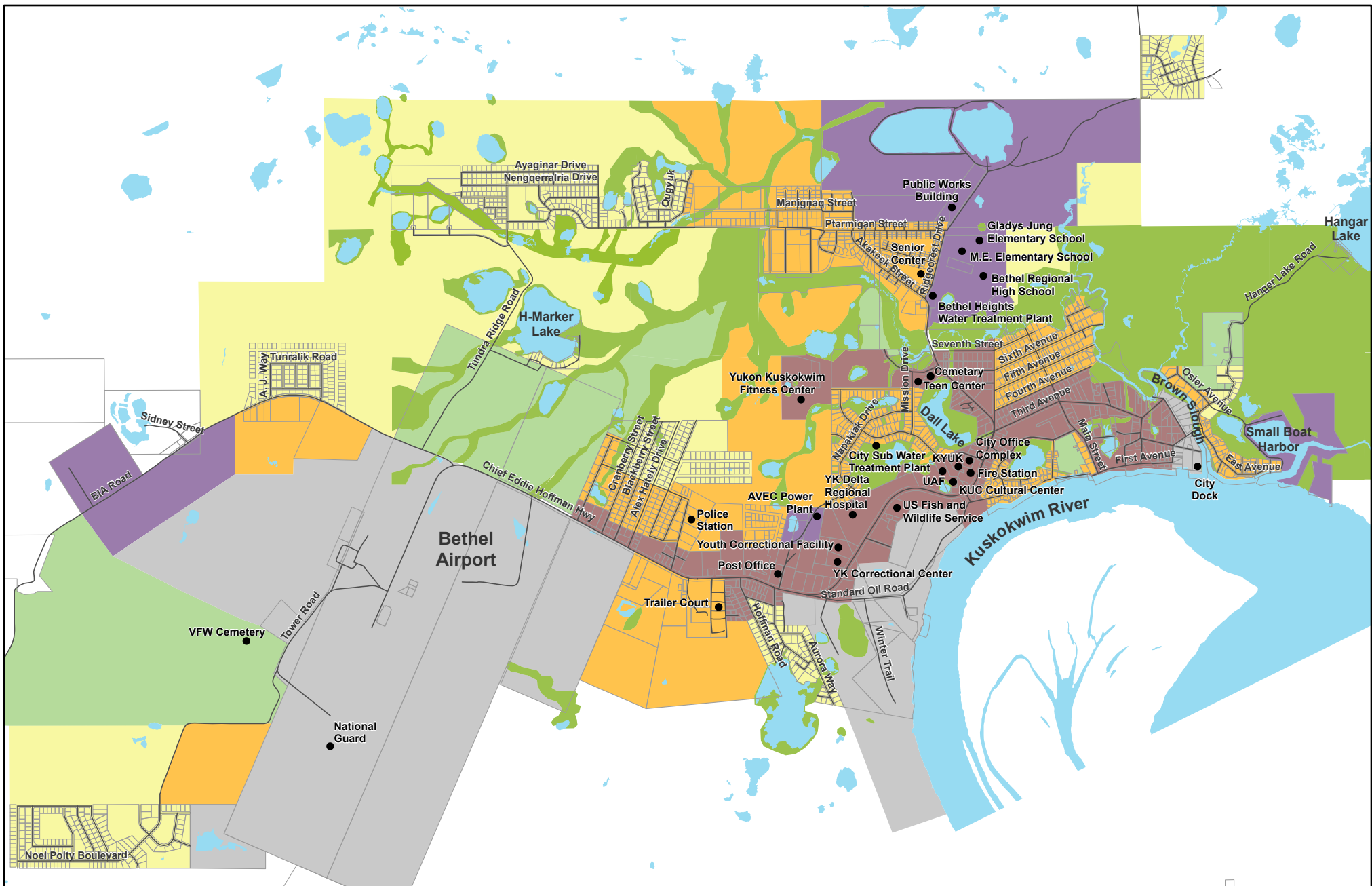
When considering both the current Zoning Map and the Future Land Use Plan Map created as part of the 2011 Comprehensive Plan, it was noted that the General Use zoning district and Mixed-Use future land use designations might be too general to help shape desired development. The designations created for this updated plan seek to improve clarity on which uses are encouraged where. The Future Land Use Plan Map and definitions below also provide examples of what types of flexibility are consistent with community goals for each designation.

Table 3: Future Land Use Designations

Future Land Use Designation	Definition / Intent	Implementing Zoning Districts and Uses
Single- and Two-Family Residential Neighborhood	Of the two main “residential-oriented” designations, this is more similar to traditional single-family and two-family neighborhoods. It is typically located further from the commercial and civic center of town. R should be the most common zoning district in this designation, and lot sizes and homes might tend to be larger as further-out development is more expensive and better suited to this type of lower-density residential development.	R
	Multifamily and commercial development is possible, but it should typically be reserved for the edges of neighborhoods or along major roads.	Could include some R2 (<i>new zoning district recommended in this plan</i>) and NC along neighborhood edges or more major roads Parks and recreation facilities, open space
Compact Residential Neighborhood	Of the two main “residential-oriented” designations, this is the more “urban” of the two. The most common zoning district to implement it would be the new R2, Multifamily Residential district, which emphasizes higher density, multifamily housing types. This designation is typically located closer to major roads and commercial / civic centers, so that more people may access a more transit or walking-friendly lifestyle.	R2 (<i>new zoning district recommended in this Plan</i>)
	In line with the more “urban” and “walkable” feel, these neighborhoods are well-suited to including residential-compatible commercial uses, including mixed-use developments.	NC, mostly along neighborhood edges or roads but can include a mix of uses
	Parks and open space associated with multifamily developments / Planned Unit Developments are encouraged in every residential neighborhood, so space should be set aside for this in Compact Residential neighborhoods.	Could include some DC on more major roads Parks and recreation facilities, open space
Commercial / Civic Center	This designation is intended to generally follow the commercial and civic corridor along the highway and extending into the heart of “Old Bethel.” This is where most commercial and institutional activities are located. These areas typically contain employment centers or common “destinations” that people need or want to go, including the hospital, government offices, groceries, restaurants, and other gathering spaces.	DC PLI NC and/or R2
	With the most convenient access to Bethel’s commercial and civic center, housing developed within or near to this area should typically emphasize higher density, multi-family options.	Parks and recreation facilities
Community Infrastructure	This designation is intended to include public infrastructure and facilities, such as the landfill, sewage lagoon, school district campus, and small boat harbor. In the future, this could also include facilities for alternative energy generation.	PLI
	<i>* Housing is consistently an urgent need in Bethel. Not all land in areas with the Public Infrastructure designation are under City ownership or zoned PLI. If opportunities arise for</i>	Parks and recreation facilities, open space

Commented [KS3]: QUESTION FOR STAKEHOLDERS: Please review the designations and the Future Land Use Plan Map following this table and let us know if you have any suggestions for changes.

	land in this designation to be developed as housing that will not be impacted by incompatible uses (such as heavy industrial), that would be acceptable. Along these lines, it may be appropriate for commercial or industrial uses to develop near public infrastructure such as the sewage lagoon or landfill.	Other zones / uses are possible within Public Infrastructure, as appropriate *
Industrial / Heavy Commercial	This designation is intended to include industrial and heavy commercial uses that support Bethel's role as a hub for transportation and cargo for the region. This includes areas around the port and airport. This may also include land reserved for utilities-related uses.	I
		PLI
		DC
Public Open Space	This designation indicates areas that are recommended to be reserved as larger public open spaces. This does not necessarily include all parks in Bethel, as these can be smaller and within residential or commercial/civic areas. This designation is different from the Preservation zone because it includes areas that are recommended to remain open, rather than significant wetlands and drainage that must be preserved per code, are unlikely to ever be developed, and cannot include any uses that require fill. This designation is often used adjacent to the Preservation zone, such as in some areas of the "Donut Hole," where the intent is to reserve areas for recreation and subsistence in "green belts" along areas that must be preserved. This designation also makes sense to be applied to areas on the periphery of Bethel that are unlikely to be developed and would remain as open space, such as a potential refuge at the end of BIA Road.	OS
		PLI
Zoning District	Definition / Intent	
Preservation	Because areas zoned P are likely to remain as such given that they contain more significant wetlands and drainage ways that should be preserved, this zone has been shown on the Future Land Use Plan Map to represent areas that are unlikely to be developed. The preservation district is intended to apply to significant wetlands and drainage ways that should be preserved as open areas or to which careful attention must be given to development that would disturb the wetlands or affect the drainage ways. It is the intent of the city that the boundaries of the P district be consistent with boundaries of general permit 83-4 issued by the Army Corps of Engineers, and that amendments to the official map will be made when the boundaries of the general permit are changed. Permitted uses include greenbelts, trails, boardwalks, subsistence, recreational uses, or other accessory uses that do not require the use of fill material.	P



Future Land Use Designation - Single- and Two-Family Residential Neighborhood - Compact Residential Neighborhood - Commercial/Civic Center - Community Infrastructure - Industrial/Heavy Commercial - Public Open Space			City of Bethel Parcel Boundary	Future Land Use Plan Map	
Zoning Designation Preservation				City of Bethel Comprehensive Plan	
					Date: November 11, 2022 Figure 4

As discussed above, the updated Future Land Use Plan Map emphasizes that denser (and therefore more affordable) housing development should be located near the commercial and civic center of Bethel. This commercial and civic center is mostly the older core of Bethel, which has primarily General Use or PLI zoning. In order to encourage the use of newer and more focused zoning districts (including Neighborhood Commercial, Downtown Commercial, and the proposed higher-density residential district), which align better with the updated Future Land Use Plan Map, the General Use zone should be phased out of use. This will give the City more ability to shape what types of development happen where in the future. There is still flexibility through the use of conditional use permits where applicable.

As Bethel continues to expand, there will likely be more commercial and civic development needed to support further-out residential development. The definitions provided in the table above seek to show how there can still be a mix of uses in residential areas, but there is guidance provided for how they would ideally be organized. This will help commercial and residential development support each other but remain compatible.

GOAL 5: Using the Future Land Use Plan Map and its land use designations, shape future development to ensure an organization of uses that is logical and compatible.

Strategy 1: Implement and raise awareness about the Future Land Use Plan Map and how it is used.

Action A: Add the Future Land Use Plan Map to the City's GIS maps. **PL**

Action B: Post the explanation of Zoning versus Future Land Use Plan Map from this plan, as well as the table with Future Land Use designations, definitions, and implementing districts, to the Planning Department website. **PL**

Action C: Use the Future Land Use Plan Map as the basis for initiating discussions with landowners that could potentially develop their land in the priority development area. **PL**

Strategy 2: Create a working group to alter code for zoning designations so that future development is more strategically organized.

Action A: Create a working group to assist the City Planner on potential changes to zoning code that could be brought forward to the Planning Commission and City Council for approval. **PL**

Action B: Create an organized table for all uses and all zoning districts, clarifying which uses are permitted, require additional permitting, or not permitted. **PL**

Action C: Consider eliminating the General Use (GU) zone. **PL**

Action D: Create a residential zone that encourages denser residential development on smaller lots. Meanwhile, the traditional R zoning district could be altered to focus on a less dense model that would encourage single-family and duplex development. **PL**

Action E: Consider City-led rezones to help phase out the GU district and assign more specific zones (including newly implemented zoning districts) to applicable areas. **PL**

Action F: Examine the list of uses that require conditional use permits for all zoning districts and consider changes based on the intent of each district; the changes could be brought forward to the Planning Commission and City Council for approval. **PL**

3.5 GIS Mapping

GIS stands for Geographic Information Systems. Using contemporary GIS software, there are infinite possibilities of spatial information and maps that can be created and shared online. The City is currently already working to recreate the Zoning Map in GIS to make it easier to update and access online.

Once each property within the City is represented in this digital space, any additional information can be added, including land use, ownership, address numbers, and more. Accessing the information will be much easier for the Planning Department, the Planning Commission, developers, members of the public, and anyone else who may need to reference it. This is a tool that is available and growing in many other communities and can make land use processes much clearer and more efficient.

GOAL 6: Make spatial information and maps available to the public online using GIS.

Strategy 1: Publish online GIS maps that provide information that was identified as the highest priority for stakeholders.

Action A: Publish the GIS version of the Zoning Map online. **PL**

Action B: Publish an online, interactive GIS map that can provide property lines, zoning, street addresses, and ownership information (when available). **PL**

Action C: Publish an online GIS version of the Future Land Use Plan Map. **PL**

Strategy 2: The Planning Department can continue to add to the GIS maps used internally or available to the public online, based on suggestions made by the community.

Action A: Create a map or maps showing easements for trails, rights-of-way, and utilities. **PL**

Action B: Create a map that shows wetlands, stream or floodplain setbacks, or other limitations to development related to preservation. **PL**

4.0 CHAPTER 4: LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

4.1 Introduction

The primary mechanism for transportation planning in Bethel is the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The LRTP is intended to be revised every five years and used in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan. Based on traffic analysis and extensive public input, it provides more specific transportation engineering and planning guidance for the City. Each time the LRTP is revised, it should be reviewed by relevant committees and commissions, as well as City Council, and then be adopted as ordinance to help ensure it is implemented.

The most recent LRTP was fully prepared and finalized in 2020, but never officially adopted. It should be adopted by the City Council so that it can be publicly shared and used.

Future LRTP revisions should continue to involve extensive public input, as the LRTP informs what maintenance will be prioritized, along with new potential transportation facilities including roads, trails, and port facilities. The City should educate the community that the LRTP is a main opportunity to provide input specifically on transportation planning projects and needs.

GOAL 1: Use the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) to guide all local transportation facility planning.

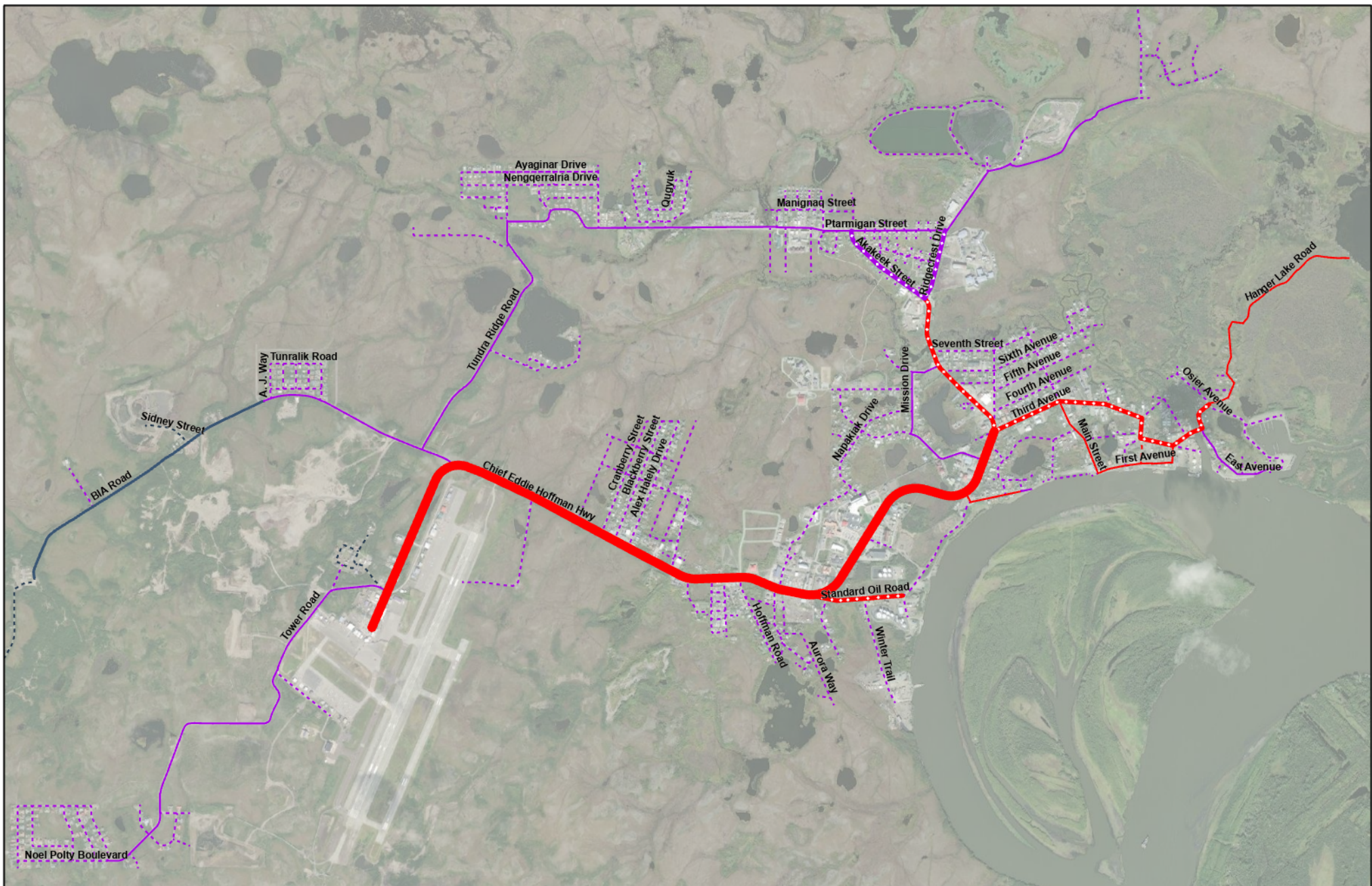
Strategy 1: Emphasize the LRTP process and recommendations in Bethel.

Action A: Adopt the 2020 Draft LRTP. **CM**

Action B: Every five years, revisit (through a public process) and update the LRTP. **CM**

4.2 Road System

As shown in the Road Classification and Maintenance Map on the next page, most roads in Bethel are classified as “collectors” or “local” roads, which refers to a relatively low amount of traffic (compared to major roads in places like Anchorage). Most are City-maintained and gravel. Some of the major roads, including the Chief Eddie Hoffman Highway (the only Minor Arterial in Bethel), are paved and maintained by the State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF). Road maintenance is an ongoing funding and capacity challenge in Bethel, so this section focuses many action items on improving maintenance procedures to be more effective and efficient in the future.



Road Classification Minor Arterial Major Collector Minor Collector Local		Current Road Management Responsibility State Highway Agency City or Municipal Agency Federal Agency		 	Road Classification and Management	
					City of Bethel Comprehensive Plan	
						Date: January 13, 2023 Figure 5

GOAL 2: Plan for an organized, proactive approach to surface transportation facility maintenance.

Strategy 1: Clarify surface transportation facility maintenance responsibilities.

Action A: Create a transportation facility (i.e. roads, trails) maintenance responsibility map. **PW**

Action B: Obtain maintenance agreements (or joint maintenance agreements) for transportation facilities that are not solely under City jurisdiction. **CM**

Action C: Work with DOT&PF to update existing state road MOUs, including exploring the possibility of the City assuming responsibility for maintenance of DOT&PF-managed roads in Bethel. **CM**

Strategy 2: Identify and address key transportation facility maintenance issues.

Action A: Regularly inspect roads for major potholes that need to be filled / grated, and complete maintenance work as needed. **PW**

Action B: Regularly inspect transportation facilities for overgrowth, blockage, or freezing culverts and other drainage facilities, and complete maintenance work as needed. **PW**

Action C: Explore options for controlling dust on gravel roads, shoulders, and trails, such as watering, emulsifiers, or other surface treatments. **PW**

Action D: As part of the snow removal prioritization plan, incorporate sites for storing snow, to avoid large berms building up within the road ROW. **PW**

Action E: Monitor City signage to ensure it meets public needs for wayfinding and safety, and that visibility is not impacted by vegetation overgrowth, snow/ice cover, vandalism, or other maintenance issues. **PW**

Action F: Enforce the removal of ROW encroachments. **PW**

Strategy 3: Establish improved systems to track maintenance operations.

Action A: Raise awareness about the Report a Problem feature on the City website that should be used to report road maintenance needs. **PW**

Action B: Investigate and potentially implement a software program to track maintenance operations. **PW**

Action C: Create a typical maintenance schedule based on expected work needed on a seasonal basis, as well as best practices for responding to maintenance needs. **PW**

Action D: Create a map of all City transportation supporting elements such as signage, lighting, culverts, other drainage systems, etc. PW

Strategy 4: Create a prioritized City road maintenance plan.

Action A: Create a prioritized City road maintenance plan, and incorporate it into the transportation facility funding strategy and Capital Improvement Plan (see Goal 6 below). PW

Action B: Identify and prioritize more major road rehabilitation projects, and incorporate it into the transportation facility funding strategy (see Goal 6 below). PW

Strategy 5: Design new and rehabilitated road and other transportation facilities to proactively minimize maintenance needs.

Action A: Continually evaluate materials for road surfacing and other transportation facility construction to improve durability, such as emulsifiers or other innovative construction methods. PW

Action B: As paving technology continues to improve and become more available, use paved surfaces instead of gravel for new or rehabilitated roads of collector classification and above. PW

Action C: Improve the implementation of adequate drainage facilities. PW

Action D: At the same time as undertaking road rehabilitation projects, assess whether there is additional ROW needed or encroachments that need to be addressed; address these as part of the design process. PW

Besides maintenance of existing roads, planning new connections to support current and future development is also an important consideration. The road system in Bethel has developed in response to the relatively spread-out development patterns described in Chapter 3 – Housing and Land Use. Large areas in the middle and western parts of town remain undeveloped, also leaving a gap in the transportation network, particularly of north-south connections. This creates issues for access, efficiency of travel, and emergency response; it is also tied to maintenance issues, as heavy and concentrated traffic wears down roads more quickly and makes it difficult for the City to close certain key roads for maintenance.

Tundra Ridge Road has recently been formalized and improved to provide a connection between the northwest residential areas along Ptarmigan Street and the airport area along the highway. The previous LRTP and Comprehensive Plan also recommended to connect the highway north through the central undeveloped area of Bethel (known as the “Donut Hole”), connecting to the Fitness Center and all the way to Ptarmigan Street. Not only would these new connections support current development, but they may also help make new development more feasible in areas where it couldn’t be considered previously.

The map on the next page shows an updated version of the Transportation Priority Projects map from the 2020 Draft LRTP. As shown, some projects have been started or completed since the original map was created. Other projects have moved up the priority list. As part of the action items in this chapter, the City will identify new projects to add to this living list / map going forward.

Surface Transportation Priority Projects

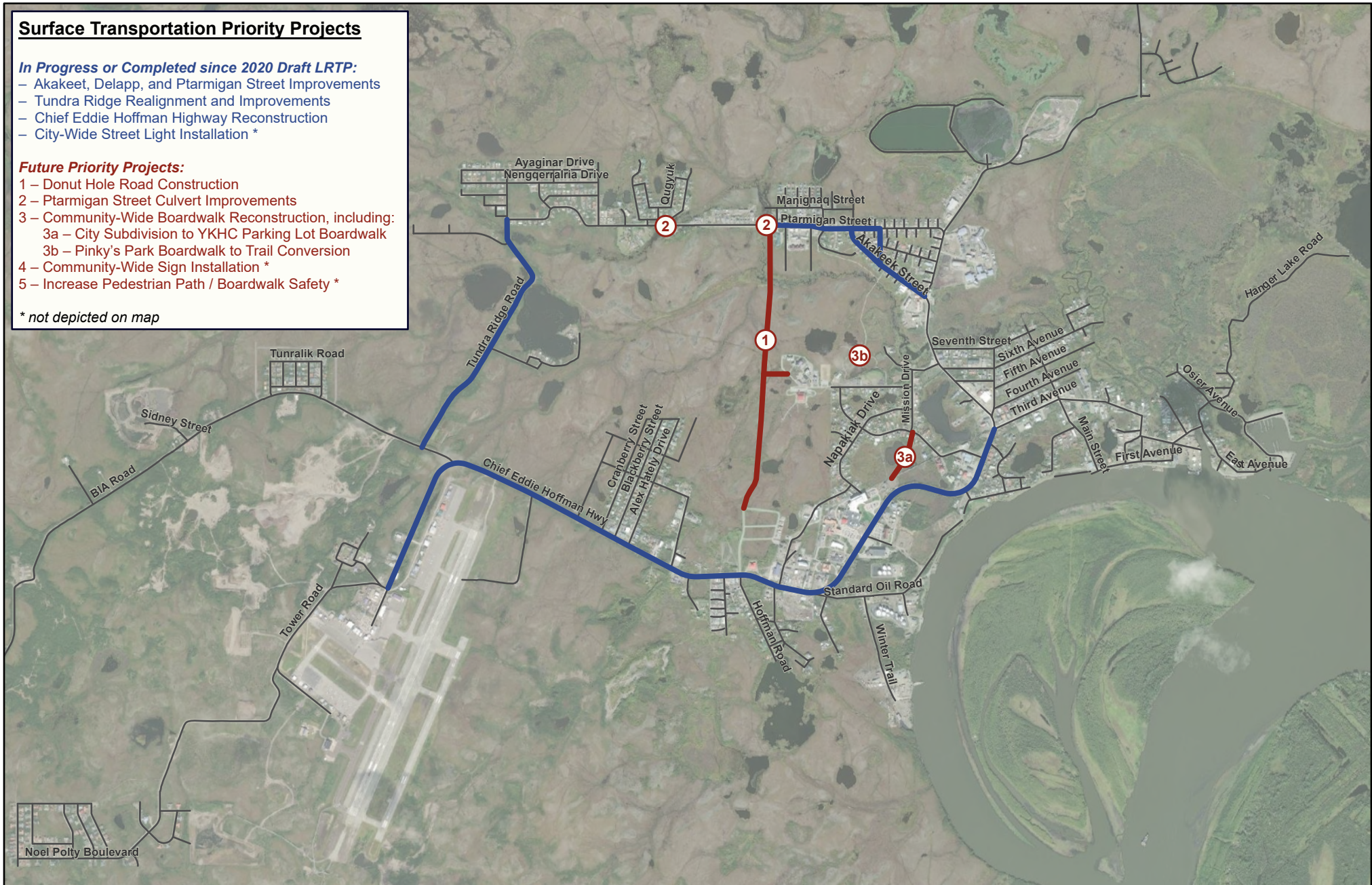
In Progress or Completed since 2020 Draft L RTP:

- Akakeet, Delapp, and Ptarmigan Street Improvements
- Tundra Ridge Realignment and Improvements
- Chief Eddie Hoffman Highway Reconstruction
- City-Wide Street Light Installation *

Future Priority Projects:

- 1 – Donut Hole Road Construction
- 2 – Ptarmigan Street Culvert Improvements
- 3 – Community-Wide Boardwalk Reconstruction, including:
 - 3a – City Subdivision to YKHC Parking Lot Boardwalk
 - 3b – Pinky's Park Boardwalk to Trail Conversion
- 4 – Community-Wide Sign Installation *
- 5 – Increase Pedestrian Path / Boardwalk Safety *

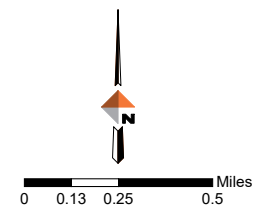
* not depicted on map



Project Type

- In Progress or Completed since 2020 Draft L RTP
- Future Priority Projects

— Road



Transportation Priority Projects

City of Bethel Comprehensive Plan



Date: February 15, 2023

Figure 8

GOAL 3: Develop the surface transportation network to reduce travel times, alleviate congestion, and support future development.

Strategy 1: Identify missing links in the surface transportation network.

Action A: Track traffic data, population and traffic forecasts, and significant future development plans and use these to assist with the identification and prioritization of surface transportation projects through LRTP updates. PW

Action B: Starting with the Priority Projects map in the 2020 LRTP, create a map that shows new road connections that may be needed in the future. PW

Action C: Based on locations of likely future land development, add locations of potential future road and other surface transportation connections that would support connectivity for this additional development. PW

Strategy 2: Use the LRTP to prioritize and guide implementation of new surface transportation construction projects.

Action A: Based on the map, create a prioritized list of new surface transportation construction projects. PW

Action B: Incorporate the prioritized list of new transportation projects into the funding strategy – see *Goal 6 below*. PW

Action C: Working with key stakeholders and the community, use the five-year LRTP update cycle as an opportunity to revisit and update the prioritized list of new road projects. PW

4.3 Non-Motorized Connectivity

Many Bethel residents use non-motorized modes of transportation (such as walking, bicycling, etc. – basically any mode besides vehicles driving on the road) to get around town. There is a non-motorized transportation “system” made up of a combination of formal trails and boardwalks, paths or shoulders alongside roads, shared roads, and an infinite number of other informal routes people may use depending on their mode of transportation and/or the season. To support the continuation of non-motorized access in the future, community members had many suggestions for improvements that would impact access, safety, and comfort.

Significant improvements have been made and should continue to be made when designing reconstructed or new streets to provide safe and comfortable access for non-motorized users in addition to drivers on the road. This is discussed in Goal 4 in this section, which focuses on the Complete Streets concept.

When it comes to trails, some projects are more complicated due to unclear ownership or maintenance responsibilities or other challenges. As such, many of the action items in this section focus on formalizing the trail system when possible and helpful to its users.

The map on the following page shows existing facilities that are formally established in blue (including paths/trails, boardwalks, and designated shoulders intended for non-motorized use), and some potential future routes to explore creating in green. The rest of the routes shown in orange are “Informal / Unconfirmed,” and attempt to paint a picture of common routes that some people may use; it is important to note that many of these likely cross private property and would require research and coordination to be formalized.

In future revisions of the LRTP and through coordination with the Community Parks and Recreation Committee (which has a focus on the trail system in Bethel), the City should continue to edit the trail system map (as discussed in action items below) and identify its non-motorized facility improvement and expansion priorities.

Commented [KS4]: QUESTION FOR STAKEHOLDERS / PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE:
Pete mentioned that there may be a map created by the committee showing priority new trail projects – we should ensure that our map reflects these potential new projects.

If any stakeholders have a copy of this map, please let us know! Otherwise, we will reach out to the Committee to request it so that we can review it before we release the Public Comment Draft.



- Existing Formal Facilities
- Informal/Unconfirmed Trails
- Potential New Routes
- City of Bethel Parcel Boundary



0 0.13 0.25 0.5 Miles

Trail System

City of Bethel Comprehensive Plan



Date: November 11, 2022

Figure 7

GOAL 4: Design new and reconstructed streets with a focus on providing safe and comfortable routes for all transportation modes and all users.

Strategy 1: Ensure adequate ROW for sharing the road and implementing the Complete Streets concept.

Action A: Ensure that new ROWs created as part of subdivisions meet minimum width requirements per code. **PW**

Action B: When plats are submitted, require that additional ROW be dedicated if adjacent ROWs are not wide enough per code. **PL**

Action C: Consider developing a set of typical roadway cross-sections depending on roadway classification, for reference in City or private development projects involving new or reconstructed roads. **PW**

Strategy 2: When implementing Complete Streets, prioritize the most safe and comfortable facilities for non-motorized transportation that space will allow.

Action A: Ensure that Complete Streets (BMC 12.05) is being considered and used to the extent possible in the design of new and reconstructed roads in Bethel. **PW**

Action B: When deciding the location and type of non-motorized facilities to be included in a Complete Streets project, prioritize a separated pathway or boardwalk on at least one side over a shoulder for non-motorized users, when possible. **PW**

When there is insufficient space for a separated pathway or boardwalk, create a shoulder or shoulders for walkers, bicyclists, and other non-motorized users. **PW**

Action C: Along existing and new shoulders for non-motorized transportation, implement measures to discourage the shoulders' use as parking or an unofficial turn lane. **PW**

Action D: If a shoulder or separated path for non-motorized users will be gravel, consider implementing methods to reduce dust impacts. **PW**

Strategy 3: Add safety features to key non-motorized routes.

Action A: On a map, identify main non-motorized routes, including key shared roads as well as trails and boardwalks. **PW**

Action B: Using the map and community input, identify locations that need safety improvements such as crosswalks, additional lighting, and/or signage. **PW**

Action C: Plan safety improvements as individual projects and/or as part of other transportation projects, keeping in mind that federal Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) funding may be available. **PW**

GOAL 5: Improve and expand the trail system.

Strategy 1: Address trail and boardwalk maintenance needs more efficiently.

Action A: Encourage the use of the Report a Problem feature on the City website for the public to report trail and boardwalk maintenance issues, including hazards or vandalism. **PW**

Action B: Initiate an Adopt-a-Trail and/or boardwalk and trail maintenance volunteer group to assist when City maintenance staff does not have capacity to respond to trail / boardwalk maintenance issues. **PW**

Action C: As maintenance issues are reported and repairs are made, record any recurring maintenance issues (types of issues or problematic areas). **PW**

Action D: Alter trail maintenance and construction best practices over time to mitigate common maintenance issues. **PW**

Strategy 2: Clarify the existing City-managed trail system.

Action A: Create an updated and easy-to-read map of existing formal City trails. **PW**

Action B: On the City trails map, identify which users and modes of transportation are allowed on each trail. **PW**

Action C: Make the trails map and information (including type of facility, users allowed, and distances) easily available on the City website. **PW**

Action D: Post signs with the trails map and information at key points within the trail system, such as at parks and recreation facilities. **PW**

Strategy 3: Expand the trail system by formalizing popular trails and adding new trails.

Action A: For planning purposes, mark popular but informal trails on the map in dotted lines. **PW**

Action B: Investigate what would be needed to obtain easements to formalize informal trails. **PW**

Action C: Based on community input, add other potential new trail / boardwalk routes to the map in dotted lines. **PW**

Action D: Coordinate with owners of properties that have informal or potential new trails through them to obtain easements or agreements. **PW**

Action E: For trails within or through larger properties, consider forming agreements or partnerships for private management / maintenance of the trails. **PW**

Strategy 4: Improve safety and comfort on the trail system.

Action A: Identify and potentially add pedestrian amenities to more locations, including lighting and benches. PW

Action B: Add amenities for bicyclists at parks and recreation facilities, such as bike racks and bike “fix-it” stations. PW



Vehicles and pedestrians sharing a gravel road in Bethel.

4.4 Funding for Facility Construction and Maintenance

Annually, the City reviews and prioritizes projects for City general fund funding. During and leading up to City Council budget retreats and budget approvals, City Management and Department heads collaborate with contractors and engineering support staff to prepare cost estimates for potential projects that could be funded through the Capital Improvement Plan with City general funds. This is only one part of how the City finds funding for priority projects; there are many federal, state, and other funding opportunities that the City may choose to pursue.

GOAL 6: Strategically seek funding for transportation facility construction and maintenance.

Strategy 1: Leverage opportunities available in Alaska to secure potential funding sources for implementing transportation projects.

Action A: Work with Alaska Municipal League and DOT&PF to use the Alaska Transportation Funding Opportunity Hub to identify potential funding sources for different types of surface transportation projects, and to prioritize Bethel's projects through the Hub Intake Survey. **GM**

Strategy 2: Create a prioritized list of all transportation facility construction and maintenance projects.

Action A: Combine the lists of maintenance / rehabilitation and new transportation facility projects created for roads and trails, and add details on estimated design and construction cost and grant-related considerations. **GM**

Action B: Order the list based on priority and when each project should be completed. **GM**

Strategy 3: Pursue funding to complete priority projects.

Action A: Continue to review priority projects annually to select those that could be funded through the Capital Improvement Plan. **GM**

Action B: Nominate priority projects for state owned / managed facilities to the STIP, and nominate City owned / managed facilities to other state programs for federal funding such as the Community Transportation Program (CTP). **GM**

Action C: Apply for grants to fund other priority projects, focusing on time-sensitive funding opportunities. **GM**

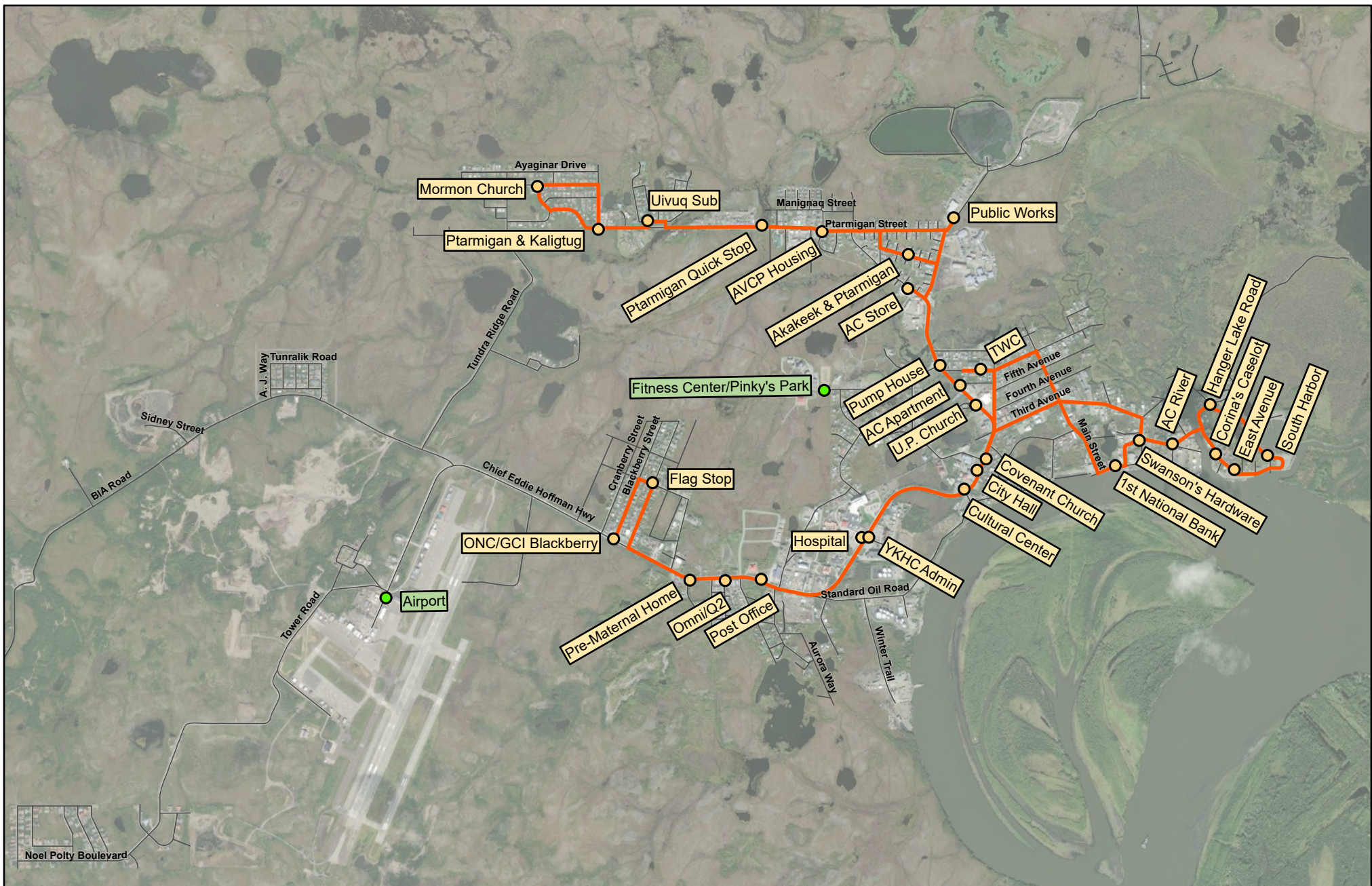
4.5 Public Transportation

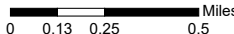


Bethel Transit System sheltered bus stop.

The Bethel Transit System provides a key way to get around town for those without vehicles, and its service should be improved and expanded in the future. (While there are many taxi cabs available to serve community and visitor needs, the bus is much less expensive.) Community members noted that while the Transit Manager currently collects some passenger data, there could be opportunities to collect more targeted data and start using it to inform decisions about priority changes as well as to support potential grant applications.

Over time, the transit system has already been making changes in response to community requests and ridership patterns. At times there were two routes instead of one, and some stops have been added and/or removed. The map on the next page includes current Bethel Transit System routes and stops, as well as two potential new stops that have been commonly requested by community members: the airport and the fitness center. Both of these stops have been tested in the past, but there may be opportunities to improve their implementation if created again. Changes to the road system may influence routes, and more multifamily development in Bethel may help support shorter headways (time between buses at each particular stop). As more grant funding is secured, new buses can be purchased, both to replace buses that are quickly worn out on Bethel's difficult road conditions and to help expand routes to farther out areas like Kasayulie.



● Bus Stop ● Potential Future Bus Stop — Bus Route  	Transit System City of Bethel Comprehensive Plan  Date: November 11, 2022 Figure 6
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GOAL 7: Improve the public transit system to be more convenient and responsive to the community's needs.

Strategy 1: Use data collection to inform changes to the transit system or back up capital needs and potential grant applications.

Action A: Expand data collected on ridership to reflect times of day and days of the week. **TM**

Action B: Expand data collected on ridership to reflect how many passengers enter or exit the bus at each stop. **TM**

Action C: Create a comment form on the City website's transit page to collect questions, comments, or issues reported by riders. **TM**

Strategy 2: Improve access to information about the transit system.

Action A: Post signs with schedules and routes at bus stops and inside key community facilities. **TM**

Action B: Continue to print transit information in the newspaper periodically, and also consider printing it in the City newsletter. **TM**

Action C: Incorporate transit information into visitor information on the City's website. **TM**

Action D: When there are updates to routes or schedules, share within the City to be posted on City social media (as well as in the newspaper and City newsletter to continue to remain accessible to those not using social media). **TM**

Strategy 3: Make changes or expansions to the transit services provided.

Action A: Consider adding a stop at the airport or partnering with another organization to add another transit link between the airport and the central city. **TM**

Action B: Annually, consider altering the transit route(s) to include additional stops that are commonly requested by community members, such as the Fitness Center. **TM**

Action C: Review ridership data and/or community comments to consider running the transit system later into the evening. **TM**

Action D: Consider decreasing headways from one hour to half an hour, either throughout the day or during times of peak use. **TM**

Strategy 4: Maintain and improve the transit fleet.

Action A: Use a database to track maintenance needs and expected lifespans of buses and make repairs and/or replace buses as needed. **TM**

Action B: Consider adding features to buses to improve accessibility and convenience. **TM**

4.6 Other Local Transportation Links

While roads and trails connect people with the places they live, work, and recreate in Bethel, each place of origin and destination has elements of site design that are critical to getting to and from safely. The actions in this section focus on parking facilities and the routes non-motorized travelers use to access their destinations.

Commented [KS5]: QUESTION FOR STAKEHOLDERS
Are there any other concerns / issues with local transportation that should be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan?

GOAL 8: Evaluate site development codes to better support safe access for all transportation modes.

Strategy 1: Provide for adequate and safe parking facilities and practices.

Action A: Examine code to make sure appropriate numbers of parking spaces are provided for each type of land use. (If changes are warranted, see Action C below.) **PL**

Action B: Facilitate shared parking between adjacent properties and uses when appropriate. **PL**

Action C: If changes are warranted to parking requirements or shared parking provisions in code, provide changes to the Planning Commission and City Council for approval. **PL**

Action D: Clarify locations where street parking is not permitted using signage and/or announcements via the various City channels (in the event of ongoing compliance issues in specific areas, or changes). **PW**

Action E: Continue to enforce parking violations. **PD**

Strategy 2: Provide for safe access for vehicles and non-motorized users.

Action A: Consider consolidating driveway and parking design provisions in code or creating a separate driveway standards worksheet. **PL**

Action B: Review commercial site design code to identify opportunities to improve safety provisions such as those encouraged by Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. **PL**

Commented [KS6]: QUESTION FOR THE CITY AND STAKEHOLDERS:
Let's say there are regularly occurring issues with people parking along streets in certain locations, disrupting traffic and/or neighborhoods or causing safety issues.

When is this a Police Department enforcement responsibility, and when might other clarification or action be needed from Public Works and/or Planning, such as a code enforcement officer position that could be created?

5.0 CHAPTER 5: REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION

Like many communities in Alaska, Bethel is not accessible by any road system and is isolated from surrounding villages. However, Bethel has a critical role as the air and water transportation hub of the Y-K Delta region for both people and goods.

5.1 Airport

Practically everyone traveling to or from any community in the Y-K Delta must travel through the Bethel Airport at some point in their journey; as such, Bethel is sometimes nicknamed the “gateway to the region.” Bethel’s airport is the third busiest airport in the state, and it is owned and operated by DOT&PF. While DOT&PF manages airport facilities and operations, the City has an interest in participating in planning for the airport and surrounding area given its importance to the community.

GOAL 1: Create a well-functioning airport area for travelers and businesses.

Strategy 1: Facilitate efficient and organized access to the airport.

Action A: Between the City, DOT, and tenants leasing land and/or buildings on airport land, determine (and formalize in agreements if needed) which party is responsible for managing roads, parking, signage, and other elements within the airport area. **CM**

Action B: Advocate for clear loading and unloading areas for taxicabs and private vehicles at the main jet terminal. **PW**

Action C: Consider adding a transit stop around the airport. **TM**

Action D: Create a guide to transportation options available to/from the airport with a map of where to access them, to be distributed and displayed in buildings for the passenger airline(s). **TBD**

Action E: Advocate for more wayfinding signage in the airport area to direct parking and pick-up / drop-off traffic. **PW**

Strategy 2: Facilitate adequate parking at the airport.

Action A: Once parking management is determined, advocate for exploring the potential of designating short-term and long-term parking lots and an associated parking fee system with time limits. **TBD**

Action B: Once parking management is determined, advocate for the completion of a parking study to evaluate whether more parking is needed near the main jet terminal and if so, make plans to provide additional parking space. **TBD**

Strategy 3: Support the development of relevant industrial uses and commercial amenities within the airport area.

Action A: Coordinate with DOT to determine if an Airport zoning overlay district is needed, and what this overlay district would look like. **PL**

GOAL 2: Support DOT&PF in airport operations and planning.

Strategy 1: As requested by the FAA and/or DOT&PF, take actions that support smooth and secure airport operations.

Action A: Examine FAA requirements and recommendations when reviewing potential land uses near the airport. **PL**

Action B: If a new landfill is constructed, place it as far from the airport as practicable to avoid attracting wildlife that could be harmed, damage airport equipment, and disrupt operations. **LM**

Action C: Coordinate with the airport management / DOT&PF to schedule security drills. **CM**

Strategy 2: Participate in planning for the future of the airport.

Action A: Maintain regular coordination (such as quarterly meetings) with DOT&PF and representatives from airlines operating at the airport to track near- and long-term plans impacting the Bethel airport. **CM**

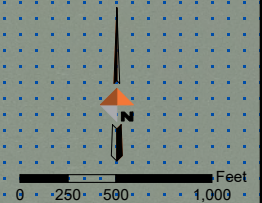
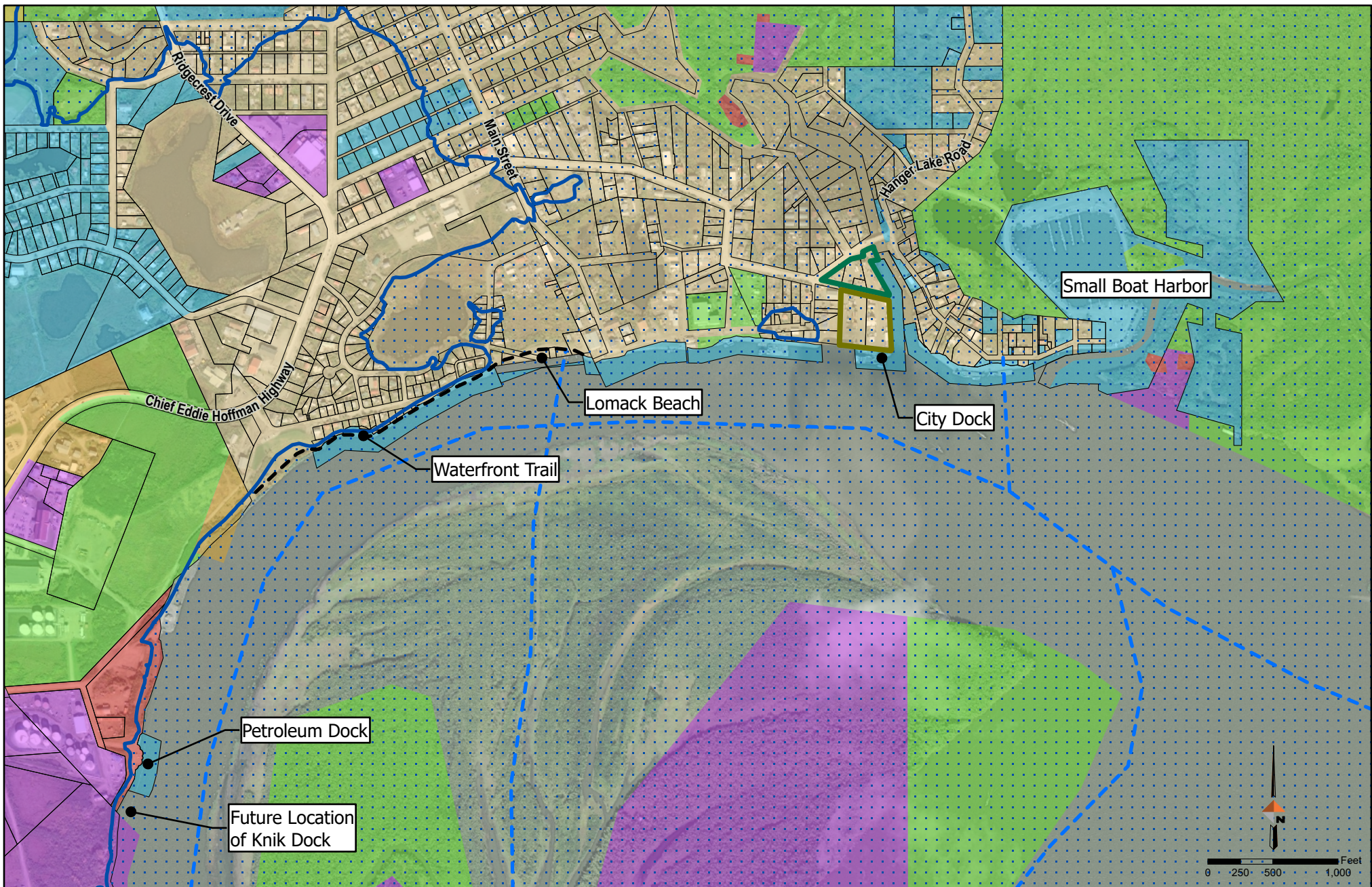
Action B: Encourage public participation in airport planning projects so that the City and community's needs are factored into plans. **PL**

5.2 Port and River

The Port of Bethel, managed by the City, is the only port in Southwest Alaska that is not dependent on high tides for access; as such, it is the shipping hub for the region. The Port facilities include the Port Office, City Dock (for freight) and secure cargo storage yard, the small boat harbor, Lomack Beach (including float plane access), the petroleum port, and the seawall (which mitigates erosion along the riverbank). The City works closely with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to track changes in the course of the river that could impact all of this critical regional infrastructure and by extension access to the entire region; the City also works with USACE on dredging, studies, seawall maintenance, and other essential infrastructure improvements and repairs at the Port.

Besides the critical commercial and industrial uses of the cargo and petroleum port facilities (including 15-20 freight barges per year and smaller river barges to carry goods farther upriver), the Port facilities including the small boat harbor and Lomack Beach are vital to commercial fishing and subsistence activities, as well as transportation for the general public, government agencies, businesses, and non-profit organizations.

Given heavy use of Port of Bethel infrastructure and changes in the river, there is consistently more maintenance and planning needed.



General Ownership (1997 City of Bethel Comprehensive Plan)

- ANCSA^{*}
- Bethel Native Corporation^{*}
- City of Bethel
- Federal
- Private
- State of Alaska
- Information Unavailable

^{*}includes ANCSA 14c1/c2 and ANCSA c3

^{*}a small number of properties are also part federal or private ownership

Ownership from Other Sources (Unverified)

- City of Bethel
- State of Alaska

- Waterfront Trail
- Ice Road
- 100-Year Floodplain [FEMA]
- City of Bethel Parcel Boundary

Waterfront

City of Bethel Comprehensive Plan



Date: February 15, 2023

Figure 4

GOAL 3: Study and plan for potential changes to the river's course that may impact port operations.

Strategy 1: Keep up with regular dredging operations.

Action A: Continue to complete hydrographic studies every two years, as required by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. **PO**

Action B: Continue to dredge Brown's Slough annually. **PO**

Action C: As needed and based on the hydrographic studies, dredge the river between the petroleum port and the entrance to the small boat harbor. **PO**

Strategy 2: Plan for potential future changes in the Kuskokwim River's course to mitigate potential impacts.

Action A: Request assistance from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for funding and conducting a feasibility study for a potential navigation study of the river. **PO**

Action B: Following the feasibility study, complete a navigation study to determine how changes in the river may impact larger ships' ability to access Bethel's port. **PO**

Action C: Monitor the sea wall conditions to determine if, and at what rate, the river is undercutting the sea wall. **PO**

Action D: Develop an action plan for studies, monitoring, and maintenance activities needed to mitigate riverfront erosion and ensure navigability of the river around Bethel's port. **PO**

Commented [KS7]: QUESTION FOR THE CITY:
Is the sea wall inspected on a regular (such as annual) basis,
or how does this monitoring work?

Strategy 3: Collaborate with other major waterfront property owners on riverfront management efforts.

Action A: As part of coordination with the private entity constructing a new cargo dock near the petroleum port in Bethel, explore partnership opportunities to obtain funding for hydrographic or navigation studies, sea wall monitoring, and maintenance or dredging efforts. **PO**

Action B: If other major waterfront developments occur in Bethel, coordinate with the property owners / developers to incorporate measures to mitigate erosion and participate in City efforts to monitor and take action according to changes in the river. **PO**

Action C: Coordinate with other property owners along the Kuskokwim River to identify collaboration and cost-sharing opportunities for studies, dredging, and other maintenance. **PO**



Shipping containers on the City Dock and small boats in Browns Slough.

GOAL 4: Maintain adequate port infrastructure to support shipping operations.

Strategy 1: Efficiently manage port infrastructure maintenance and repairs.

Action A: Regularly inspect all public port infrastructure to assess wear occurring and predict future maintenance needs. **PO**

Action B: Create and maintain a list of maintenance needs at the port. **PO**

Action C: Prioritize the list, determine whether current maintenance staff have the skills and equipment to complete the work or if specialized contractors will be needed, and prepare cost estimates. **PO**

Action D: Pursue funding opportunities for more significant maintenance projects at the port, such as grants (which could be pursued in partnership with other entities such as tribal organizations), or partnership with private entities like Lynden. **PO**

Strategy 2: Identify new infrastructure that may be needed to improve port operations.

Action A: Coordinate with port management, current shipping operators, and other stakeholders to identify infrastructure needs to support current and future shipping operations. **PO**

Action B: As part of the regular LRTP process, document the port's existing conditions, issues, and needs; this would be used to create a prioritized list of infrastructure and maintenance needed. **PO**

Action C: Pursue funding opportunities for additional infrastructure expansions that would improve port operations, such as grants (which could be pursued in partnership with other entities such as tribal organizations), and partnership with private entities like Lynden. **PO**

GOAL 5: Maintain infrastructure to support the use of small boats and float planes for transportation, commerce, subsistence, and recreation.

Strategy 1: Maintain infrastructure for small boat users.

Action A: Regularly inspect the existing small boat harbor infrastructure and manage its use to help determine maintenance and/or expansion needs. **PO**

Action B: Consider developing additional parking at the small boat harbor. **PO**

Action C: Facilitate transit and taxi access to and from the small boat harbor by incorporating signage to direct passengers to appropriate loading areas. **PO**

Action D: Add any maintenance needs to the prioritized list created as part of Goal 4, Strategy 1 above. **PO**

Action E: Evaluate the costs associated with maintaining small boat harbor infrastructure and dredging. **PO**

Action F: Based on approximate yearly costs for maintenance as well as other longer-term projects that may need funding, consider gradual fee increases and/or creating new fees for various types of small boat harbor users (such as for businesses using the harbor, or vehicle parking fees) to help fund operations and improvements. **PO**

Strategy 2: Maintain infrastructure for float plane users.

Action A: Continue to place gravel on Lomack Beach to protect it from erosion associated with launching float planes. **PO**

Action B: Create a maintenance agreement with DOT&PF to clarify land and facility ownership and shared maintenance responsibility for Hangar Lake Road and the float plane docks at Hangar Lake. **PO**

Action C: Consider partnerships (with government agencies and/or private entities) or ways to levy user fees for float plane facilities on the river and lakes in and around Bethel to help fund erosion control measures. **PO**

5.3 Expanding Regional Access

As the transportation hub for the region, Bethel has an opportunity to play a leadership role in regional collaboration on transportation initiatives that can improve and expand the many ways people travel between Y-K Delta communities, including the ice road, trails, and future opportunities for inter-community transit and new road development. Regular collaboration can help Bethel and its neighbors make connections and start sharing more ideas and funding for transportation projects that can benefit the entire region.

GOAL 6: Support the improvement and expansion of other modes of regional transportation.

Strategy 1: As the hub of regional transportation, organize a City-led regional transportation coordination group to plan routes, maintenance, and funding.

Action A: Establish a regional transportation coordination group, including DOT&PF, representatives from villages and tribal organizations, shipping companies, and transportation companies. **CM**

Action B: The group should meet regularly to discuss existing routes, maintenance responsibilities and issues, potential new routes or transportation methods, and grant opportunities. **CM**

Action C: Jointly create a funding strategy including participation from private entities as well as grant applications and pursuing tribal transportation and/or STIP funding. **GM**

Strategy 2: Work with the regional transportation coordination group to improve reliability of ice road maintenance.

Action A: Create a map of the typical ice road route, including all the villages it connects. **TBD**

Action B: Create a typical snow-clearing schedule, including what party or parties are responsible for clearing and marking. **TBD**

Action C: Collect data on past years' freezing and break up and monitor freezing, ice thickness, and break up each year. Share this data and changes over time to help reduce the risk of incidents where vehicles fall through the ice. **TBD**

Strategy 3: Work with the regional transportation coordination group to improve the reliability of the trail network.

Action A: Work with the group and DOT&PF to develop a map of the most used trails between Bethel and the surrounding villages, including user groups, trail markers, hazards, and other landmarks. **TBD**

Action B: Identify whether easements are needed for places where trails cross private property, and coordinate with property owners. **TBD**

Action C: Create a regional trail maintenance strategy that is responsive to different seasons, various types of trail users (snowmachine versus ATV, for example), and changing conditions over time. **TBD**

Strategy 4: Facilitate potential regional transit opportunities as they arise.

Action A: Coordinate with the hovercraft operator to determine if they may consider providing passenger transit again in the future. **TBD**

Action B: If interest in a river (and/or ice road) transit or taxi service arises, explore how the City's port can help accommodate it. **PO**

Strategy 5: Explore potential road connections between Bethel, Oscarville, Napaskiak, and Napakiak.

Action A: Work specifically with Oscarville, Napaskiak, and Napakiak representatives in the transportation coordination group to gauge interest in pursuing surface road routes between each village and Bethel. **CM**

Action B: Explore partnership agreement opportunities to implement future road connections. **CM**



Passenger loading area in front of the Alaska Airlines terminal at the Bethel Airport.

6.0 CHAPTER 6: UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Contemporary homes need a network of utility services in order to function, including energy for electricity and heating, water and sewer service, internet access, and a way to dispose of solid waste. These utilities are central to quality of life. They are also a challenge in remote communities like Bethel; they are provided by a mix of City and other entities, some are extremely costly to residents, and all have environmental considerations involved. For all of these utilities, updating infrastructure can bring savings and sustainability improvements, but moving towards updating the infrastructure can be complicated and expensive.



A solar array near the Fitness Center in Bethel.

6.1 Energy

Energy production in Bethel has historically relied on non-renewable, expensive methods such as diesel generators, which cost approximately 60 cents per kilowatt per hour. This is more than 300% higher than the national rate of approximately 14 cents. This high cost is added on top of an already high cost of living in Bethel including other essentials like housing, transportation, and groceries.

The Alaska Village Electric Cooperative (AVEC) is the largest source of energy for the region, and Bethel is AVEC's largest member community. As a member-owned rural electric cooperative, AVEC serves more than 50 remote member communities. Its Bethel power plant provides power to nearby communities of Oscarville and Napakiak in addition to Bethel.

The 2011 Comprehensive Plan outlined goals to reduce energy consumption, improve existing infrastructure, and develop new alternative energy sources to reduce costs. Stakeholders have stressed the importance of pursuing alternative energy sources; not only are they more environmentally sustainable, but they also will reduce costs in the long run.

Commented [KS8]: Question for AVEC: Is there a capacity limit for wind turbines in Bethel?

Since 2011, the following are some examples of progress made:

- As of 2011, Bethel electricity was provided by Bethel Utility Company (BUC, Inc.), a private, investor-owned utility, but the Comprehensive Plan identified a cooperative as the ideal model for Bethel. Now that AVEC provides energy, there may be more opportunities for regional coordination on alternative energy sources and infrastructure advancements.
- In 2014, one wind turbine capable of putting out 100 kW was constructed to help power the new Yukon-Kuskokwim Regional Aquatic Health and Safety Center, which features a six-lane swimming pool, weight room, hot tub, and more for Bethel residents and surrounding communities. The wind turbine produces 40% of the facility's electricity.
- In 2020, a new 900 kilowatt-capacity wind turbine was constructed about 3.3 miles from the diesel-fired prime power plant. AVEC selected Bethel as the place to locate its first MW-range wind turbine due simply to the size of the grid. In its first 15 months of operation - October 2018 through December 2019 - it produced nearly 5% of all the power generated and consumed on the Bethel grid.
- In 2020, the 45-year-old power plant in Bethel was improved to maintain proper voltage regulation and provide more surge protection.

Stakeholders identified wind turbines, solar panels, hydroelectric facilities, natural gas, and small-scale nuclear power as avenues to pursue in order to diversify Bethel's energy sources away from diesel. The City's role in electricity and heat generation currently lies in the infrastructure it provides for its own facilities. The City also has an interest in improving quality of life and reducing cost of living for its residents; as such, the City should collaborate with AVEC and other organizations to make progress towards energy upgrades.

GOAL 1: Advance projects in Bethel to increase electricity production from alternative energy sources to reduce both costs and generation of greenhouse gases.

Strategy 1: Facilitate large-scale projects to introduce more alternative energy sources to the local network.

Action A: Assign a City "energy point person" to coordinate regularly with AVEC. **CM**

Action B: Working with AVEC, create a plan that identifies ways for the City to support a transition to more alternative energy generation. **CM**

Action C: Monitor and support AVEC in applying for grant opportunities for alternative energy generation and storage that could be implemented in Bethel. **GM**

Action D: Pursue partnerships with tribal entities to work together on grant applications and gain access to more potential funding. **GM**

Strategy 2: Update City facilities to be more energy efficient.

Action A: When updating existing City facilities or constructing new City facilities, design must consider including alternative energy sources, such as solar or wind power instead of diesel. **PW**

Strategy 3: Encourage efficiency updates for private energy users.

Action A: Develop outreach materials to encourage commercial and residential users on energy efficiency best practices and grants that may be available for installing private alternative energy facilities. **TBD**

Action B: Work with AVEC to develop and share a guide to approval processes required for private alternative energy facilities and opportunities to sell excess power back to the grid. **TBD**



Water and sewer pipes serving homes in the Bethel Heights neighborhood.

6.2 Water and Sewer

Bethel currently has a mix of truck-hauled and piped water and sewer services. The truck-haul system serves approximately 1,100 residences, compared to approximately 500 served by piped water and sewer. Due to Bethel's high groundwater and discontinuous permafrost, pipes are installed above ground so they are better able to withstand ground movement.

The City is focused on upgrading to a fully piped system. Piped water and sewer offer several advantages over the haul system, including improved public health, reduced road wear and safety concerns from haul trucks, and reduced risk of spills and leaks. The City experiences a chronic shortage of truck drivers, and operating the piped system costs the City about a third as much as the haul system. Residents generally prefer the unlimited capacity allowed by the piped system and support eliminating haul trucks from the roadways.

Recent price escalations of both materials and labor pushed the capital cost of water and sewer pipe construction to approximately \$2 million for every 1,000 feet, which could make future upgrades cost prohibitive for the City. However, piped water and sewer remain a top priority to reduce cost of living and improve quality of life for the City in the long run.

Since the 2011 Comprehensive Plan, the City has undertaken many water and sewer projects including:

- Extended and improved piped water and sewer in the Institutional Corridor (including facilities like the hospital and City Hall)
- New pumps, a generator, and a Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) mixer for the Main Lift Station
- Ongoing security improvements, including a fence around the City Subdivision Water Treatment Plant water tank
- Design of the Avenues Piped Water and Sewer project to serve 110 residences is underway, with construction anticipated to begin in 2023.
- The Bethel Heights-Martina Oscar Piped Water and Sewer project, which includes new services to 25 houses, expansion of the Bethel Heights Water Treatment Plant, and repairs to existing pipes (in response to frost jacking), is expected to begin in 2024. The City also implemented corrosion control measures to address water discoloration concerns in Bethel Heights.

Based on the most recent rate study, a new rate structure could be implemented to address the cost disparity between piped and hauled service. Looking ahead to Bethel's goal of a fully piped system, in 2022 the City completed a Community-Wide Piped Water and Wastewater Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) to evaluate potential buildout of the piped system to almost all Bethel households. This was a requirement in order to qualify for certain federal grants available for implementing more water and sewer improvements.

The PER outlines a 12-phased approach to extending the piped utilities. The phases present more readily constructible and fundable projects than piping the entire community at once. The series of projects starts with a new truck fill and distribution center, followed by extending pipes and adding lift stations to each residential subdivision. There are a few alternatives possible for planning for sewer, such as adding an additional sewage lagoon cell when needed or using modular treatment plants for each subdivision. Another project recommended in the PER is the construction of a backup well.

GOAL 2: Based on the results of the Preliminary Engineering Report (2022), transition Bethel's water and sewer utilities to fully-piped systems serving all residences and businesses by 2035.

Strategy 1: Complete each phase of projects outlined in the PER.

Action A: Obtain grant and loan funding for new water and sewer projects, including from the USDA. **GM**

Action B: Identify available land and begin acquiring easements for future facilities, such as the truck fill station, pipes, and additional source water well. **PW**

Action C: Implement each phase of the PER. **PW**

Strategy 2: Focus on maintenance to protect the City's utility investments and avoid unnecessary costs.

Action A: Continue to maintain existing infrastructure for the hauled system while it is in effect. **PW**

Action B: Construct security fences around all water treatment plants. **PW**

Action C: Improve Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) compatibility of Bethel's water treatment plants and lift stations to reduce the manual monitoring tasks performed by staff. **PW**

Action D: Provide information to the community on how to use the piped sewer system, restrictions on what can be dumped into the system, and who is responsible for maintenance costs associated with different elements of the system. **PW**

Strategy 3: During the phases of the PER and beyond, manage the piped system to be as efficient and accessible as possible, as well as equitable in cost.

Action A: Complete a rate study every 10 years; utilize results of the rate study to set rates appropriately. **PW**

Action B: Establish a process for non-residential properties to be informed about the piped system progress in their area and how and when to connect to the piped system. **PW**

Action C: For new development or redevelopment, investigate how the City could implement an "impact fee" system in which there are clear expectations related to new or upgraded infrastructure cost to the developer. **CM**

Action D: Provide City assistance with finding potential grant or loan funding for new commercial connections or subdivision developments not currently included in the 2022 PER phases. **GM**

Action E: If water usage becomes an issue due to water supply or excessive usage, install meters in conjunction with a tiered rate system to encourage less water usage and increase revenue. **PW**

Commented [KS9]: QUESTION FOR THE CITY AND STAKEHOLDERS:
Are there any important considerations for this potential City and developer cost-sharing system? How would the City manage this?

6.3 Internet

Bethel's current lack of access to adequate broadband internet service limits economic development as well as the efficiency of services by health care providers, schools, tribal entities, businesses, and residents. Widespread access to broadband will remove barriers to public health innovation and schooling options and would stimulate economic growth.

Fast and reliable communications through deployment of broadband networks are a priority for the State of Alaska, which recently developed a State Office of Broadband Development and, along with other federal agencies, will be funding large scale deployment in the next 5-10 years. According to the State of Alaska Governor's Task Force on Broadband, Alaska "must prioritize broadband service expansion in unserved and underserved areas" as 63.7% of Alaskans living in rural areas have access to fixed terrestrial broadband at speeds of at least 25 Mbps. Additionally, Alaska will receive at least \$100 million through a new federal program to expand high-speed internet to underserved rural areas to promote workforce development.

GCI is currently the sole internet service provider in Bethel with microwave system-based speeds of 10 Megabits per second (Mbps) but is planning to expand access to Bethel through a combination of projects. Though the City is not directly involved in providing internet service, fast and reliable internet would greatly improve efficiency for City government, local businesses, and residents seeking to connect with those outside the region; the City should do what it can to help GCI bring in broadband.

GOAL 3: Facilitate broadband development within the City of Bethel to advance community access to reliable internet service.

Strategy 1: Monitor the buildout of internet-related infrastructure in Bethel.

Action A: Request information from GCI regarding locations of existing fiber optic cable within Bethel. **PW**

Strategy 2: When possible, streamline permitting of internet-related infrastructure.

Action A: Prioritize facilitation of rights-of-way within city-owned land or city-held easements for laying fiber optic cable. **PW**

Action B: Review and amend tall tower permitting code to be simpler and more efficient. **PL**

Action C: If / as needed to help facilitate improved internet connectivity in Bethel, review and amend other sections of BMC that may impact permits required for different types of internet-related infrastructure (besides cables and towers). **PL**

6.4 Solid Waste

Part of the Public Works Department's maintenance and operations responsibilities for the City include solid waste management. Trash is primarily collected in residential and commercial dumpsters located throughout the city before being placed in the landfill.

The Bethel landfill was constructed in 1991 and has completed several studies throughout the years to determine its remaining capacity. Per a 2019 study, the landfill is projected to reach capacity in 2043. Landfill closure, continued monitoring that would be required after closure, and the opening of another landfill would be very expensive, so the City of Bethel is motivated to prolong the life of the existing landfill as much as possible. Reducing existing volume of waste and managing new waste entering the landfill are two main strategies to achieve this goal.

Based on Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) inspections, Bethel has continued to improve landfill operations. The city has purchased a shredder to reduce waste volume. There are also opportunities to reduce the amount of waste that heads for the landfill in the first place. Since the latest Comprehensive Plan in 2011, the recycling program in Bethel has been discontinued due to the high cost of shipping out materials, which has led to an increase in reusable / recyclable material in the landfill. Outside of the community informally passing along reusable items, some of the strategies in this section focus on the City finding ways to divert more waste from the landfill.

GOAL 4: Prolong the life of the existing landfill.

Strategy 1: Continuously monitor the capacity of the landfill to assess if / when a new landfill might be needed in the future.

Action A: Conduct a new landfill closure study approximately every five years to measure and evaluate progress. **LM**

Strategy 2: Utilize best solid waste management practices and compliance with ADEC standards to reduce the volume of waste in the landfill.

Action A: Regularly review guidance on the ADEC Solid Waste website and incorporate recommendations based off of the annual state inspection and new technology as it becomes available. **LM**

Action B: Create a transition plan to prepare for the upcoming retirement of the landfill manager, including adequate staff training / certification to manage the landfill after the transition. **LM**

Action C: Improve separation of waste by establishing cells (such as for lumber or scrap metal and vehicles). **LM**

Action D: Train personnel on the use of the shredder and other techniques to reduce volume of waste. **LM**

Action E: Provide additional staff training such as freon removal with Total Reclaim, the Rural Alaska Landfill Operator (RALO) course, and/or HAZWOPER. **LM**

Action F: In the longer term, consider building an additional storage garage to store and protect heavy equipment. **LM**

Strategy 3: Pursue ways to redirect more types of waste from the landfill.

Action A: Provide information to the public on existing City waste separation programs and what types of waste can and cannot be disposed in dumpsters. **LM**

Action B: Identify and separate out types of waste that may be able to be reused or recycled locally; stage these items for public salvaging. **LM**

Action C: Facilitate and raise awareness for ONC's e-waste collection program. **LM**

Action D: Research funding or partnership opportunities for barging out other kinds of waste, particularly harmful waste, or recyclables such as cardboard or aluminum. **LM**

Action E: Based on ongoing research about the cost of shipping out recyclables, consider implementing local recycling again; this could include preparation work like shredding metals or processing wood. **LM**



Refrigerators being stored separately from other waste at the Bethel Landfill.

7.0 CHAPTER 7: PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES

Details on the responsibilities of each City department are provided in Chapter 2 – Existing Conditions.

7.1 General City Administration and Communications

The City has reported ongoing difficulty in finding people to work in City jobs, particularly since the Covid-19 pandemic. This has created issues for the Public Works Department, which must still keep up with hauled water and sewer service and road and other infrastructure maintenance. Vacancies in City committees and commissions also reduce their ability to effectively meet and make decisions, as meetings cannot be held without a quorum. The City should pursue new ways to recruit potential employees and volunteers. This will also require strategic bolstering of ways the City communicates with the community.

GOAL 1: Enhance the City's staff recruitment efforts.

Strategy 1: Regularly raise awareness about current and upcoming job and committee / commission openings within Bethel.

Action A: Create a running list of staffing needs within the City, and order it based on priority. **AD**

Action B: Post open position advertisements to LinkedIn and Indeed, featuring the highest priority openings as identified in Action A. **AD**

Action C: Set up an automated email alert service that sends updates to potentially interested parties when there are openings at the City, featuring the highest priority openings as identified in Action A. **AD**

Action D: Organize an annual City of Bethel Opportunity Fair, where representatives from each department and committee / commission can raise awareness about their activities and meet potentially interested candidates. **AD**

Action E: Advertise current and upcoming openings as well as the opportunity fair and any other relevant events through typical channels within Bethel. **AD**

Strategy 2: Work with educational programs to create a pipeline of trained candidates for City jobs.

Action A: Work with local schools, including the high school, vocational school, and university, to create a pipeline of potential City employees. **AD**

Action B: Identify other vocational schools in Alaska and advertise job openings through their channels. **AD**

Action C: Request that the University of Alaska help share job openings with their network to broaden the reach across Alaska. **AD**

Strategy 3: Broaden recruitment channels around the region and Alaska.

Action A: Invite people from villages in the region to attend hiring events and apply for jobs at the City. **AD**

Action B: Work with tribal organizations and native corporations to raise awareness about jobs at the City with a statewide audience. **AD**

Action C: Consider working with recruiters to help find candidates. **AD**

GOAL 2: Communicate regularly and effectively with the community through various channels.

Strategy 1: Expand the reach of the Clerk's newsletter, "In the Loop."

Action A: Provide a link for the current month's newsletter on the homepage of the City website. **CC**

Action B: Create a City information flier to laminate and place around town, including URLs and QR codes for the current newsletter and other key sites to access. **CC**

Action C: Print some copies of the newsletter to leave in key locations around town. **CC**

Strategy 2: Expand the City's presence on social media.

Action A: Create an official City of Bethel page on Facebook. **CC**

Action B: Stay active on social media with posts for all updates and events. **CC**

Strategy 3: Optimize the City website and update it regularly.

Action A: Each year, conduct a review of the website to determine if there are particular pages or sections that need to be added, deleted, reorganized, or updated. **CC**

Action B: As needed, update the home page (and/or other pages) with more new information and links. **CC**

Action C: Make it easier to find contact information to use for different types of inquiries to the City. **CC**

7.2 City Finances

The City of Bethel's financial structure includes certain types of revenue contributing to a general fund to pay for things like City employee salaries and building operation costs. Current funding sources include bed tax, sales tax (including selective sales tax on certain items like alcohol, marijuana, and tobacco), gaming fees, and payment in lieu of taxes. The sales tax is currently six percent, and seniors are exempt.

Other fees are structured as “enterprise funds” that fund services and facilities that are supposed to be self-supporting, such as water and sewer, solid waste services, or the municipal dock enterprise fund. These may not always be self-supporting as they could become too expensive to residents – they may require subsidizing through other revenue sources. This is something the Finance Department should take the lead on managing as discussed in Strategy 1 below.

There are currently no property taxes in Bethel, unlike the large majority of Alaskan cities of Bethel's size. This is because there is such a mix of Native allotments and privately owned land, and Native allotments are not taxable.

Commented [KS10]: THIS SECTION STILL REQUIRES FINANCE DEPARTMENT REVIEW

GOAL 3: Optimize the management of City revenue and spending.

Strategy 1: Improve Finance Department operations.

Action A: Develop, document, regularly update, and provide staff training on department policies and procedures. **FI**

Action B: Working with the City Manager, examine the potential capacity to add one or two positions to the Finance Department. **FI**

Action C: Work closely with other City departments to train and assist them in tracking, managing, and reporting on their budgets. **FI**

Action D: Working with other City departments as well as the Finance Committee, consider ways to augment, diversify, and allocate City revenue sources, such as based on particular projects that may need funding. **FI**

Action E: In the longer term, conduct a comprehensive study of municipal finances to determine the most efficient and effective fiscal structure. **FI**

Commented [KS11]: QUESTION FOR THE CITY:
How are departments' budgets tracked now? Is there a way to improve that can be added here?

Strategy 2: Regularly update fees and other charges.

Action A: Update the City's fee schedule annually (as required by BMC 4.04.025), including consideration of whether new fees should be levied. **FI**

Action B: Keep up-to-date utility rates by completing utility rate studies every 10 years. **PW**

Strategy 3: Improve clarity and consistency of sales tax collection and business licensing.

Action A: Consolidate and improve clarity of information on the City website related to businesses, licensing, and sales tax collection. **FI**

Action B: Before local business licenses are issued or renewed, require a code compliance review from the Planning Department. **FI**

Action C: Enforce compliance with business licensing requirements and sales tax collection. **FI**

Action D: Expand resources to help people start local businesses. **FI**

Strategy 4: Shape sales taxes and fees to positively influence public health and sustainability and fund key community projects.

Action A: Consider proposing expansions to bed taxes to include short-term vacation rentals (such as Airbnbs) not currently covered under bed taxes. **CM**

Action B: Over time, consider proposing expansions to taxes on alcohol, marijuana, and tobacco sales, as well as gambling. **CM**

Action C: Propose a “bag tax” for disposable bags from stores and restaurants. **CM**

Action D: Consider proposing vehicle parking fees in some areas, such as for long-term parking near the airport or boat harbor. **CM**

Strategy 5: Maximize grant funding that can be obtained.

Action A: Expand the grant writing and research capacity of the City beyond the Grants Manager, including assistance from other departments and/or hiring consultants to prepare some grant applications. **GM**

Action B: Explore partnerships with other organizations to fund some projects. **GM**

7.3 Public Facilities & Equipment

In addition to the revenue sources discussed above in Section 7.2, the City holds assets including land, equipment, transportation and other infrastructure, buildings, and other public facilities. To best serve the community, the City must manage potential land uses for its holdings or otherwise navigate leases or sales. Equipment, public utility, and building facilities must be maintained, updated, and expanded when necessary, but this requires advance planning to make sure there is adequate funding available and that public services are not interrupted while the City waits for new equipment to arrive, for example. The City regularly completes a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to plan allocation of City funds, but this system might benefit from more strategic updates. Goals 4 and 5 below provide guidance for managing City land and other assets as well as planning to prioritize where to obtain and/or allocate funding in the future.

GOAL 4: Manage City lands in an efficient, cost-effective, and forward-thinking manner.

Strategy 1: Maintain a map of City-owned lands and ownership changes.

Action A: Create a map of City-owned lands using GIS and an associated database. **PL**

Action B: Identify undeveloped or underutilized properties currently owned by the City on the map. **PL**

Action C: Using the community land use needs identified as part of the goals in Chapter 3 – Housing and Land Use, identify community needs that may be met with City-owned properties or underutilized properties. Use this information to identify where there are gaps, which could lead to identifying properties that may be pursued for acquisition by the City. **CM**

Action D: Update the map as properties are acquired or sold, also tracking properties identified as potential acquisitions or potential properties to sell. **PL**

Strategy 2: Improve processes for City property acquisition, sales, and leasing.

Action A: When the City needs to buy or lease land, release requests to negotiate lease or sale agreements with other property owners in order to help find available land that meets City purposes. **CM**

Action B: Consider proposing modifications to BMC to allow greater flexibility when the City is planning to buy, sell, or lease property; being allowed to negotiate more when appropriate could help the City. **CM**

Action C: Examine publicly owned lands for all potential uses, including open space use, before disposition. **PL**

GOAL 5: Manage updates to City facilities and equipment in an efficient, cost-effective, and forward-thinking manner.

Strategy 1: Maintain the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Action A: Update the CIP every year. **CM**

Action B: Ensure that items in the CIP factor in City goals for improving energy efficiency and a transition to alternative energy sources in the future. **CM**

Action C: Continue to use the insurance schedule to anticipate items that the City may need to spend money on in the future, such as repairing frozen pipes. **CM**

Strategy 2: Continually seek funding for additions, improvements, and repairs to City facilities and equipment.

Action A: Remain up-to-date on funding opportunities, including special infrastructure funding through federal or state programs. GM

Action B: Apply to grants to fund infrastructure, such as BUILD grants. GM

Action C: Consider allocating other funding sources for some infrastructure improvements, including through collaboration and potentially facilities-sharing with organizations such as ONC. GM



Bethel Heights water treatment plant.

7.4 Public Safety

The Bethel Fire Department currently includes a captain, a chief, and around ten paid staff, in addition to approximately 20 community firefighter and/or emergency medical volunteers, some of whom are certified Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs). The department operates several trucks, an aerial apparatus, a tundra firefighting vehicle, and an Advanced Life Support ambulance out of the fire station in the middle of town (near City Hall and the Cultural Center). The City has a mutual aid agreement with the state-owned Bethel airport to provide services, as well as a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for access to additional equipment and personnel when needed.

Prevention and education programs include a home safety inspection program, fire prevention classes, and fire drills for children through field trips and school visits (including Fire Prevention Month in October), and a program in which fire department personnel regularly examine commercial and residential properties in areas of the community where a significant fire problem might develop. Smoke detectors are available and can be tested year-round at the fire station; the department will also provide, test, or install detectors in homes for those without the means to do so themselves.

The Bethel Police Department currently includes 13 sworn staff that handle a significantly larger number of calls for service than other cities of its size. Bethel police also respond to calls outside of city limits as the public safety answering point (PSAP) for the Alaska State Troopers; the troopers contract with the City for after-hours dispatch services for calls from dozens of surrounding villages across an area the size of Texas.

In addition to police, Bethel has a state grant-funded Community Service Patrol program with several full-time and part-time employees. This program helps with the police department's response load for certain types of cases, such as bringing intoxicated people to the sobering center operated in partnership with YKHC.

Recent capital improvements include new police headquarters, a new Community Service Patrol vehicle (funded with Covid-19 relief money), a new ladder truck, a new pumper-tender truck, and refurbishment of an existing ambulance. It is important to note that many improvements that fall under the Public Works department, including for improved roads and water systems, would also benefit the emergency response operations and help lengthen the life of equipment.

Commented [KS12]: THIS SECTION IS IN THE PROCESS OF BEING REVIEWED BY THE FIRE AND POLICE DEPARTMENTS

GOAL 6: Improve public safety facilities and services in Bethel.

Strategy 1: Continue to improve fire and emergency medical infrastructure and services.

Action A: Construct a new fire substation near the airport. **FD**

Action B: As the City's piped water system is expanded, install fire hydrants. **PW**

Action C: Address maintenance needs for the fire station. **FD**

Action D: Continue to recruit and provide training to fire and EMS staff and volunteers. **FD**

[Action E](#): Address other public safety capital improvement needs as they arise and new technology becomes needed and/or available. **FD**

[Action F](#): Continue existing fire prevention and education programs. **FD**

Strategy 2: Continue to improve police service.

[Action A](#): Continually upgrade public safety dispatch and communications equipment. **PD**

[Action B](#): Purchase additional surveillance and other evidence collection equipment, as needed. **PD**

[Action C](#): Provide additional training to Police and Community Service Patrol staff, as needed. **PD**

[Action D](#): Make other upgrades and additions to police department facilities as needed, including the vehicle impound yard. **PD**



Bethel Fire Department trucks located outside of the fire station.

Other than general Fire and Police Department updates, locally specific, targeted initiatives have been successful at improving public safety in the past. One example is the progress made on the “Kids Don’t Float” program, which was listed as an action item in the previous Comprehensive Plan. To help prevent drowning, safety information signage and life jackets or other flotation devices have been placed near water access.

There could be other opportunities for public safety initiatives that respond to safety issues that are specific to Bethel, which may be spearheaded by the Fire and/or Police Departments or in partnership with other organizations, depending on the specific issue.

GOAL 7: Target specific public safety concerns within Bethel.

Strategy 1: Improve maritime safety through educational programs.

Action A: Continue to work with the fitness center to offer swim classes for all ages. **TBD**

Action B: Through the Port, organize boating safety classes. **PO**

Commented [KS13]: QUESTION FOR THE CITY:
Why did the Port stop offering its own boating safety classes?

Strategy 2: Improve ATV and snowmachine safety, on and off Bethel roads.

Action A: Pursue a partnership with the State of Alaska to offer ATV and snowmachine safety information and/or classes. **PD**

Action B: Require ATV registration to drive ATVs on roads within City limits. **PD**

Strategy 3: Reduce drug abuse in Bethel.

Action A: Continue to support the Bethel Winter House nonprofit organization. **PD**

Action B: Continue operation of the Community Service Patrol, the grant-funded service that picks up individuals under the influence and drops them off at places such as YKHC or their sobering center. **PD**

Strategy 4: Support organizations that provide services to people experiencing homelessness in Bethel.

Action A: Continue to support the Bethel Winter House nonprofit organization. **TBD**

Strategy 5: Improve animal care and control programs.

Action A: Continue discussions on whether to hire a dedicated City animal control staff person to catch loose dogs and issue citations for animal cruelty. **PD**

Action B: Support and coordinate with Bethel Friends of Canines (BFK9) on the new animal shelter project. **PD**

7.5 Parks and Recreation

Bethel Parks and Recreation are managed by the Public Works department and advised by the Community Parks and Recreation Committee. The recreational facilities including parks, trails, the fitness center and pool, and other facilities are heavily used by the community and identified as a key community resource that contributes to quality of life in Bethel. As such, there is a desire to expand recreational facilities for people of all ages. In the past, expansion efforts have involved grants, special funding allocation from City taxes, and community partnerships and volunteer efforts. Given the strong public interest in more parks, trails, and other facilities, it is likely similar collaborative efforts could be enacted for future projects. These projects will also improve the visitor experience of Bethel and provide more spaces for sports and cultural events held in the City, which is important to economic development, as discussed in Chapter 8 – People and Economy.

GOAL 8: Enhance the role of parks in the Bethel community.

Strategy 1: Expand the City's capacity to manage and maintain parks.

Action A: Designate a Parks and Recreation department and/or manager within the City who will be responsible for leading parks improvement projects and coordination with the Community Parks & Recreation Committee. **CM**

Action B: Continue efforts to hire and train maintenance staff, including for seasonal positions and/or potential for volunteer involvement. **AD**

Action C: Monitor general and ongoing maintenance issues related to parks (such as vandalism) and discuss ideas for solutions with the Community Parks & Recreation Committee. **PW**

Strategy 2: Expand and improve key central parks in Bethel with the goal of making them community landmarks and gathering spaces.

Action A: Create a new park on the former Kilbuck School site, as the neighborhood park for the Avenues / Alligator Acres area. **PW**

Action B: Identify waterfront park investment opportunities to create an iconic and central civic space that represents Bethel. **PW**

Action C: At Pinky's Park, add amenities that are focused on community gathering and comfort for all ages. **PW**

Strategy 3: Establish a network of Bethel parks to serve all neighborhoods.

Action A: Create an online guide and map of all the parks in Bethel that are updated regularly. **PL**

Action B: Using the development of the parks guide and map, identify areas with less access to nearby parks. **PL**

Action C: Pursue the development of new City parks in underserved areas. **PW**

Action D: Require that new residential subdivisions reserve space for a park or open space. **PL**

Strategy 4: Improve park facilities for sports and other recreational activities.

Action A: Continue to upgrade and add facilities to Pinky's Park, including new playground equipment and potentially new gravel trails to replace run-down boardwalks. **PW**

Action B: Consider creating additional facilities such as a recreational campground, dog park, non-motorized winter recreation such as cross-country skiing or mushing, additional skate park facilities, or new sports fields or courts. **PW**

Strategy 5: Pursue special funding and collaboration opportunities for enhancing Bethel parks.

Action A: Pursue Land and Water Conservation Fund or similar outdoors-related grant money to help with parks projects. **GM**

Action B: Add more community gardening opportunities to parks, potentially in partnership with Alaska Native organizations or other sponsor entities. **GM**

GOAL 9: Enhance recreational facilities and programs in Bethel.

Strategy 1: Expand the facilities and operations of the Fitness Center to accommodate more activities and all ages.

Action A: Expand the fitness center with a gym and fitness track. **TBD**

Action B: Include programming within the fitness center oriented towards younger people. **TBD**

Action C: Include programming within the fitness center and/or pool that is oriented towards seniors. **TBD**

Strategy 2: Support expansions to childcare, teen activities, and senior activities.

Action A: Support upgrades and expansions to the Bethel 4-H Youth Center facilities and programming, including food programs, classes, and recreation for teens and afterschool youth. **TBD**

Action B: Support recreational programming dedicated to seniors, such as upgrades to the existing Senior Center Park or other programs. **TBD**

Strategy 3: Explore collaborations for recreational activities at other facilities in Bethel.

Action A: Explore opportunities to use school facilities for programming outside of school hours. **TBD**

Commented [KS14]: QUESTION FOR THE CITY AND STAKEHOLDERS:
Should these be designated as Public Works action items, or on a separate Parks & Recreation list (to be assigned by the City Manager to appropriate parties)?

Commented [KS15]: QUESTION FOR STAKEHOLDERS
Childcare was identified as a big need. Please let us know if you have other ideas for how the City can play a role in supporting the provision of childcare services in Bethel.

Action B: Support expansions to recreational facilities and resources, such as the Cultural Center and the Kuskokwim Consortium Library. **TBD**



Yukon-Kuskokwim Fitness Center.

GOAL 10: Enhance the network of trails and open spaces in Bethel.

Strategy 1: Improve access and comfort for trails.

See Chapter 4 – Local Transportation for trail and other non-motorized transportation goals.

Action A: Add trails to the map and guide of parks and recreation facilities. **PL**

Strategy 2: Maintain a network of open spaces.

Action A: Identify and map open spaces within and around the developed area of Bethel that can be used for public recreation. **PL**

Action B: Identify key future transportation connections across currently open areas such as the “Donut Hole.” **PL**

Action C: Based on the map of key future connections through currently open space, as well as mapped areas that must be preserved due to wetlands or drainage, identify suitable locations for potential green belts. **PL**

8.0 CHAPTER 8: PEOPLE & ECONOMY

To restate the community's Vision Statement,

Bethel is the hub that connects the communities of the rural Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region.

Bethel is a growing, diverse community that strives to improve quality of life, affordability, and opportunities through strategic development that responds to Bethel's remote location.

As a remote hub city, Bethel provides opportunities to build businesses, careers, homes, and community connections. Its economic development strategy should be tied to attracting, retaining, and connecting the people who make the community great. While the economy is dominated by employment in local government (city, tribal, and school) as well as government-funded organizations (like the Association of Village Council Presidents and Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation), there are opportunities to expand local commercial activity. With investments in local people and culture, locally generated economic growth is expected to follow.

8.1 Education and Career Training

As the regional hub of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, Bethel is also the de facto educational hub for the surrounding villages. Schools and career training are an important piece of Bethel's economic sustainability and growth. Bethel is home to many educational facilities, as listed in Chapter 2 – Existing Conditions. However, Bethel (like many remote Alaskan communities) struggles to fill job vacancies with local community members who have the appropriate training. It may be that residents with more education and training locally are moving to larger communities such as Anchorage, in part due to the high cost of living in Bethel.

Facing the continued rise in cost of living, Bethel should continue to encourage residents to seek out job training and explore new ideas for the retention and recruitment of local and regional talent. This will not only build local recruitment pipelines, but it will also give more Bethel residents higher-paying jobs and contribute to the overall resiliency of the community. These goals will require quality education at all levels.

GOAL 1: Promote high-quality education and career training in Bethel, so that there are opportunities for locals and newcomers to access training and become employed in Bethel.

Strategy 1: Identify community priorities for education and career training.

Action A: City of Bethel staffing is an important priority; see Chapter 7 – Public Facilities and Services, Goal 1: “Improve the City’s ability to address staffing needs now and in the future.” **AD**

Action B: Work with City departments and community partners to identify key community staffing needs. **CM**

Action C: Identify gaps between community unemployment and community job openings. **TBD**

Action D: Working with community partners and the business community, monitor which employment sectors are likely to increase in importance and which employment sectors are likely to decrease in importance in 2045. **TBD**

Strategy 2: Foster a city-wide culture of emphasizing local hiring and training for specific local opportunities.

Action A: Lead the community in the creation of a local “job board” that helps businesses find suitable hires. **TBD**

Action B: Create a focused internship and apprenticeship program that offers introductory training and support leading to employment with City of Bethel or through partnerships with community organizations or businesses. **TBD**

8.2 Donlin Mine

The Donlin Mine has long been discussed as a controversial project on the horizon that may have significant impacts on Bethel. After years of uncertainty about whether the project would proceed, it now seems to be moving forward; as such, it will be important to plan for the potential impacts. In the future, there could be other major projects in the region that Bethel should track and respond to similarly.

The Donlin Gold Project would include development of an open pit mine approximately 150 miles northeast of Bethel. All key federal and state approvals have been obtained, and planning for construction is in progress. Bethel (along with a barge landing on the Kenai Peninsula) would be a primary accumulation point for pipeline materials during construction. Construction of the mine site, transportation facilities, and pipeline is anticipated to take about 3-4 years. This would begin with moving equipment, supplies, and personnel to the project site using various transportation modes. The Donlin Mine is expected to cost approximately \$1.2 billion in labor; at peak construction, the proposed Donlin Gold Project would annually require up to 3,200 workers, including 2,500 for mine site and transportation facilities construction and 650 for natural gas pipeline construction.

The Donlin Gold Project would occur over a period of approximately 30 years, representing nearly a full generation of workers and residents. Approximately 50 to 60 percent of the peak year workforce would be drawn from communities within the Y-K region, and there are strong training programs to support local hire. Employment during operations would be less but still substantial, estimated to impact 4 to 4.5 percent of households in the region. A portion of those employees at the Donlin Gold Mine may relocate their household outside of the region. Based on experience at Red Dog Mine, about 50 percent of employees would out-migrate to Bethel or Anchorage.

As part of mine development, an EIS was conducted which evaluated potential impacts to Bethel, including the following:

- Increased employment and income from the mine may go to residents of Bethel, which could increase the population above current projections by the Alaska Department of Labor and may also change Bethel’s cultural composition (e.g., percentage of Alaska Natives and non-Natives).

- Infrastructure improvements for the Port of Bethel would be necessary, as the project is expected to approximately double the number of freight and fuel barges annually.
- Some local businesses in the Y-K region could experience an increase in activity during construction (likely concentrated in Bethel, as there are few retail and service outlets in smaller communities).
- An influx of capital and labor to small communities such as Bethel (small when viewed from a state-wide perspective) as a result of project construction could also have a negative economic effect in the form of inflationary pressure. Basically, this could increase the prices of goods and services for residents, especially impacting those not employed by the project.

GOAL 2: Minimize potential negative impacts to Bethel from the Donlin Mine efforts and maximize potential benefits.

Strategy 1: Ensure effective coordination with the Donlin Mine Project.

Action A: Develop a Memorandum of Understanding for ongoing coordination, including holding annual strategy meeting for conflict resolution and identify partnering opportunities. **CM**

Action B: Establish a communications plan to outline ways to keep Bethel residents informed of construction schedules and status of barge traffic, as well as to keep Donlin informed of the location and timing of commercial and subsistence fishing activities and other concerns or questions. **CM**

Strategy 2: Work with the Donlin project to plan for additional traffic associated with Donlin Mine.

Action A: Obtain full details about the planned dock construction south of the Bethel petroleum dock (associated with the Donlin Mine project). **PO**

Action B: Given Donlin's significant anticipated impacts to the Port of Bethel, jointly work with Donlin on port and waterway studies and improvements needed. **PO**

Action C: Coordinate with DOT&PF to monitor potential impacts to the capacity of Chief Eddie Hoffman Highway and whether improvements would be needed. **PW**

8.3 Fishing and Subsistence

For decades, commercial fishing was a key source of income in Bethel. Recently, however, commercial fishing has declined significantly due to falling fish population and prices. Since the 1990s, revenue from commercial fishing in Bethel decreased by nearly 50 percent. In 2016, the Coastal Villages Region Fund (CVRF) stopped buying and processing fish from the Kuskokwim region. CVRF was the largest buyer for 20 villages surrounding Bethel in Western Alaska. Since 2016, the region has been without a processor, making it nearly impossible to sell fish. Local fishermen tried to organize a cooperative to work with an external fish processor but had no success.

Many residents in Bethel and the broader region participate in subsistence fishing, just as people in the Yup'ik villages in the area had done long before the establishment of Bethel. Many people have small boats and travel along the river to fish camps. Subsistence food, including fish, makes up nearly half of residents' annual diet. However, salmon runs have been extremely low in recent years, causing Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) to limit how many fish people can catch. This has put strain on Bethel and other river communities as they are forced to rely more heavily on expensive imported groceries and less on traditional subsistence ways of life.

In addition to fish in the river, there are many other subsistence foods harvested around Bethel that supplement residents' diets. Beyond food, harvested materials can be used for clothing, tools, crafts, shelter, and more. These practices are important to the local culture and way of life for many Bethel residents, including but not limited to Alaska Natives. Most harvesting occurs during the summer and fall months, when the growing season and typical hunting season occur. Year-round, there is also informal sharing and trading of subsistence foods.

Many City of Bethel residents will continue to be impacted by the local salmon decline and other environmental challenges that are likely to impact subsistence resources (like climate change, which is already changing characteristics of the tundra). While the City cannot directly interfere with ADFG or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service resource management policies, there may be opportunities to provide information or other resources to assist with local organizations' research and advocacy efforts.

Several organizations in the region are involved in advocacy to address issues impacting salmon populations, including climate change, pollution, and salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock fishery. One example is the Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, which advocates for stricter restrictions on salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea and continued coordination with Alaska Native tribes that can provide traditional ecological knowledge. Other groups include the ONC Fisheries Department and the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group.

GOAL 3: Support subsistence rights and access to resources for Bethel residents and Alaska Natives throughout the region

Strategy 1: Protect physical access to subsistence resources around Bethel.

Action A: Maintain the small boat harbor facility, and identify future expansion needs and priorities for funding to ensure sufficient access for subsistence users. **PO**

Commented [KS16]: QUESTION FOR STAKEHOLDERS:
Are there any other ideas for ways for the City to support this goal?

Action B: Require the dedication of parks and/or open spaces, such as green belts, in new subdivisions in order to maintain access to the undeveloped tundra. **PL**

Action C: Work to obtain public access easements over trails used to access fishing, hunting, or plant harvesting areas. **PL**

Strategy 2: Support research and advocacy efforts that seek to protect access to subsistence resources.

Action A: As opportunities arise, provide information or resources to support the activities of subsistence resource advocacy groups. **PO**

8.4 Local History and Culture

As the hub city for the YK Delta region, Bethel represents a confluence of cultures. As both the gateway to the villages of the region and the gateway from the region to the rest of the world, community members referred to it as the “heartland of the Yup’ik people” and a very diverse community. Due to its remote location, community members describe a strong sense of interconnectedness, community, and self-reliance. People come together in Bethel around traditional activities and expressions of community and culture. The cultural environment in Bethel includes not only Yup’ik traditions that have existed for thousands of years, but also contemporary sports that bring people together and a common value for the beauty of the river and the tundra. The City can play a role in supporting the cultural fabric that makes Bethel a great community in which to live, with a strong sense of place and local identity and pride.

GOAL 4: Support locally-specific cultural activities and attractions in Bethel.

Strategy 1: Work with community organizations to continue to highlight Yup’ik culture in Bethel.

Action A: Identify needs and opportunities to expand existing Yup’ik translation services provided as part of City functions. **AD**

Action B: Seek opportunities to incorporate Alaska Native place names and art into public spaces in Bethel, such as parks and trails. **PW**

Action C: When possible, partner with Bethel Council on the Arts and Alaska Native organizations to sponsor cultural facilities and events in Bethel, such as arts and crafts markets, cultural exhibits, or the Camai dance festival. **TBD**

Strategy 2: Support community activities and events.

Action A: Pursue the expansion of the fitness center to make space for more sports activities, such as basketball. **PW**

Action B: Pursue the expansion of organized winter sports facilities and activities, such as mushing and cross-country skiing. **PW**

Strategy 3: Celebrate natural and historic resources and sites in Bethel.

Action A: Emphasize preservation of natural landscapes and native plants in the management and design of open spaces and parks. **PW**

Action B: Create a guide to natural features, spaces and parks, as well as key subsistence resources located around Bethel, for the education and appreciation of residents and visitors. **TBD**

Action C: Identify and map buildings or historic sites that are of historic significance. **TBD**

Action D: Develop and implement an informational signage system for parks and significant places of interest. **TBD**



Bethel Farmers Market shed.

8.5 Local Businesses

Community members report that it is very difficult to start a small business in Bethel. The City should try to help foster a small business friendly environment, as local production and commerce is a great way to decrease reliance on imports, oftentimes lowering the cost of living and keeping the money flowing in the local economy.

The right balance between regulations and policies that ease the way for small businesses needs to be found. In the past, it was sometimes difficult for the City to enforce business licensing that allows the City to collect sales tax, an important source of City revenue to fund public facilities and services. When Covid-19 relief money came into the community to assist businesses, more businesses were forced to get licenses in order to access funding; this is an example of an incentive that helped formalize more businesses in Bethel.

GOAL 5: Foster a thriving local business community.

Strategy 1: Encourage the reinvigoration of the Chamber of Commerce.

Action A: Assign a staff person within the City to serve as a liaison to the business community in Bethel. **CM**

Action B: Identify and reach out to business leaders in the community that were involved in the Chamber of Commerce in the past about the City's interest in more coordination with the business community, including potentially supporting the reinvigoration of the Chamber of Commerce. **FI**

Action C: Organize a City space for representatives from the business community / Chamber of Commerce to meet on a quarterly basis. **FI**

Strategy 2: Expand resources to help people start local businesses.

Action A: Continue to provide information on licensing and permitting required, as well as enforcement. **FI**

Action B: Pursue a partnership with an organization such as UAF to offer business planning assistance. **FI**

Action C: Raise awareness about resources available to help small businesses, such as the Alaska Small Business Development Center and related guides or workshops. **FI**

Strategy 3: Create a business-friendly environment in Bethel.

Action A: Identify any barriers that the City may be able to address to assist with starting and running businesses. **FI**

Action B: Examine BMC to consider allowing some small businesses to be a legal in residential zoned areas. **PL**

Action C: Work with the Chamber of Commerce to develop a directory of local businesses that is updated regularly. **FI**

Action D: Work with the Chamber of Commerce to organize events that highlight local businesses, such as markets or events that encourage people to visit businesses around town. **TBD**

8.6 Visitor Experience

People visit Bethel for a variety of reasons. The most common group visiting the area is made up of people visiting friends and relatives, known in tourism research as VFRs. Other common reasons for visiting Bethel include business trips, medical care, shopping, and community events. There is also a small segment of visitors seeking birdwatching, hunting, or flyfishing experiences. Each of these groups may be encouraged to spend more time in Bethel if investments are made in marketing and better accessibility of information about local attractions and amenities. This should increase spending and in turn help fund improvements to attractions for visitors, also improving the local quality of life and community sense of pride.

GOAL 6: Support and expand tourism and visitation to Bethel.

Strategy 1: Expand information and marketing for visitors.

Action A: Provide general visitor information on the City website. **TBD**

Action B: Create visitor marketing materials specific to different visitor groups:

Family-friendly – focused on people visiting friends and relatives (aka VFRs) with children and/or seniors in their groups

Business travelers – focused on coffee / breakfast, lunch and dinner dining, catering for meetings, wifi hangout spots, the fitness center, and “quick” attractions to visit

Nature tourists – focused on in-town attractions, equipment shops or rental services, and regional guiding services

Visitors from villages – focused on resources they may be coming to access and include Yup'ik translation

New residents – overview of key community resources as well as popular spots for locals and residents to help people who recently moved to “get to know Bethel” **TBD**

Action C: In collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce, encourage businesses and community facilities to provide up-to-date contact, website information, and photos on Google Maps. **F**

Strategy 2: Improve attractions for visitors.

Action A: Emphasize locally specific natural and cultural attractions. **TBD**

Action B: Work with the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations to develop a calendar of community events. **TBD**

Action C: Develop a beautification plan for the downtown area (roughly between the Cultural Center and Brown's Slough) and the waterfront. **TBD**

Action D: Provide information about observing and/or harvesting local plants and animals. **TBD**



Waterfront trail in Bethel.

APPENDIX 1:
ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT ACTION
ITEMS

APPENDIX 1 – ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT ACTION ITEMS

Chapter 7 – Public Facilities & Services

GOAL 1: Enhance the City’s staff recruitment efforts.		
Strategy 1: Regularly raise awareness about current and upcoming job and committee / commission openings within Bethel.		
	Action A: Create a running list of staffing needs within the City, and order it based on priority.	For example, water and sewer truck drivers and utility maintenance workers play a critical role in the City, and hiring for these types of roles should be prioritized. This and other actions related to hiring should be completed in collaboration with representatives from relevant departments when searching for specific roles.
	Action B: Post open position advertisements to LinkedIn and Indeed, featuring the highest priority openings as identified in Action A.	
	Action C: Set up an automated email alert service that sends updates to potentially interested parties when there are openings at the City, featuring the highest priority openings as identified in Action A.	This service could allow candidates to select types of jobs or departments for which they’d like to be alerted. Because this service is via email, people anywhere could add themselves to the list, not just in Bethel.
	Action D: Organize an annual City of Bethel Opportunity Fair, where representatives from each department and committee / commission can raise awareness about their activities and meet potentially interested candidates.	Private employer partners could also participate and help organize an event like this.
	Action E: Advertise current and upcoming openings as well as the opportunity fair and any other relevant events through typical channels within Bethel.	Also see Chapter 7 – Public Facilities & Services, Goal 2 on communications.
Strategy 2: Work with educational programs to create a pipeline of trained candidates for City jobs.		
	Action A: Work with local schools, including the high school, vocational school, and university, to create a pipeline of potential City employees.	For more discussion of working with schools in Bethel, see Chapter 8: People and Economy.

	Action B: Identify other vocational schools in Alaska and advertise job openings through their channels.	
	Action C: Request that the University of Alaska help share job openings with their network to broaden the reach across Alaska.	
Strategy 3: Broaden recruitment channels around the region and Alaska.		
	Action A: Invite people from villages in the region to attend hiring events and apply for jobs at the City.	
	Action B: Work with tribal organizations and native corporations to raise awareness about jobs at the City with a statewide audience.	
	Action C: Consider working with recruiters to help find candidates.	

GOAL 8: Enhance the role of parks in the Bethel community.

Strategy 1: Expand the City's capacity to manage and maintain parks.

	Action B: Continue efforts to hire and train maintenance staff, including for seasonal positions and/or potential for volunteer involvement.	<i>See Chapter 7, Goal 1 for more actions related to City recruitment.</i>
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Chapter 8 – People & Economy

GOAL 1: Promote high-quality education and career training in Bethel, so that there are opportunities for locals and newcomers to access training and become employed in Bethel.

Strategy 1: Identify community priorities for education and career training.

	Action A: City of Bethel staffing is an important priority; see <i>Chapter 7 – Public Facilities and Services, Goal 1: “Improve the City’s ability to address staffing needs now and in the future.”</i>	This section discusses strategies for the City to hire new City staff, which are applicable to providing opportunities in Bethel and can also be applied to opportunity development beyond City roles.
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GOAL 4: Support locally-specific cultural activities and attractions in Bethel.		
Strategy 1: Work with community organizations to continue to highlight Yup’ik culture in Bethel.		
	Action A: Identify needs and opportunities to expand existing Yup’ik translation services provided as part of City functions.	For example, Yup’ik language assistance is provided associated with local elections. There are many speakers in Bethel, including visitors from villages and elders who may rely on translation services more. There is also a Yup’ik immersion school and Yup’ik programming through UAF.

APPENDIX 2:
CITY CLERK ACTION ITEMS

APPENDIX 2 – CITY CLERK ACTION ITEMS

Chapter 7 – Public Facilities & Services

GOAL 2: Communicate regularly and effectively with the community through various channels.		
Strategy 1: Expand the reach of the Clerk's newsletter, "In the Loop."		
	Action A: Provide a link for the current month's newsletter on the homepage of the City website.	There is a page on the City website for the newsletter that includes a link to sign up to receive it. The reach of this newsletter could be expanded by publishing it directly online, as well as pursuing other ways to spread the word. On the newsletter page of the website, also include an archive of past newsletters.
	Action B: Create a City information flier to laminate and place around town, including URLs and QR codes for the current newsletter and other key sites to access.	The flier can include URLs and QR codes for the City website, City Facebook page, and current City newsletter. Good locations may include City Hall, the Cultural Center, the Post Office, the airport, the small boat harbor, and the hospital.
	Action C: Print some copies of the newsletter to leave in key locations around town.	Printed copies may be more accessible for more residents. Another possibility could be to charge a small fee to receive printed copies via mail. On printed versions, adequate font size will also be important for accessibility.
Strategy 2: Expand the City's presence on social media.		
	Action A: Create an official City of Bethel page on Facebook.	This is the typical way government organizations have a presence on Facebook. An official page is more easily searchable than a profile, and it is the most streamlined way for organizations to make announcement posts and events. There could be a note on the page to "subscribe," allowing people who are interested to receive notifications for City updates. The City's public relations contractor has recently taken over management of the Clerk profile on Facebook, and they could be responsible for establishing a page.
	Action B: Stay active on social media with posts for all updates and events.	It is important for the page to remain active so that it is a useful tool that people look to for community updates. The page description can include links to important pages on the City website. Updates can include election or application reminders, key staff or contact changes, exciting announcements of City achievements like grants obtained or projects started or completed, and other similar topics. When special meetings outside of regular City meetings are held, these could be announced; if the City wishes to raise more awareness about an event and/or collect a rough RSVP, an Event can be created.

Strategy 3: Optimize the City website and update it regularly.

	Action A: Each year, conduct a review of the website to determine if there are particular pages or sections that need to be added, deleted, reorganized, or updated.	This could be organized by the City's contracted public relations firm.
	Action B: As needed, update the home page (and/or other pages) with more new information and links.	
	Action C: Make it easier to find contact information to use for different types of inquiries to the City.	

APPENDIX 3:
CITY MANAGER ACTION ITEMS

APPENDIX 3 – CITY MANAGER ACTION ITEMS

Chapter 3 – Housing and Land Use

GOAL 1: Address potential barriers to housing development.

Strategy 3: Encourage development by working with developers collaboratively to install public infrastructure, including piped water and sewer systems and roads.

Action A: As part of the subdivision agreement process, consider designing a standardized “impact fee” mechanism to have developers participate in funding when their development will impact the overall system (water and sewer or other infrastructure such as roads).	The impact fee could include funding for engineering, materials, and/or construction. A transparent, standardized process will be important in making expectations clear to potential developers.
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GOAL 3: Reserve space to accommodate community needs and desired development.

Strategy 2: Create and regularly maintain a list of community facility and infrastructure needs that will require land.

Action A: Create and maintain a list of community facility and infrastructure needs, in order of priority and including specific spatial needs such as location and approximate area of land required.	The City Manager and the Planning Department should create and maintain the list of facilities and infrastructure needs, in collaboration with leaders from each department. Some items on the list would go hand-in-hand with the Capital Improvement Plan (see <i>Chapter 7 – Public Facilities & Services</i>). As a start, consider including the following space needs for the community (other than housing): - Additional schools that may be needed as the population continues to grow - Additional civic or public works buildings needed - Parks and open space, distributed around different areas of Bethel - Port expansion areas, as needed - Water and wastewater treatment facilities (see <i>Chapter 6 – Utility Infrastructure for more discussion of water and sewer</i>)
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		- Alternative energy generation (wind, solar, etc.) and energy storage sites - Likely new road and other transportation corridors
	Action B: As applicable, identify and initiate coordination with entities that need to be involved in implementation (such as the Public Works department for wastewater facilities, or AVEC for alternative energy generation sites).	<i>See Chapter 6, Utility Infrastructure for more information on coordination with Public Works and AVEC, for example.</i>
	Action D: As needed, create a plan to obtain land or a lease for each priority community infrastructure space need.	<i>Also see Chapter 7 – Public Facilities and Services, Goal 4 regarding management of City land.</i>
Strategy 4: Sell, trade, or lease City-owned properties that the City does not need in the future so that more private development can occur.		
	Action A: Evaluate City-owned properties that should be considered to sell or lease for private development.	
	Action B: Create a plan for how the City will dispose of (sell or lease) certain properties over time.	Through RFP processes and/or purchase and sale agreements, the City can maintain some control over what gets developed, whether with formal public-private partnership or simply the terms of the agreement. This can help ensure that the land is utilized for community benefit.
	Action C: Initiate the process to dispose of these properties according to the plan.	City land disposal decisions would require a City Council vote.

GOAL 4: Identify areas that are good candidates for infill development and take steps to facilitate their development.

Strategy 2: Investigate how private landowners within the priority development area identified above might be interested and able to participate in community development goals.

	Action A: Explore partnership opportunities to achieve desired development, such as with BNC.	See Goal 3 above for more discussion of desired development. The City could potentially approach land owners considering development in the priority development area and assist with elements such as infrastructure funding. This could be used to help encourage developments that would be beneficial for the whole community, such as multifamily housing or alternative energy generation facilities.
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	Action B: Compile and share information from BIA about how native allotment owners can coordinate towards development.	There is a formal process the City could go through with BIA Realty to invite native allotment owners to participate in development.
	Action C: Coordinate with the Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) Realty Department to learn more about potential land exchanges between BNC and native allotment owners for “in-town” native allotments.	Coordination with BIA would also be helpful. The AVCP Realty Department offers support to native allotment holders for a variety of actions they could take with their land, including land exchanges, rights-of-way, or subdivision. BNC owns a significant amount of land around the peripheries of the official boundary of Bethel; they may have good candidate properties for land trades that are still near Bethel. The City could then partner with BNC to encourage development on the in-town parcels.
Strategy 4: Facilitate redevelopment of properties that are underutilized, dilapidated, or abandoned.		
	Action D: Consider funding available for the purchase of dilapidated or abandoned properties, potentially for use in partnership developments.	The City could potentially assist with cleaning up sites in order to facilitate redevelopment. Many owners of defunct / dilapidated properties can't afford to clean up the property and/or don't live on the premises.

Chapter 4 – Local Transportation

GOAL 1: Use the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) to guide all local transportation facility planning.		
Strategy 1: Emphasize the LRTP process and recommendations in Bethel.		
	Action A: Adopt the 2020 Draft LRTP.	This LRTP was fully prepared but never officially adopted. It should be adopted by the City Council so that it can be publicly shared and used.
	Action B: Every five years, revisit (through a public process) and thoroughly update the LRTP.	Reviewing and updating the LRTP should continue to involve extensive public input, as it informs what maintenance will be prioritized, along with new potential transportation facilities including roads, trails, and port facilities. The City should make it clear to the community that the LRTP is their main opportunity to provide input on transportation planning.

GOAL 2: Plan for an organized, proactive approach to surface transportation facility maintenance.		
Strategy 1: Clarify surface transportation facility maintenance responsibilities.		

	Action B: Obtain maintenance agreements (or joint maintenance agreements) for transportation facilities that are not solely under City jurisdiction.	One example is for BIA Road, which is currently maintained by a federal entity with occasional City involvement; this arrangement should be clarified in an agreement and would also be important to have in place to help manage future road improvement funding opportunities. A joint maintenance agreement was also recommended in the 2020 Draft LRTP to allow the City and ONC to share TTP funds.
	Action C: Work with DOT&PF to update existing state road MOUs, including exploring the possibility of the City assuming responsibility for maintenance of DOT&PF-managed roads in Bethel.	The City currently has five MOUs with DOT&PF, under which the airport manager is responsible for maintenance of state-owned roads in Bethel. Without a local crew as involved in road maintenance, DOT&PF may be less equipped to manage local road maintenance than the City. Public Works would like to explore the possibility of assuming maintenance of all of these roads, potentially except CEHH. This would require coordination with DOT&PF to negotiate and agree to the terms of the transition, including examining how it could impact STIP funding eligibility.

Chapter 5 – Regional Transportation

GOAL 1: Create a well-functioning airport area for travelers and businesses.		
Strategy 1: Facilitate efficient and organized access to the airport.		
	Action A: Between the City, DOT, and tenants leasing land and/or buildings on airport land, determine (and formalize in agreements if needed) which party is responsible for managing roads, parking, signage, and other elements within the airport area.	
GOAL 2: Support DOT&PF in airport operations and planning.		
Strategy 1: As requested by the FAA and/or DOT&PF, take actions that support smooth and secure airport operations.		
	Action C: Coordinate with the airport management / DOT&PF to schedule security drills.	
Strategy 2: Participate in planning for the future of the airport.		
	Action A: Maintain regular coordination (such as quarterly meetings) with DOT&PF and representatives	

	from airlines operating at the airport to track near- and long-term plans impacting the Bethel airport.	
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GOAL 6: Support the improvement and expansion of other modes of regional transportation.

Strategy 1: As the hub of regional transportation, organize a City-led regional transportation coordination group to plan routes, maintenance, and funding.

	Action A: Establish a regional transportation coordination group, including DOT&PF, representatives from villages and tribal organizations, shipping companies, and transportation companies.	
	Action B: The group should meet regularly to discuss existing routes, maintenance responsibilities and issues, potential new routes or transportation methods, and grant opportunities.	

Strategy 5: Explore potential road connections between Bethel, Oscarville, Napaskiak, and Napakiak.

	Action A: Work specifically with Oscarville, Napaskiak, and Napakiak representatives in the transportation coordination group to gauge interest in pursuing surface road routes between each village and Bethel.	There are already power lines connecting Bethel with Napakiak and Oscarville. Community members have expressed interest in surface connections in the past since these villages are close to Bethel. - For Oscarville, only a few miles of road and a creek crossing would be needed. There have been efforts to fund a bridge to cross the creek. - Napaskiak is just across the river from Oscarville, so a bridge would be needed. - Napakiak is also close to Bethel, and there was recently a DOT&PF RFP released to explore aviation and surface connections between village and the City. That RFP was canceled due to a funding issue, but this idea may arise again soon, and DOT&PF will be important to the discussion.
	Action B: Explore partnership agreement opportunities to implement future road connections.	The City would likely not lead these efforts, but can help coordinate through the transportation group.

Chapter 6 – Utility Infrastructure

GOAL 1: Advance projects in Bethel to increase electricity production from alternative energy sources to reduce both costs and generation of greenhouse gasses.

Strategy 1: Facilitate large-scale projects to introduce more alternative energy sources to the local network.

	Action A: Assign a City “energy point person” to coordinate regularly with AVEC.	In the past, there was an Energy Committee that held discussions around energy, but there is no clear person or group within the City that focuses on energy now.
	Action B: Working with AVEC, create a plan that identifies ways for the City to support a transition to more alternative energy generation.	Bethel has an interest in lowering energy costs for residents, and a shift to more renewable energy is anticipated to be the best way to do this. Alternative energy generation also is generally less harmful to the already-fragile Alaskan tundra and river environment on which Bethel depends. Bethel should work with AVEC to identify ways Bethel can help transition the grid to more alternative energy sources, such as working together on acquiring and/or setting aside land for wind or solar farms. AVEC currently needs to weigh in if the City applies for alternative energy grants, but in the future there could be opportunities for the two organizations to work together more collaboratively to obtain funding. As the largest member community within AVEC, Bethel may have an opportunity to play an influential role in support AVEC’s alternative energy transition.

GOAL 2: Based on the results of the Preliminary Engineering Report (2022), transition Bethel’s water and sewer utilities to fully-piped systems serving all residences and businesses by 2035.

Strategy 3: During the phases of the PER and beyond, manage the piped system to be as efficient and accessible as possible, as well as equitable in cost.

	Action C: For new development or redevelopment, investigate how the City could implement an “impact fee” system in which there are clear expectations related to new or upgraded infrastructure cost to the developer.	Other communities have systems in place for development to bear some or all of the cost of public infrastructure associated with the development. Eventually, this system should be added to municipal code. Clear expectations for private contributions, how this funding would be managed, and how the City can assist could help avoid discouraging development from high installation costs.
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Chapter 7 – Public Facilities & Services

GOAL 3: Optimize the management of City revenue and spending.

Strategy 4: Shape sales taxes and fees to positively influence public health and sustainability and fund key community projects.

	Action A: Consider proposing expansions to bed taxes to include short-term vacation rentals (such as Airbnbs) not currently covered under bed taxes.	Bed taxes on hotels and bed-and-breakfast homestays are currently at 12%. Landlords also have a tax responsibility for their rent income. However, how and whether to tax short-term vacation rentals (such as Airbnbs) has not been resolved as it is a complicated issue. If the City decides to pursue taxation in the future, the funds from bed taxes could potentially be dedicated to facilitating affordable housing development. If the City decides to pursue expansions to bed taxes, this would likely require an approval process with City Council.
	Action B: Over time, consider proposing expansions to taxes on alcohol, marijuana, and tobacco sales, as well as gambling.	If the City decides to pursue expansions to these selective sales taxes, this would likely require an approval process with City Council.
	Action C: Propose a “bag tax” for disposable bags from stores and restaurants.	Frequently called a “bag tax” in other communities, this is a small (few cents) fee per disposable bag used at stores. The “bag tax” could encourage more environmentally friendly behaviors including using reusable bags and reusing paper or plastic bags instead of throwing them away after one use. This change would help extend the life of the landfill. Creating a new “bag tax” would likely require an approval process with City Council.
	Action D: Consider proposing vehicle parking fees in some areas, such as for long-term parking near the airport or boat harbor.	Implementation and/or enforcement could be challenging, but there is room to expand parking fees at these locations. In the past, parking fees were tested at the harbor, but there was confusion around whether a harbor permit includes vehicle parking already. At the airport, coordination with the airport manager and DOT&PF would be required.

GOAL 4: Manage City lands in an efficient, cost-effective, and forward-thinking manner.

Strategy 1: Maintain a map of City-owned lands and ownership changes.

	Action C: Using the community land use needs identified as part of the goals in Chapter 3 – Housing and Land	
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	Use, identify community needs that may be met with City-owned properties or underutilized properties. Use this information to identify where there are gaps, which could lead to identifying properties that may be pursued for acquisition by the City.	
Strategy 2: Improve processes for City property acquisition, sales, and leasing.		
	Action A: When the City needs to buy or lease land, release requests to negotiate lease or sale agreements with other property owners in order to help find available land that meets City purposes.	
	Action B: Consider proposing modifications to BMC to allow greater flexibility when the City is planning to buy, sell, or lease property; being allowed to negotiate more when appropriate could help the City.	While appraised values factor in market conditions, the City has noted that additional flexibility to negotiate sale or lease agreements would be helpful depending on the situation. Especially when leasing City property to others, the City could benefit from a Rental Market Analysis to factor in location, size, property type, and other considerations. An additional consideration would be to track and observe any outside limitations that may exist (for example, if federal dollars were used to acquire a property and could have come with additional stipulations requiring exact appraised value be used in future deals).

GOAL 5: Manage updates to City facilities and equipment in an efficient, cost-effective, and forward-thinking manner.		
Strategy 1: Maintain the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).		
	Action A: Update the CIP every year.	There is currently a focus on upgrades to heavy equipment, and facility upgrades (such as the need for a new Public Works building) have been deferred. Priorities may shift over time, and unexpected expenses may arise. Updating the CIP each year is a comprehensive approach to planning for capital improvements. At the time of the preparation of this Comprehensive Plan, the City noted the following examples of facilities that need upgrades: - New Public Works Building is needed (current estimated cost \$36.4 million) - Library and Cultural Center need repairs and a new paint job

	Action B: Ensure that items in the CIP factor in City goals for improving energy efficiency and a transition to alternative energy sources in the future.	<i>Reference the Energy section of Chapter 6 – Utility Infrastructure.</i>
	Action C: Continue to use the insurance schedule to anticipate items that the City may need to spend money on in the future, such as repairing frozen pipes.	

GOAL 8: Enhance the role of parks in the Bethel community.

Strategy 1: Expand the City's capacity to manage and maintain parks.

	Action A: Designate a Parks and Recreation department and/or manager within the City who will be responsible for leading parks improvement projects and coordination with the Community Parks & Recreation Committee.	The past Comprehensive Plan designates many action items for the Parks & Recreation Department. However, this department no longer exists at the time this plan update is being written. The Community Parks & Recreation Committee is very active, but it would greatly increase the City's ability to improve parks and recreation to have at least one staff person dedicated to this role, and potentially more people involved on a seasonal basis. In addition to working with the Committee, this designated leader of parks-related efforts would need to collaborate with the City's property maintenance team and Planning Department.
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Chapter 8 – People & Economy

GOAL 1: Promote high-quality education and career training in Bethel, so that there are opportunities for locals and newcomers to access training and become employed in Bethel.

Strategy 1: Identify community priorities for education and career training.

	Action B: Work with City departments and community partners to identify key community staffing needs.	Key staff may include childcare workers, commercial drivers, and maintenance staff for the City or other organizations. The Chamber of Commerce is not currently active, but if it does resume activities, this would be a good resource to consult with on staffing needs.
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GOAL 2: Minimize potential negative impacts to Bethel from the Donlin Mine efforts and maximize potential benefits.

Strategy 1: Ensure effective coordination with the Donlin Mine Project.

	Action A: Develop a Memorandum of Understanding for ongoing coordination, including holding annual strategy meeting for conflict resolution and identify partnering opportunities.	The MOU could discuss Donlin participation in studies and maintenance that may be needed related to causing increased traffic for the Port and the highway.
	Action B: Establish a communications plan to outline ways to keep Bethel residents informed of construction schedules and status of barge traffic, as well as to keep Donlin informed of the location and timing of commercial and subsistence fishing activities and other concerns or questions.	The communications plan could involve notices in the City's newsletter, discussed in <i>Chapter 7 – Public Facilities & Services</i> .

GOAL 5: Foster a thriving local business community.

Strategy 1: Encourage the reinvigoration of the Chamber of Commerce.

	Action A: Assign a staff person within the City to serve as a liaison to the business community in Bethel.	The liaison role may make the most sense to be held by someone in the Finance Department.
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APPENDIX 4:
FINANCE DEPARTMENT ACTION ITEMS

APPENDIX 4 – FINANCE DEPARTMENT ACTION ITEMS

Chapter 7 – Public Facilities & Services

GOAL 3: Optimize the management of City revenue and spending.

Strategy 1: Improve Finance Department operations.

Action A: Develop, document, regularly update, and provide staff training on department policies and procedures.	Maintaining consistent procedures and ways of operating has been a challenge for the Finance Department due to lack of staff continuity over the years. Establishing and following consistent procedures could assist current and future staff in running the department properly and efficiently.
Action B: Working with the City Manager, examine the potential capacity to add one or two positions to the Finance Department.	This would require identifying funding to pay additional salaries. With greater capacity to manage sales tax and other revenue collection that would come with an additional staff person, this may be able to be supported.
Action C: Work closely with other City departments to train and assist them in tracking, managing, and reporting on their budgets.	
Action D: Working with other City departments as well as the Finance Committee, consider ways to augment, diversify, and allocate City revenue sources, such as based on particular projects that may need funding.	Departments can collaborate to change the strategy over time based on key projects that need funding. For example, one-half-percent of City sales taxes were previously allocated to raise funds for the construction of the fitness center. <i>For more ideas, see Strategy 4 within this goal.</i>
Action E: In the longer term, conduct a comprehensive study of municipal finances to determine the most efficient and effective fiscal structure.	

Strategy 2: Regularly update fees and other charges.

Action A: Update the City's fee schedule annually (as required by BMC 4.04.025), including consideration of whether new fees should be levied.	This should be organized by the Finance Department in coordination with all other departments. City Council approves the fee schedule annually, and it is posted to the City website. The relevant page should note that the fees are current as of when they went into effect.
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Strategy 3: Improve clarity and consistency of sales tax collection and business licensing.

Commented [KS1]: QUESTION FOR THE CITY:
How are departments' budgets tracked now? Is there a way to improve that can be added here?

	Action A: Consolidate and improve clarity of information on the City website related to businesses, licensing, and sales tax collection.	Currently, some information is housed under Businesses, while some is under the Finance Department page in the Government tab. Business owners also receive information from the City when registering. Reorganizing the information could make it more accessible and easier to use. This should include a clear list of all types of economic activities that require different types of licensing and the collection of sales tax.
	Action B: Before local business licenses are issued or renewed, require a code compliance review from the Planning Department.	This should be noted in the information for businesses on the City website and added to the Finance Department's procedures. Before the Finance Department issues a license, they should be required by Department procedure to send the relevant information to the Planning Department for review.
	Action C: Enforce compliance with business licensing requirements and sales tax collection.	In 2022, the new Finance Director worked to bring a large percentage of businesses into compliance and used various communication strategies to spread the word about the effort, including sending letters, publishing in the newspaper, and posting on social media.
	Action D: Expand resources to help people start local businesses.	<i>See the Local Businesses section in Chapter 8 – People and Economy.</i>

Chapter 8 – People & Economy

GOAL 5: Foster a thriving local business community.		
Strategy 1: Encourage the reinvigoration of the Chamber of Commerce.		
	Action B: Identify and reach out to business leaders in the community that were involved in the Chamber of Commerce in the past about the City's interest in more coordination with the business community, including potentially supporting the reinvigoration of the Chamber of Commerce.	The "Business Community Liaison," as determined by the City Manager as part of Action A in this strategy, would be responsible for this. It is important to note that the Chamber of Commerce previously dissolved due to lack of interest. If there is still insufficient interest in a formal Chamber even as Bethel's business community grows over time, it could still be worthwhile for the City to coordinate regularly with business leaders about the state of the business community.
	Action C: Organize a City space for representatives from the business community / Chamber of Commerce to meet on a quarterly basis.	The "Business Community Liaison" would be responsible for organizing this.
Strategy 2: Expand resources to help people start local businesses.		

	Action A: Continue to provide information on licensing and permitting required, as well as enforcement.	The City website currently provides information on the applicable federal, state, and local requirements, but it may be helpful to optimize the information on the website to be more user-friendly – see <i>Chapter 7 – Public Facilities & Services</i> .
	Action B: Pursue a partnership with an organization such as UAF to offer business planning assistance.	There could also be opportunities to connect new businesses with students or young professionals who may be help with some elements of starting up a new business, like building a website or social media accounts.
	Action C: Raise awareness about resources available to help small businesses, such as the Alaska Small Business Development Center and related guides or workshops.	These resources are already linked on the Business Licensing page within the Finance Department section under the Government Tab of the City website, but this may be difficult to find, and people may not be aware of the resources available. The Chamber of Commerce is currently inactive, but if it resumes activities, the City could also work with them to improve the accessibility of these resources. Also see <i>Chapter 7 – Public Facilities & Services</i> .
Strategy 3: Create a business-friendly environment in Bethel.		
	Action A: Identify any barriers that the City may be able to address to assist with starting and running businesses.	The City could work with the Chamber of Commerce to conduct a survey of business owners to identify key challenges.
	Action C: Work with the Chamber of Commerce to develop a directory of local businesses that is updated regularly.	

GOAL 6: Support and expand tourism and visitation to Bethel.

Strategy 1: Expand information and marketing for visitors.

	Action C: In collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce, encourage businesses and community facilities to provide up-to-date contact, website information, and photos on Google Maps.	Many visitors turn to map applications like Google Maps to plan and navigate, but the information currently available is inconsistently complete. More information could make visitors feel more comfortable navigating Bethel as an outsider.
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APPENDIX 5:
FIRE DEPARTMENT ACTION ITEMS

APPENDIX 5 – FIRE DEPARTMENT ACTION ITEMS

Chapter 7 – Public Facilities & Services

GOAL 6: Improve public safety facilities and services in Bethel.

Strategy 1: Continue to improve fire and emergency medical infrastructure and services.

	Action A: Construct a new fire substation near the airport.	The substation would house a vehicle and equipment and serve as a gathering place for volunteers responding to fires. This would help serve the Kasayulie and Tundra Ridge subdivisions as well as the airport; some existing homes and buildings within this area are subject to significantly higher insurance rates due to their distance from the current fire station. This could also help serve more development that could occur in this area.
	Action C: Address maintenance needs for the fire station.	The station may need repairs to the foundation, piles, and retaining walls, as well as improved drainage on the site. As noted in the previous Comprehensive Plan, the fire training tower is also planned to be replaced, likely closer to the fire station than its previous location near the sewage lagoon.
	Action D: Continue to recruit and provide training to fire and EMS staff and volunteers.	It has at times been challenging to attract volunteers; the City may need to brainstorm additional recruitment ideas for this volunteer opportunity. <i>See Chapter 8 – People & Economy for more information on education and career training that may be relevant.</i>
	Action E: Address other public safety capital improvement needs as they arise and new technology becomes needed and/or available.	For example, it was noted in the previous Comprehensive Plan that a radiation detector is needed.
	Action F: Continue existing fire prevention and education programs.	The Fire Department organizes programs such as fire prevention classes, school visits, and home safety inspections; these types of activities should continue and can be further promoted through social media.

APPENDIX 6:
GRANT MANAGER ACTION ITEMS

APPENDIX 6 – GRANT MANAGER ACTION ITEMS

Chapter 3 – Housing & Land Use

GOAL 1: Address potential barriers to housing development.

Strategy 3: Encourage development by working with developers collaboratively to install public infrastructure, including piped water and sewer systems and roads.

Action B: Create a guide to infrastructure development grants or other funding assistance programs, in order to assist developers with finding information.

The Grant Manager can prepare and maintain this list, to be shared with the Planning Department for use in their discussions with potential developers. As part of the subdivision agreement process, the City Planner can ensure that this guide is readily available to developers. It should also be posted to the City website to help encourage development by improving awareness of resources available.

GOAL 4: Identify areas that are good candidates for infill development and take steps to facilitate their development.

Strategy 4: Facilitate redevelopment of properties that are underutilized, dilapidated, or abandoned.

Action D: Consider funding available for the purchase of dilapidated or abandoned properties, potentially for use in partnership developments.

The City could potentially assist with cleaning up sites in order to facilitate redevelopment. Many owners of defunct / dilapidated properties can't afford to clean up the property and/or don't live on the premises.

Chapter 4 – Local Transportation

GOAL 6: Strategically seek funding for transportation facility construction and maintenance.

Strategy 1: Leverage opportunities available in Alaska to secure potential funding sources for implementing transportation projects.

	Action A: Work with Alaska Municipal League and DOT&PF to use the Alaska Transportation Funding Opportunity Hub to identify potential funding sources for different types of surface transportation projects, and to prioritize Bethel's projects through the Hub Intake Survey.	While the STIP nomination process can be used for projects on DOT&PF facilities, other funding must be secured for any other transportation projects. The Alaska Municipal League and DOT&PF have partnered to improve access across Alaska to project development and funding opportunities. A project intake survey should be completed for all potential projects to support matching project opportunities with funding sources and assist with securing funds to complete surface transportation improvement projects in Bethel.
Strategy 2: Create a prioritized list of all transportation facility construction and maintenance projects.		
	Action A: Combine the lists of maintenance / rehabilitation and new transportation facility projects created for roads and trails, and add details on estimated design and construction cost and grant-related considerations.	Use the list and funding strategy developed for Strategy 1 above to inform potential funding sources for projects. Deadlines and schedules for different funding sources could impact how projects are prioritized.
	Action B: Order the list based on priority and when each project should be completed.	The prioritization should factor in community need, cost, funding opportunities available, and what timing makes sense based on other transportation projects and/or developments. It should also consider the funding opportunity application windows to align projects with grants and increase the chances of success when seeking grant applications. The Alaska Transportation Funding Opportunity Hub can be used to support programming of projects to align them with funding opportunities.
Strategy 3: Pursue funding to complete priority projects.		
	Action A: Continue to review priority projects annually to select those that could be funded through the Capital Improvement Plan.	Note that the STIP only applies to state-managed facilities. If MOUs for management change, this could impact funding eligibility,
	Action B: Nominate priority projects for state owned / managed facilities to the STIP, and nominate City owned / managed facilities to other state programs for federal funding such as the Community Transportation Program (CTP).	Some of these funding applications may include working with partners, such as tribal organizations like ONC who have access to different funding opportunities, including the Tribal Transportation Program (TTP). Matching funds with organizations that have access to different funding can enable the City to take on more significant projects.
	Action C: Apply for grants to fund other priority projects, focusing on time-sensitive funding opportunities.	Some of these funding applications may include working with partners, such as tribal organizations like ONC who have access to different funding opportunities, including the Tribal Transportation Program (TTP). Matching funds with organizations that have access to different funding can enable the City to take on more significant projects.

Chapter 5 – Regional Transportation

GOAL 6: Support the improvement and expansion of other modes of regional transportation.		
Strategy 1: As the hub of regional transportation, organize a City-led regional transportation coordination group to plan routes, maintenance, and funding.		
	Action C: Jointly create a funding strategy including participation from private entities as well as grant applications and pursuing tribal transportation and/or STIP funding.	There have been examples of this type of collaboration in the past, such as villages obtaining tribal transportation funds to clear snow from the ice road and passing it to the City to do the plowing work.

Chapter 6 – Utility Infrastructure

GOAL 1: Advance projects in Bethel to increase electricity production from alternative energy sources to reduce both costs and generation of greenhouse gasses.		
Strategy 1: Facilitate large-scale projects to introduce more alternative energy sources to the local network.		
	Action C: Monitor and support AVEC in applying for grant opportunities for alternative energy generation and storage that could be implemented in Bethel.	AVEC would be responsible for taking the lead on major projects impacting AVEC assets in the overall City electric system, but the City can assist by keeping tabs on potential funding opportunities and supporting AVEC when applying for funding. There may also be opportunities for collaboration with AVEC when pursuing funding for alternative energy projects that would be City-owned.
	Action D: Pursue partnerships with tribal entities to work together on grant applications and gain access to more potential funding.	The City's "energy point person" and representatives from local tribal entities could look for opportunities with the ANTHC Rural Energy Initiative and the ANTHC Rural Energy Technical Assistance Program.

GOAL 2: Based on the results of the Preliminary Engineering Report (2022), transition Bethel's water and sewer utilities to fully-piped systems serving all residences and businesses by 2035.		
Strategy 1: Complete each phase of projects outlined in the PER.		

	Action A: Obtain grant and loan funding for new water and sewer projects, including from the USDA.	It may be advantageous to collaborate with other local organizations to obtain grants, such as ONC, which is able to access additional tribal funding sources. It is also important to recognize that the long-term cost savings from operating piped systems in place of hauled systems represents funds that can be used to repay loans. - City: USDA Rural Development (grant and loan), Community Development Block Grant, EPA Alaska Native Villages and Rural Communities Water, State Revolving Fund - ONC: Indian Community Development Block Grant, Indian Housing Block Grant additional competitive funds, EPA Tribal Set-Aside Drinking Water and Infrastructure
Strategy 3: During the phases of the PER and beyond, manage the piped system to be as efficient and accessible as possible, as well as equitable in cost.		
	Action D: Provide City assistance with finding potential grant or loan funding for new commercial connections or subdivision developments not currently included in the 2022 PER phases.	

Chapter 7 – Public Facilities & Services

GOAL 3: Optimize the management of City revenue and spending.		
Strategy 5: Maximize grant funding that can be obtained.		
	Action A: Expand the grant writing and research capacity of the City beyond the Grants Manager, including assistance from other departments and/or hiring consultants to prepare some grant applications.	
	Action B: Explore partnerships with other organizations to fund some projects.	Some funding organizations may encourage or require cooperative arrangements for grants. One example of a collaboratively funded and implemented project in the past was the City's partnership with the University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension to provide a community garden for all Bethel residents to use. Such projects could also include considerations for ongoing revenue to support the project, such as rental fees for garden plots.

GOAL 5: Manage updates to City facilities and equipment in an efficient, cost-effective, and forward-thinking manner.

Strategy 2: Continually seek funding for additions, improvements, and repairs to City facilities and equipment.

	Action A: Remain up-to-date on funding opportunities, including special infrastructure funding through federal or state programs.	This should include improvements and repairs to existing City facilities, but the City should also remain informed about funding opportunities specific to adding new types of facilities and equipment. For example, there may be funding available specifically for updating the technology used in City offices.
	Action B: Apply to grants to fund infrastructure, such as BUILD grants.	For example, a new Public Works building is needed. Currently, the cost of construction is estimated at approximately \$36.4 million and could be a candidate for BUILD grant funding.
	Action C: Consider allocating other funding sources for some infrastructure improvements, including through collaboration and potentially facilities-sharing with organizations such as ONC.	See Goal 3, Strategy 5, Action B above.

GOAL 8: Enhance the role of parks in the Bethel community.

Strategy 5: Pursue special funding and collaboration opportunities for enhancing Bethel parks.

	Action A: Pursue Land and Water Conservation Fund or similar outdoors-related grant money to help with parks projects.	As part of a past Land and Water Conservation Fund grant award, the City was required to designate Pinky's Park for outdoor recreation in perpetuity. For other parks projects in the future, this or similar funding may be available.
	Action B: Add more community gardening opportunities to parks, potentially in partnership with Alaska Native organizations or other sponsor entities.	There is currently a community garden that was developed as part of a partnership between the City and the University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension; there could be opportunities to expand this type of facility through partnerships. <i>Chapter 8 – People & Economy also discusses opportunities for incorporating Native place names and public art.</i>

APPENDIX 7:
LANDFILL MANAGER ACTION ITEMS

APPENDIX 7 – LANDFILL MANAGER ACTION ITEMS

Chapter 5 – Regional Transportation

GOAL 2: Support DOT&PF in airport operations and planning.

Strategy 1: As requested by the FAA and/or DOT&PF, take actions that support smooth and secure airport operations.

	Action B: If a new landfill is constructed, place it as far from the airport as practicable to avoid attracting wildlife that could be harmed, damage airport equipment, and disrupt operations.	The FAA recommends new landfills be six miles from airports, but many Alaskan communities receive exemptions due to their small size. The existing landfill is under six miles away, but it is located away from the airport.
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Chapter 6 – Utility Infrastructure

GOAL 4: Prolong the life of the existing landfill.

Strategy 1: Continuously monitor the capacity of the landfill to assess if / when a new landfill might be needed in the future.

	Action A: Conduct a new landfill closure study approximately every five years to measure and evaluate progress.	The main priority will be to use a multitude of strategies to preserve the life of the existing landfill as long as possible, as constructing a new one would be very expensive and difficult.
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Strategy 2: Utilize best solid waste management practices and compliance with ADEC standards to reduce the volume of waste in the landfill.

	Action A: Regularly review guidance on the ADEC Solid Waste website and incorporate recommendations based off of the annual state inspection and new technology as it becomes available.	The current inspection contains some recommendations, including: - Maintain adequate cover - Establish secondary containments (e.g., liner) for staged/impounded vehicles
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	Action B: Create a transition plan to prepare for the upcoming retirement of the landfill manager, including adequate staff training / certification to manage the landfill after the transition.	
	Action C: Improve separation of waste by establishing cells (such as for lumber or scrap metal and vehicles).	Currently, some waste is deposited in designated piles, such as for construction material, vehicles, tires, or trees and branches, but this practice could be expanded and improved according to ADEC guidance.
	Action D: Train personnel on the use of the shredder and other techniques to reduce volume of waste.	Compact shredded waste within the landfill, maintaining stable slopes. The City could pursue dynamic compaction using a crane as another technique. There may be funding available for this through grants.
	Action E: Provide additional staff training such as freon removal with Total Reclaim, the Rural Alaska Landfill Operator (RALO) course, and/or HAZWOPER.	
	Action F: In the longer term, consider building an additional storage garage to store and protect heavy equipment.	This was recommended by the State as part of their inspection. Equipment such as the shredder should be protected to ensure the longest lifespan to help extend the life of the landfill.
Strategy 3: Pursue ways to redirect more types of waste from the landfill.		
	Action A: Provide information to the public on existing City waste separation programs and what types of waste can and cannot be disposed in dumpsters.	Alaska State Statutes dictate what can and cannot go in the landfill; in addition to the landfill management enforcing this, the public should be educated so as to avoid these items arriving at the landfill in the first place.
	Action B: Identify and separate out types of waste that may be able to be reused or recycled locally; stage these items for public salvaging.	The City currently separates wood out for the public to be able to come take, and there is also a Junk Vehicle Removal Services system in place for parts salvage.
	Action C: Facilitate and raise awareness for ONC's e-waste collection program.	This program is made possible through Indian Governance Assistance Program (IGAP), which coordinates bargaining out e-waste.
	Action D: Research funding or partnership opportunities for bargaining out other kinds of waste, particularly harmful waste, or recyclables such as cardboard or aluminum.	Backhaul Alaska is one example of an organization that coordinates hauling harmful waste.
	Action E: Based on ongoing research about the cost of shipping out recyclables, consider implementing local	The City worked with a Seattle recycling center in the past that wanted metals to be pre-shredded; now that the City has a shredder, this may be an option.

	recycling again; this could include preparation work like shredding metals or processing wood.	There is also a program that recycles wood into pallets that can be burned in pallet stoves for heating. While equipment is currently expensive, this could be something to keep on the City's radar in the future. As more technology is developed, there may be other reuse opportunities that emerge and could help the City divert more waste from the landfill.
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APPENDIX 8:
PLANNING DEPARTMENT ACTION ITEMS

APPENDIX 8 – PLANNING DEPARTMENT ACTION ITEMS

Chapter 3 – Housing and Land Use

GOAL 1: Address potential barriers to housing development.		
Strategy 1: Streamline the land use approval process.		
	Action A: Every five years, audit the Planning Department website and application forms used for land use processes and revise for clarity and ease of use.	Bethel Municipal Code (BMC) Titles 15 through 18 govern land use and development. BMC is available online and updated regularly as changes are made to the code. Planning application forms are also available online on the City website. These materials are intended to make it accessible for anyone working on projects to access the information they need to get approval and complete their projects, but processes can be overwhelming for those not frequently using them; clarifying information available helps reduce time the Planning Department must help walk applicants through the process. It may be helpful to create flowcharts explaining the most common land use approval processes, including references to relevant code sections. The department may also consider creating a schedule of application submission cut-off dates for each Planning Commission hearing.
	Action B: If an element of the code or process repeatedly causes unnecessary difficulty or undue delay for housing developers, the City Planner should consider whether it would be of public benefit to make a change to the code and bring the suggested change forward to the Planning Commission and City Council.	Code and development ideas are always changing, so there needs to be room for flexibility and the ability to adapt as needed. One process in the code that can be used to address some cases, such as dimensional and parking requirements, is a Variance. Variances require a public hearing and approval before the planning commission. However, if an element of the code or process repeatedly causes unnecessary difficulty or undue delay for housing developers, the City Planner may consider whether it would be of public benefit to consider a code change that would be brought forward to the Planning Commission and City Council.
Strategy 2: Ensure that subdivision, development, and design standards are enforced.		
	Action A: Require compliance with all subdivision standards for approval, including the standard subdivision agreement process.	In the past, standards and enforcement of ROW widths and roadway construction may have been inconsistent; many roads in Bethel are narrow or have ROW encroachments. The subdivision agreement process was in part created to avoid this; insufficient ROW can cause safety, liability, or funding issues. One example of issues arising was the Haroldson Subdivision to the northeast of town, where the roads constructed without City oversight or review, which made it difficult for the city to officially accept and maintain the roadways. Later, the City had to work with the subdivision developer to inspect and bring roads up to a standard that could be accepted by the City for ownership and maintenance responsibilities. If subdivision standards are not enforced prior to or

		during development, this can cause complex issues with various private property owners within the subdivision.
	Action B: Consider changes to the subdivision approval and agreement process to improve clarity and efficiency.	While more housing is needed in Bethel and some might consider standards to be a barrier to development, they are necessary to ensuring that the City can provide for adequate quality of life in Bethel. Still, ways to improve the clarity and efficiency of the process may arise, so the Planning Department should be open to changes in the future.
	Action C: Develop a position description to potentially hire a code enforcement officer.	Currently, the planning director or whomever they appoint is designated as the “land use administrator,” who is tasked with enforcing code. There has been discussion within the City as to whether or not there is sufficient work to justify hiring a full-time code enforcement officer, while some people think a code enforcement officer would be very busy. Funding the role may also be a challenge. Hiring a code enforcement officer may be the most effective way to combat compliance issues. There may also be opportunities for them to undertake other duties, such as documenting maintenance issues across the City, including drainage concerns, vegetation overgrowth, or vandalism.
	Action D: Examine code sections related to non-conformance and coming closer to compliance to determine if changes may be needed.	
Strategy 3: Encourage development by working with developers collaboratively to install public infrastructure, including piped water and sewer systems and roads.		
	Action A: As part of the subdivision agreement process, consider designing a standardized “impact fee” mechanism to have developers participate in funding when their development will impact the overall system (water and sewer or other infrastructure such as roads).	This could include funding for engineering, materials, and/or construction. A transparent, standardized process will be important in making expectations clear to potential developers.
	Action C: The City can encourage and/or assist subdivision developers to seek and apply for infrastructure grants.	For road development, the City can help developers apply for transportation funding via the Alaska Transportation Funding Opportunity Hub (see Chapter 4 – Local Transportation, Goal 6 for more discussion). For water and sewer, there are other grants that may be able to help with funding, such as the grants the City will use to fund projects outlined in Chapter 6 – Utility Infrastructure. For subdivisions developed by tribal organizations, additional funding sources may be available.

GOAL 2: Facilitate more affordable housing development and access to affordable housing.

Strategy 1: Use zoning to encourage multifamily and more dense housing development.

	Action A: Develop a working group to assist the City Planner to study and create code changes and zoning map changes for a new Multifamily Residential zoning district that can be brought forward to the Planning Commission and City Council for approval.	While multifamily development is currently possible in several zones, there may be code requirements that hinder its feasibility or discourage it. Creating a new Multifamily Residential zoning district would require an amendment to zoning code. A working group could conduct analysis to determine exact requirements and standards associated with this district. Units allowed per acre should be higher than other districts, which currently only allow four maximum, and lot sizes should be viable to fit triplexes or larger. Ideally a CUP would not be required under some threshold of units (instead, only a site plan permit). The Future Land Use Plan Map in this plan should be used to guide where this new zoning district would be appropriate.
	Action B: Encourage the implementation of the new Multifamily Residential zone and existing Downtown Commercial and Neighborhood Commercial zones through the Future Land Use Plan Map.	When people consider completing projects, the City Planner can provide information and advice about potential zoning changes.
	Action C: Consider rezoning some City land to Multifamily Residential where recommended in the Future Land Use Plan Map.	
	Action D: Encourage use of the Planned Unit Development model, which allows increased flexibility on some dimensional aspects of multifamily development and can create open spaces that are shared with a neighborhood feel.	To demonstrate the potential of PUD or other creative multifamily residential development projects, the City could release an RFP to examine multi-family or mixed-use projects as examples of the PUD model.

Strategy 2: Support access to information on housing assistance programs.

	Action A: Work with various community partners, potentially including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC), ONC, or BNC, to gather and share educational programming or information to assist people in accessing economic housing assistance.	Links to information about programs that exist could be compiled and shared on the City website.
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GOAL 3: Reserve space to accommodate community needs and desired development.

Strategy 1: Inventory City-owned properties and information that may impact how they can be used.

Action A: Inventory all City-owned properties, including their current use or any use requirements/restrictions or other encumbrances associated with original BLM conveyance to the City.	This should be included in the City's GIS mapping efforts; see Goal 6. To determine and potentially change encumbrances that may exist on City properties, coordination with BLM may be required.
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Strategy 2: Create and regularly maintain a list of community facility and infrastructure needs that will require land.

Action C: Using the list and the guidance of relevant entities as coordinated by Public Works, the Planning Department research and identify if there are specific City-owned sites that should be reserved for each based on spatial needs.	If appropriate, the sites should be identified on the Future Land Use Plan Map – see Goal 5 below. Existing City property that can serve community needs should be considered first. If adequate or appropriately located property is not available for a particular need, look into other properties that may make sense to pursue trading or acquiring (Action D).
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Strategy 3: Use the Future Land Use Plan Map to designate priority areas for residential and commercial development.

GOAL 4: Identify areas that are good candidates for infill development and take steps to facilitate their development.

Strategy 1: Identify the best areas for infill development.

Action A: Create a map that highlights a “priority development area” including the best / most likely areas for infill development as Bethel grows.	<i>The map could include:</i> - <i>The area within and around existing Bethel development, or the areas that would not require long road extensions to reach them</i> - <i>Remove already-developed parcels – just leave parcel boundaries to show there is development there</i> - <i>Remove areas that are not reasonably developable, such as waterways and floodplains in the Preservation zone (this should be updated as areas classified by the Corps as wetlands may change over time)</i> - <i>Show land ownership for the remaining parcels or areas</i>
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Strategy 3: Decrease barriers to additional commercial development and incentivize development patterns that support more commercial activity.

	Action A: Revise zoning code to clarify how shopping centers could be permitted.	
	Action B: Consider setting aside a space to host “markets” where small businesses (such as artisans may otherwise work out of their homes) can rent booths and sell goods or services.	<i>See People and Economy chapter.</i> This may be an opportunity to co-locate businesses to help more small businesses get off the ground and share spaces, parking, and customers. This type of event could be hosted in an existing space like the cultural center, or outside in a City park during the summer.

Strategy 4: Facilitate redevelopment of properties that are underutilized, dilapidated, or abandoned.

	Action A: Compile a list of sites that appear to be underutilized, dilapidated, or vacant / abandoned.	This list can begin by considering some sites recommended by the community as part of the Comprehensive Plan Update process: - Former Kilbuck School site. The site has been vacant since the school burned down. Though the site may be more complicated than it looks due to old utilities running down the middle, it could be replatted and these elements could be addressed. It has been suggested that it become a park; the site could also include additional residential and/or commercial development. - The school district has a property with old fuel tanks that may no longer be in use. If that is the case, the tanks could be removed and the site could be redeveloped. There may be grants available to help with any remediation that might be needed.
	Action B: Implement a vacant building registration ordinance.	This would be a proactive approach to give the City a way to track, assist with clean-up or demolition, and potentially acquire vacant and/or abandoned properties. This can also facilitate sale of the properties while maintenance is completed.
	Action C: Examine and revise the Public Nuisance Abatement code (BMC 9.36) to improve its effectiveness and efficiency.	Currently, abatement is a very time-intensive process that makes it difficult for the City to undertake. Legal guidance would be needed to revise the code, and a potential Code Enforcement Officer could assist with abatement efforts.

GOAL 5: Using the Future Land Use Plan Map and its land use designations, shape future development to ensure an organization of uses that is logical and compatible.

Strategy 1: Implement and raise awareness about the Future Land Use Plan Map and how it is used.

	Action A: Add the Future Land Use Plan Map to the City's GIS maps.	<i>See Mapping section and Goal 6 below.</i>
	Action B: Post the explanation of Zoning versus Future Land Use Plan Map from this plan, as well as the table with Future Land Use designations, definitions, and implementing districts, to the Planning Department website.	
	Action C: Use the Future Land Use Plan Map as the basis for initiating discussions with landowners that could potentially develop their land in the priority development area.	<i>See Goal 4, Strategies 1 and 2 above.</i>
Strategy 2: Create a working group to alter code for zoning designations so that future development is more strategically organized.		
	Action A: Create a working group to assist the City Planner on potential changes to zoning code that could be brought forward to the Planning Commission and City Council for approval.	This would include the addition of the proposed new Multifamily Residential zone discussed above in Goal 2, Strategy 1 and below in Action C.
	Action B: Create an organized table for all uses and all zoning districts, clarifying which uses are permitted, require additional permitting, or not permitted.	A current version of this table should be used to help guide working group discussions. Once the working group has prepared potential code changes, they should create a proposed updated version of the table that could be adopted as part of zoning code.
	Action C: Consider eliminating the General Use (GU) zone.	Existing uses in the GU zone would be grandfathered in, and new developments could not rezone to GU anymore. This would encourage more specific requirements according to the Future Land Use Plan Map. The grandfathered GU zone could also be amended to include guidelines for redeveloping properties to incentivize making improvements according to surrounding development / Future Land Use Plan Map designation.
	Action D: Create a residential zone that encourages denser residential development on smaller lots. Meanwhile, the traditional R zoning district could be altered to focus on a less dense model that would encourage single-family and duplex development.	The creation of the proposed new Multifamily Residential (R2) zone is discussed in Goal 2, Strategy 1 above. Differentiating R2 from R could help clarify the difference and encourage both of their uses.

	Action E: Consider City-led rezones to help phase out the GU district and assign more specific zones (including newly implemented zoning districts) to applicable areas.	
	Action F: Examine the list of uses that require conditional use permits for all zoning districts and consider changes based on the intent of each district; the changes could be brought forward to the Planning Commission and City Council for approval.	This may provide insight on how to streamline the permitting process and help encourage the use of newer zoning districts, such as Neighborhood and Downtown Commercial and the proposed Multifamily Residential zone.

GOAL 6: Make spatial information and maps available to the public online using GIS.		
Strategy 1: Publish online GIS maps that provide information that was identified as the highest priority for stakeholders.		
	Action A: Publish the GIS version of the Zoning Map online.	
	Action B: Publish an online, interactive GIS map that can provide property lines, zoning, street addresses, and ownership information (when available).	Where possible, add the land uses present on each property (for example, single-family home, duplex, retail, and so on.)
	Action C: Publish an online GIS version of the Future Land Use Plan Map.	
Strategy 2: The Planning Department can continue to add to the GIS maps used internally or available to the public online, based on suggestions made by the community.		
	Action A: Create a map or maps showing easements for trails, rights-of-way, and utilities.	
	Action B: Create a map that shows wetlands, stream or floodplain setbacks, or other limitations to development related to preservation.	

Chapter 4 – Local Transportation

GOAL 4: Design new and reconstructed streets with a focus on providing safe and comfortable routes for all transportation modes and all users.

Strategy 1: Ensure adequate ROW for sharing the road and implementing the Complete Streets concept.

	Action B: When plats are submitted, require that additional ROW be dedicated if adjacent ROWs are not wide enough per code.	
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GOAL 8: Evaluate site development codes to better support safe access for all transportation modes.

Strategy 1: Provide for adequate and safe parking facilities and practices.

	Action A: Examine code to make sure appropriate numbers of parking spaces are provided for each type of land use (If changes are warranted, see Action C below).	Stakeholders indicated that some uses may not require sufficient spaces, while others may require too many. The Planning Department could lead a study of parking requirements in City code and any recommended revisions to the code, likely with the assistance of technical advisors.
	Action B: Facilitate shared parking between adjacent properties and uses when appropriate.	City code already provides for the possibility of shared parking between two or more contiguous uses (18.48.170.C). Shared parking agreements can help create more efficient site layouts and should be encouraged when possible / helpful to landowners. During site plan review applications, the Planning Department could assist property owners by helping identify shared parking opportunities. Then, the owners could coordinate with each other on potential agreements. The City could also provide a standardized agreement that property owners could use and record to memorialize the agreement.
	Action C: If changes are warranted to parking requirements or shared parking provisions in code, provide changes to the Planning Commission and City Council for approval.	The Planning Department could review these sections and try to make them easier to understand if there are sections that are confusing or cause issues for applicants.

Strategy 2: Provide for safe access for vehicles and non-motorized users.

	Action A: Consider consolidating driveway and parking design provisions in code or creating a separate driveway standards worksheet.	There are some existing code sections regarding driveway widths and distances from intersections, but the information could be consolidated. One option is for the City to remove it from code and instead create a driveway standards memo that can be updated more frequently and easily, as needed. Since the driveway standards are currently part of the City's code, a variance is required for any deviations from the requirements.
	Action B: Review commercial site design code to identify opportunities to improve safety provisions such as those encouraged by Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.	This could include requiring site lighting, which is especially important for the safety of non-motorized users.

Chapter 5 – Regional Transportation

GOAL 1: Create a well-functioning airport area for travelers and businesses.

Strategy 3: Support the development of relevant industrial uses and commercial amenities within the airport area.

	Action A: Consider creating an Airport zoning overlay to allow commercial development, such as grocery/convenience stores or dining in the industrial area within and around the airport.	Existing zoning districts may not facilitate the mix of uses desired within the airport area. For example, the Industrial zoning district does not currently allow commercial development, but this may be convenient for travelers. If the City and DOT determine that an overlay district would be helpful, a resolution creating it would likely require approval from the Planning Commission and City Council. Also note that the City owns some land near the airport, which could be leased and redeveloped if not needed by the City.
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GOAL 2: Support DOT&PF in airport operations and planning.

Strategy 1: As requested by the FAA and/or DOT&PF, take actions that support smooth and secure airport operations.

	Action A: Examine FAA requirements and recommendations when reviewing potential land uses near the airport.	The Planning Department should factor this into reviews and may consider making recommendations. Requirements like tower height limits are already examined, but there are other recommendations that may be relevant. For example, residences near the airport are recommended to have bear proof trash containers.
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Strategy 2: Participate in planning for the future of the airport.

	Action B: Encourage public participation in airport planning projects so that the City and community's needs are factored into plans.	The Planning Department can assist DOT and the City administration with tracking airport planning projects in order to help publicize meetings and comment opportunities, including via City social media.
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Chapter 6 – Utility Infrastructure

GOAL 3: Facilitate broadband development within the City of Bethel to advance community access to reliable internet service.		
Strategy 2: When possible, streamline permitting of internet-related infrastructure.		
	Action B: Review and amend tall tower permitting code to be simpler and more efficient.	Sometimes internet-related infrastructure requires constructing new towers or making changes to existing towers, which could trigger BMC tall tower permitting requirements. The existing code section is long and complex; it should be reviewed and simplified to facilitate these processes, especially since there is often additional permitting required.
	Action C: If / as needed to help facilitate improved internet connectivity in Bethel, review and amend other sections of BMC that may impact permits required for different types of internet-related infrastructure (besides cables and towers).	

Chapter 7 – Public Facilities & Services

GOAL 4: Manage City lands in an efficient, cost-effective, and forward-thinking manner.		
Strategy 1: Maintain a map of City-owned lands and ownership changes.		
	Action A: Create a map of City-owned lands using GIS and an associated database.	See the GIS section in Chapter 3 – Housing and Land Use.

	Action B: Identify undeveloped or underutilized properties currently owned by the City on the map.	
	Action D: Update the map as properties are acquired or sold, also tracking properties identified as potential acquisitions or potential properties to sell.	
Strategy 2: Improve processes for City property acquisition, sales, and leasing.		
	Action C: Examine publicly owned lands for all potential uses, including open space use, before disposition.	

GOAL 8: Enhance the role of parks in the Bethel community.

Strategy 3: Establish a network of Bethel parks to serve all neighborhoods.

	Action A: Create an online guide and map of all the parks in Bethel that are updated regularly.	This should include discussion of the amenities included at each. It should also include a map showing the trails that connect the park system (see Goal 10 in this chapter). The guide should be posted to the City website. Also, through the website, there is potential to organize rentals of certain facilities, such as gazebos or picnic shelters for private events. Note that some public areas in the City have unclear management responsibility, such as the cemetery west of the airport. It should be clarified whether this is part of the City's park maintenance responsibilities.
	Action B: Using the development of the parks guide and map, identify areas with less access to nearby parks.	This should also identify underutilized park areas. For example, comments were received from the community that there is a run-down park area between Akakeek and Atsaq Streets.
	Action D: Require that new residential subdivisions reserve space for a park or open space.	This may require code changes to implement the requirement for open space. New subdivisions could be encouraged to follow the Planned Unit Development model or set aside park space in another way. Additional incentives should be explored that would encourage developments to have parks and open space. Like discussed in Action Item C, there would be a need to negotiate maintenance, construction, and liability for these open spaces, especially depending on final ownership / management.

GOAL 10: Enhance the network of trails and open spaces in Bethel.

Strategy 1: Improve access and comfort for trails.

	Action A: Add trails to the map and guide of parks and recreation facilities.	<i>See Goal 8, Strategy 3 above.</i>
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Strategy 2: Maintain a network of open spaces.

	Action A: Identify and map open spaces within and around the developed area of Bethel that can be used for public recreation.	Note that this would include much of the Donut Hole, though some areas are privately held. There has been some desire expressed to preserve this as permanent open space. However, this is a logical place for development to expand. Future development should preserve some open space areas – see <i>Action Items B and C</i> below.
	Action B: Identify key future transportation connections across currently open areas such as the “Donut Hole.”	This is proposed to be completed as part of trail planning (see <i>Chapter 4 – Local Transportation</i>).
	Action C: Based on the map of key future connections through currently open space, as well as mapped areas that must be preserved due to wetlands or drainage, identify suitable locations for potential green belts.	Green belts are open strips of land on which building is restricted. Designating one or more green belt within the Donut Hole could help reserve an area to remain as open space, including paths and public recreation areas, even as parts of the Donut Hole might fill in with development. This would help maintain the natural character and recreational opportunities in the middle of Bethel, even as development might spread inward. While potential locations for green belts could be brainstormed at any time, it would make the most sense to designate them during future design processes for transportation corridors and/or subdivisions.

Chapter 8 – People & Economy

GOAL 3: Support subsistence rights and access to resources for Bethel residents and Alaska Natives throughout the region.

Strategy 1: Protect physical access to subsistence resources around Bethel.

	Action B: Require the dedication of parks and/or open spaces, such as green belts, in new subdivisions in order to maintain access to the undeveloped tundra.	<i>See Chapter 3 – Housing and Land Use and Chapter 7 – Public Facilities and Services, Parks and Recreation section for more action items on preserving open space.</i>
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	Action C: Work to obtain public access easements over trails used to access fishing, hunting, or plant harvesting areas.	<i>See Chapter 4 – Local Transportation and Chapter 5 – Regional Transportation for more discussion of formalizing existing trails.</i>
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GOAL 5: Foster a thriving local business community.		
Strategy 3: Create a business-friendly environment in Bethel.		
	Action B: Examine BMC to consider allowing some small businesses to be a legal in residential zoned areas.	For many small business owners, it can be cost-prohibitive to rent a space besides one's home. Many small businesses can be compatible with residential settings, such as small arts and crafts operations or professional services that can be provided from a home office. The Chamber of Commerce, City Planning Department and Planning Commission could collaborate on this effort.

APPENDIX 9:
POLICE DEPARTMENT ACTION ITEMS

APPENDIX 9 – POLICE DEPARTMENT ACTION ITEMS

Chapter 4 – Local Transportation

GOAL 8: Evaluate site development codes to better support safe access for all transportation modes.

Strategy 1: Provide for adequate and safe parking facilities and practices.

	Action E: Continue to enforce parking violations.	The Public Works Department and Police Department can work together to clarify where street parking is not permitted and priority areas for enforcement. To prevent people from continuing to park along streets where not permitted, the Police Department will need to enforce parking violations.
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Commented [KS1]: QUESTION FOR THE CITY:
How are parking violations currently enforced? Does the Police Department have capacity to enforce parking violations?

Chapter 7 – Public Facilities & Services

GOAL 6: Improve public safety facilities and services in Bethel.

Strategy 2: Continue to improve police service.

	Action A: Continually upgrade public safety dispatch and communications equipment.	The Bethel Police Department will be looking at replacing repeaters and console radios, updating its electronic dispatch infrastructure (e-911), and installing separate police communications infrastructure (radio tower) at the new police station. The new 80-foot tower will allow the department to move its existing antennas and other equipment from the KYUK Radio Station to the police station, where it will be more secure and save money in rental fees. The department also has a 311 non-emergency number that residents can call for information and services, but coordination is needed to allow cell phone users to be able to make calls.
	Action B: Purchase additional surveillance and other evidence collection equipment, as needed.	The department received grants in the past for new equipment. Additional surveillance equipment, such as at the Port, in parks, or on police vehicles, could also benefit investigations and safety.
	Action C: Provide additional training to Police and Community Service Patrol staff, as needed.	

	Action D: Make other upgrades and additions to police department facilities as needed, including the vehicle impound yard.	Recent additions include Council signing an agreement for police housing in apartments. The City is also collaborating with Bethel Friends of Canines (BFK9) on a new shelter project.
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GOAL 7: Target specific public safety concerns within Bethel.

Strategy 2: Improve ATV and snowmachine safety, on and off Bethel roads.

	Action A: Pursue a partnership with the State of Alaska to offer ATV and snowmachine safety information and/or classes.	The State of Alaska already has some safety initiatives related to ATV safety, such as organizing opportunities to have ATVs checked for safety features.
	Action B: Require ATV registration to drive ATVs on roads within City limits.	Licensing processes are managed by the State of Alaska, but Bethel is already working on a smaller-scale registration system. The primary challenge is bringing people into compliance.

Strategy 3: Reduce drug abuse in Bethel.

	Action A: Continue collaboration with the Western Alaska Alcohol and Narcotics Team (WAANT, which includes Bethel Police, Kotzebue Police, Kodiak Police, and the Alaska State Troopers) to penalize drug trafficking and illegal alcohol bootlegging.	As part of efforts to reduce drug trafficking in Bethel, the Police Department recently obtained funding for a drug sniffing dog.
	Action B: Continue operation of the Community Service Patrol, the grant-funded service that picks up individuals under the influence and drops them off at places such as YKHC or their sobering center.	In turn, YKHC can help connect individuals with recovery resources.

Strategy 5: Improve animal care and control programs.

	Action A: Continue discussions on whether to hire a dedicated City animal control staff person to catch loose dogs and issue citations for animal cruelty.	
	Action B: Support and coordinate with Bethel Friends of Canines (BFK9) on the new animal shelter project.	BFK9 provides dog care and training education, provides treatment to stray dogs (including for rabies and spay/neutering), and helps coordinate with animal rescue groups in Alaska to rehome animals. The Police Department and BFK9 are collaborating on a new shelter near the Public Works building, as well as programming.

APPENDIX 10:
PORT OF BETHEL ACTION ITEMS

APPENDIX 10 – PORT OF BETHEL ACTION ITEMS

Chapter 5 – Regional Transportation

GOAL 3: Study and plan for potential changes to the river's course that may impact port operations.

Strategy 1: Keep up with regular dredging operations.

	Action A: Continue to complete hydrographic studies every two years, as required by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.	Note that a hydrographic study is different from a navigation study. This regularly completed study helps determine where dredging may be needed in the river by determining the depth of the water.
	Action B: Continue to dredge Brown's Slough annually.	This needs to be completed annually between the river and the bridge to allow passage for boats. There are a few different methods, including suction, dredge and biosolids press, or excavation during winter. There is some agency permitting required, and the work could be eligible for BUILD grant funding. The cost depends on the dredging method used.
	Action C: As needed and based on the hydrographic studies, dredge the river between the petroleum port and the entrance to the small boat harbor.	This makes the river more navigable for tugs, pilot boats, barges, and subsistence users. It is currently difficult for the City to predict how often this would need to be done, but continued regular completion of hydrographic studies may assist with determining a maintenance schedule. The City's current goal is to dredge the river in front of the entrance to the small boat harbor every five years, but the actual frequency has been closer to every ten years. The City could consider pursuing funding partnerships for this effort, such as with tribal organizations who share an interest in ensuring transportation to and from villages as well as access to subsistence fishing on the river. <i>This could be organized as part of collaboration efforts discussed in Goal 6 of this chapter.</i>

Strategy 2: Plan for potential future changes in the Kuskokwim River's course to mitigate potential impacts.

	Action A: Request assistance from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for funding and conducting a feasibility study for a potential navigation study of the river.	The Corps of Engineers indicated that this will be necessary before the City can complete a navigation study to look into how the course of the river may change. Both studies will likely use a cost sharing mechanism between the City and the Corps.
	Action B: Following the feasibility study, complete a navigation study to determine how changes in the river may impact larger ships' ability to access Bethel's port.	This is more extensive than the regular hydrographic studies and includes studying potential choke points for larger ships up and down the river.

	Action C: Monitor the sea wall conditions to determine if, and at what rate, the river is undercutting the sea wall.	The City has approximately 10,000 feet of sea wall and rip rap to mitigate erosion. If the sea wall were to be undercut by the river, this would have major consequences. Regular monitoring of the seawall to determine required maintenance is needed.
	Action D: Develop an action plan for studies, monitoring, and maintenance activities needed to mitigate riverfront erosion and ensure navigability of the river around Bethel's port.	
Strategy 3: Collaborate with other major waterfront property owners on riverfront management efforts.		
	Action A: As part of coordination with the private entity constructing a new cargo dock near the petroleum port in Bethel, explore partnership opportunities to obtain funding for hydrographic or navigation studies, sea wall monitoring, and maintenance or dredging efforts.	Associated with the Donlin Mine project, a new private cargo dock is planned near the existing petroleum port dock in Bethel. As part of the City's response to the Donlin Mine project, an action item in Chapter 8 – People and Economy is to maintain consistent communication with them as the project ramps up. As another major user of the Bethel riverfront, Donlin can be asked to participate in funding and/or applying for grants for necessary upkeep so that everyone can continue to rely on the critical port infrastructure in Bethel.
	Action B: If other major waterfront developments occur in Bethel, coordinate with the property owners / developers to incorporate measures to mitigate erosion and participate in City efforts to monitor and take action according to changes in the river.	This should include BNC, which owns a significant portion of the undeveloped waterfront within Bethel.
	Action C: Coordinate with other property owners along the Kuskokwim River to identify collaboration and cost-sharing opportunities for studies, dredging, and other maintenance.	<i>See Goal 6 in this chapter.</i> BNC and other village corporations own a lot of land up and down the river. Erosion that impacts Bethel impacts the entire region. Erosion is happening elsewhere as well and severely impacting fish camps.

GOAL 4: Maintain adequate port infrastructure to support shipping operations.

Strategy 1: Efficiently manage port infrastructure maintenance and repairs.

	Action A: Regularly inspect all public port infrastructure to assess wear occurring and predict future maintenance needs.	
	Action B: Create and maintain a list of maintenance needs at the port.	Some projects that have been identified include:

		- Repair city dock - Replace east timber wall at City dock
	Action C: Prioritize the list, determine whether current maintenance staff have the skills and equipment to complete the work or if specialized contractors will be needed, and prepare cost estimates.	Existing City maintenance staff are sometimes unable to complete some specialized repairs or construction work., due to lack of training or equipment The City should determine whether contractors would be better suited to complete the work.
	Action D: Pursue funding opportunities for more significant maintenance projects at the port, such as grants (which could be pursued in partnership with other entities such as tribal organizations), or partnership with private entities like Lynden.	Both projects listed above alongside Action B were estimated to cost around \$11 million and may be eligible for BUILD, or other grant funding.
Strategy 2: Identify new infrastructure that may be needed to improve port operations.		
	Action A: Coordinate with port management, current shipping operators, and other stakeholders to identify infrastructure needs to support current and future shipping operations.	This could include Lynden, petroleum companies, and discussions guided by the Port Commission. Examples of infrastructure additions that have been identified include: - Improved security infrastructure for the port - Potential expansion of the petroleum / freight dock (estimated cost would be \$17 million)
	Action B: As part of the regular LRTP process, document the port's existing conditions, issues, and needs; this would be used to create a prioritized list of infrastructure and maintenance needed.	<i>See Chapter 4 – Local Transportation – Goal 1 for additional context on the LRTP process.</i> A feasibility study was completed in the past, which included concept plans for the future of the port, but a separate Port Master Plan would be difficult to fund.
	Action C: Pursue funding opportunities for additional infrastructure expansions that would improve port operations, such as grants (which could be pursued in partnership with other entities such as tribal organizations), and partnership with private entities like Lynden.	

GOAL 5: Maintain infrastructure to support the use of small boats and float planes for transportation, commerce, subsistence, and recreation.

Strategy 1: Maintain infrastructure for small boat users.

	Action A: Regularly inspect the existing small boat harbor infrastructure and manage its use to help determine maintenance and/or expansion needs.	
	Action B: Consider developing additional parking at the small boat harbor.	There is a nearby City-owned lot that may be able to be developed for additional parking to support the small boat harbor. The City might also consider charging vehicle parking fees beyond the existing boat mooring fees.
	Action C: Facilitate transit and taxi access to and from the small boat harbor by incorporating signage to direct passengers to appropriate loading areas.	
	Action D: Add any maintenance needs to the prioritized list created as part of Goal 4, Strategy 1 above.	
	Action E: Evaluate the costs associated with maintaining small boat harbor infrastructure and dredging.	It would be helpful for the Port to determine approximate yearly costs to assist in setting mooring and other potential fee amounts; longer-term project costs could also be factored into the cost and fee considerations.
	Action F: Based on approximate yearly costs for maintenance as well as other longer-term projects that may need funding, consider gradual fee increases and/or creating new fees for various types of small boat harbor users (such as for businesses using the harbor, or vehicle parking fees) to help fund operations and improvements.	Increased mooring fees can assist with funding that may be obtained as part of the implementation of projects on the prioritized list created in Goal 4, Strategy 1.

Strategy 2: Maintain infrastructure for float plane users.

	Action A: Continue to place gravel on Lomack Beach to protect it from erosion associated with launching float planes.	There are float plane docks located on H-Marker and Hangar Lakes, but these lakes are not long enough for fully loaded planes to taxi. Therefore, some float plane traffic does need to take off on the river despite concerns about various types of traffic conflicts on the river. Some community members have suggested a float plane dock be constructed at the beach to mitigate erosion, but others do not believe this is something the City should invest in; there could
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		be issues related to current, weather, and skiffs using the dock instead of planes. For now, placing gravel seems to be the solution as it relates to erosion.
	Action B: Create a maintenance agreement with DOT&PF to clarify land and facility ownership and shared maintenance responsibility for Hangar Lake Road and the float plane docks at Hangar Lake.	Currently, the City occasionally assists the State in maintaining Hangar Lake Road by placing gravel along the roadway, but the responsibility mostly lies with the State for road maintenance and oversight of float plane use of Hangar Lake. There are existing docks, but they are located in a swampy area and could use improvements; this has been a challenge as ownership of the docks is unclear. For longer-term maintenance and improvement of Hangar Lake as a key float plane facility for Bethel, research should be completed to determine the ownership of existing facilities and, MOUs may be needed to clarify the responsibilities for the roadway, lake, and associated facilities.
	Action C: Consider partnerships (with government agencies and/or private entities) or ways to levy user fees for float plane facilities on the river and lakes in and around Bethel to help fund erosion control measures.	The City should explore partnerships or other funding opportunities to help find a better long-term solution to address erosions concerns other than placing gravel on Lomack Beach, such as: - Working with DOT&PF and/or a private entity to construct a float plane dock on the river that works despite the concerns discussed as part of Action A above - Encouraging more float plane use of Hangar Lake when possible, based on plane loads Finding appropriate and feasible ways to charge fees for facility use could help fund these types of projects.

GOAL 6: Support the improvement and expansion of other modes of regional transportation.

Strategy 4: Facilitate potential regional transit opportunities as they arise.

	Action B: If interest in a river (and/or ice road) transit or taxi service arises, explore how the City's port can help accommodate it.	Currently, some people informally ferry people back and forth from villages. The City is unlikely to provide a river transit service, but it could help support landing facilities if a private operator or tribal organization were interested. The small boat harbor only handles skiffs and no larger vessels, so there may be a need to set space aside.
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Chapter 7 – Public Facilities & Services

GOAL 7: Target specific public safety concerns within Bethel.

Strategy 1: Improve maritime safety through educational programs.

	Action B: Through the Port, organize boating safety classes.	The Port used to offer boating safety classes, but they are now only offered occasionally by other organizations. Either by organizing its own classes or partnering with other organizations, the Port should work to make safety classes available on a yearly basis.
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Why did the Port stop offering its own boating safety classes?

Chapter 8 – People & Economy

GOAL 2: Minimize potential negative impacts to Bethel from the Donlin Mine efforts and maximize potential benefits.

Strategy 2: Work with the Donlin project to plan for additional traffic associated with Donlin Mine.

	Action A: Obtain full details about the planned dock construction south of the Bethel petroleum dock (associated with the Donlin Mine project).	
	Action B: Given Donlin's significant anticipated impacts to the Port of Bethel, jointly work with Donlin on port and waterway studies and improvements needed.	A port and waterway study and improvements could also be included in the MOU that the City Manager will coordinate, discussed in this goal, Strategy 1, Action A. For further discussion of port and waterway studies and improvements, see Chapter 5 – Regional Transportation.

GOAL 3: Support subsistence rights and access to resources for Bethel residents and Alaska Natives throughout the region.

Strategy 1: Protect physical access to subsistence resources around Bethel.

	Action A: Maintain the small boat harbor facility, and identify future expansion needs and priorities for funding to ensure sufficient access for subsistence users.	See more information about the Port, including the small boat harbor, in Chapter 5 – Regional Transportation.
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Strategy 2: Support research and advocacy efforts that seek to protect access to subsistence resources.

	Action A: As opportunities arise, provide information or resources to support the activities of subsistence resource advocacy groups.	For further discussion of advocacy groups, such as the Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, see the background information in this Fishing and Subsistence section.
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APPENDIX 11:
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT ACTION
ITEMS

APPENDIX 11 – PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT ACTION ITEMS

Chapter 3 – Housing & Land Use

GOAL 3: Reserve space to accommodate community needs and desired development.		
Strategy 2: Create and regularly maintain a list of community facility and infrastructure needs that will require land.		
	Action A: Create and maintain a list of community facility and infrastructure needs, in order of priority and including specific spatial needs such as location and approximate area of land required.	The City Manager and the Planning Department should create and maintain the list, in collaboration with leaders from each department. Some items on the list would go hand-in-hand with the Capital Improvement Plan (see <i>Chapter 7 – Public Facilities & Services</i>). As a start, consider including the following space needs for the community (other than housing): - Additional schools that may be needed as the population continues to grow - Additional civic or public works buildings needed - Parks and open space, distributed around different areas of Bethel - Port expansion areas, as needed - Water and wastewater treatment facilities (see <i>Chapter 6 – Utility Infrastructure for more discussion of water and sewer</i>) - Alternative energy generation (wind, solar, etc.) and energy storage sites - Likely new road and other transportation corridors
	Action B: As applicable, identify and initiate coordination with entities that need to be involved in implementation (such as the Public Works department for wastewater facilities, or AVEC for alternative energy generation sites).	See <i>Chapter 6, Utility Infrastructure for more information on coordination with Public Works and AVEC, for example.</i>

Chapter 4 – Local Transportation

GOAL 2: Plan for an organized, proactive approach to surface transportation facility maintenance.		
Strategy 1: Clarify surface transportation facility maintenance responsibilities.		
	Action A: Create a transportation facility (i.e. roads, trails) maintenance responsibility map.	The Public Works Department should be responsible for this effort. This should include a map showing management and maintenance responsibility for each transportation facility. The Ownership and Maintenance Responsibility map in the 2020 Draft L RTP can serve as a starting point. This map could eventually be published online using GIS – <i>see the Mapping section in Chapter 3 – Housing and Land Use.</i>
Strategy 2: Clarify surface transportation facility maintenance responsibilities.		
	Action A: Regularly inspect roads for major potholes that need to be filled / grated, and complete maintenance work as needed.	As part of the typical maintenance schedule and best practices created for Strategy 3 below, guidance should be provided on roadway deterioration to minimize the risk of larger and more costly repairs and damage to vehicles.
	Action B: Regularly inspect transportation facilities for overgrowth, blockage, or freezing culverts and other drainage facilities, and complete maintenance work as needed.	As part of the typical maintenance schedule and best practices created for Strategy 3 below, best practices could be established for how and when to clear culvert and drainage facility issues and whether preventative measures could help.
	Action C: Explore options for controlling dust on gravel roads, shoulders, and trails, such as watering, emulsifiers, or other surface treatments.	As part of the typical maintenance schedule and best practices created for Strategy 3 below, a schedule could be established for when different types of treatments should be applied to gravel roads based on weather conditions and/or dust levels.
	Action D: As part of the snow removal prioritization plan, incorporate sites for storing snow, to avoid large berms building up within the road ROW.	If there is excess space on City properties, these areas should be evaluated for use as snow disposal areas. The City could also consider approaching owners of conveniently located vacant properties and creating snow disposal agreements to use that space for snow storage. For any snow disposal area, consideration should be given to existing drainage and impacts to adjacent properties.
	Action E: Monitor City signage to ensure it meets public needs for wayfinding and safety, and that visibility is not impacted by vegetation overgrowth, snow/ice cover, vandalism, or other maintenance issues.	As part of the typical maintenance schedule and best practices created for Strategy 3 below, maintain a database to track regular sign inspections and maintenance that may be needed.

	Action F: Enforce the removal of ROW encroachments.	This can include the City trimming vegetation that extends into the ROW from private property and ordering the removal of other encroachments, such as junk cars.
Strategy 3: Establish improved systems to track maintenance operations.		
	Action A: Raise awareness about the Report a Problem feature on the City website that should be used to report road maintenance needs.	Residents reporting issues may tend to use Text My Gov, but they should be referred to use Report a Problem when appropriate; this may help track the life cycle of maintenance issues, identify recurring issues, and plan future maintenance strategy.
	Action B: Investigate and potentially implement a software program to track maintenance operations.	There may be options that directly interface with something like the Report a Problem form, allowing both the public and City staff to input records of issues. As Public Works keeps record of action taken and other information in this type of system, a useful record would be created to help inform future planning.
	Action C: Create a typical maintenance schedule based on expected work needed on a seasonal basis, as well as best practices for responding to maintenance needs.	This should include expected amounts of surface repairs or treatment and drainage facility clearing in the warmer months and snow and ice clearing and management schedules for the winter. This would help in creating budgets and compiling the overall prioritized list of transportation facility projects that also includes larger construction projects. It would also help predict staffing needs.
	Action D: Create a map of all City transportation supporting elements such as signage, lighting, culverts, other drainage systems, etc.	This could also be used to help track recurring maintenance issues based on location. GIS could be used to prepare a map for the Public Works department to reference and continually update. The Environmental Assessment prepared for the private Donlin Mine project may contain information that is helpful for this effort, particularly related to drainage in Bethel. While expensive, lidar could be used to map topography and better understand drainage.
Strategy 4: Create a prioritized City road maintenance plan.		
	Action A: Create a prioritized City road maintenance plan, and incorporate it into the transportation facility funding strategy and Capital Improvement Plan (see <i>Goal 6 below</i>).	The Public Works Department has been leading related efforts. Currently, approximately three gravel roads get prioritized for rehabilitation each year, and gravel lasts 3-5 years, so the City has determined this is sufficient to get through all the roads as needed; this calculation will continue to change as Bethel grows. A more detailed, prioritized maintenance plan should identify which roads are paved or graveled, how and when to address issues such as potholes or drainage problems, and snow maintenance prioritization. This prioritized plan, maintenance schedule, and best practices created for Action G above can inform each other as they are developed.
	Action B: Identify and prioritize more major road rehabilitation projects, and incorporate it into the	Road rehabilitation projects are more significant projects than regular maintenance. This could be the mechanism for identifying existing gravel roads that should be reconstructed as paved roads.

	transportation facility funding strategy (see Goal 6 below).	
Strategy 5: Design new and rehabilitated road and other transportation facilities to proactively minimize maintenance needs.		
	Action A: Continually evaluate materials for road surfacing and other transportation facility construction to improve durability, such as emulsifiers or other innovative construction methods.	Consider innovative materials and construction methods that may work specifically for Bethel. The Denali Commission, University of Alaska, and DOT&PF continues to complete research on Alaska and permafrost-specific design. A project is currently underway to test Bethel soil samples to determine the type of emulsifier that would best work with the soil. This could make a significant difference in durability. Emulsifiers were difficult to use in the past since roads need to be temporarily closed and the Bethel road system is limited, but with the new Tundra Ridge Road for an alternative route, emulsifiers could be more broadly used in Bethel in the future.
	Action B: As paving technology continues to improve and become more available, use paved surfaces instead of gravel for new or rehabilitated roads of collector classification and above.	Contemporary paving materials and construction techniques lend themselves to easier maintenance and can be designed to anticipate conditions that are likely to occur, like frost-heaving.
	Action C: Improve the implementation of adequate drainage facilities.	The City has identified a need to continually acquire and install more culverts around town. They have recently been installed at a rate of about eight per year, which has not been enough to keep up with the existing drainage issues experienced in the City. In some cases, drainage analysis may be needed to determine the best solution. For example, in some locations, bridges instead of culverts may be needed (such as on Ptarmigan Street, where beavers are repeatedly damming culverts for a below-grade creek crossing). City maintenance workers who are often tasked with installing drainage may not have the training needed. The City could consider contracting out this work or enlisting the help of organizations such as the Alaska Municipal League or DOT&PF for additional training to improve decision-making and installation practices.
	Action D: At the same time as undertaking road rehabilitation projects, assess whether there is additional ROW needed or encroachments that need to be addressed; address these as part of the design process.	Some roads are not located where they are supposed to be based on the plats or other documents that created them – some centerlines are significantly off-center, making some road projects complicated. While the City knows there may be many similar issues around town, when projects are happening an optimal time to verify documentation and make any replatting or other changes as needed. The City also expressed concern that there are some roads so narrow that paving them does not seem worthwhile. If it is possible to obtain additional ROW at the time of road rehabilitation, this could help make more effective roads for moving cars and other users as well as providing space for snow storage and drainage.

GOAL 3: Develop the surface transportation network to reduce travel times, alleviate congestion, and support future development.

Strategy 1: Identify missing links in the surface transportation network.

	Action A: Track traffic data, population and traffic forecasts, and significant future development plans and use these to assist with the identification and prioritization of surface transportation projects through LRTP updates.	When available, the City should use traffic data to understand changes in travel demand and congestion and assist with planning roadway improvements that respond to future population and traffic needs. The City should coordinate with ADOT&PF to obtain data they collect on Bethel roads. On top of ADOT&PF data, the City should assess if other traffic data is needed based on potential future road improvements or new road connections. If so, the City can work to collect data on roughly an annual basis for key locations; this could help show growth or changes in traffic patterns over time. ADOT&PF completes traffic studies in Bethel and could likely share the results with the City upon request.
	Action B: Starting with the Priority Projects map in the 2020 LRTP, create a map that shows new road connections that may be needed in the future.	Tundra Ridge Road is one example of a road connection that has existed informally for some time, but is now becoming a formalized ROW that will help reduce travel times across town and alleviate congestion on CEHH. There are other road connections identified in the 2020 Draft LRTP that should be included in this map, and additional potential connections should be added as they are identified by the City and/or community.
	Action C: Based on locations of likely future land development, add locations of potential future road and other surface transportation connections that would support connectivity for this additional development.	See <i>Chapter 3 – Housing and Land Use</i> for discussion on locations of likely future development. Development through parts of the “Donut Hole” in the middle of town would be the most efficient location for additional development, so the following connections have been discussed (which would also help alleviate current traffic): - The City is applying for funding for the north-south “Donut Hole Road” between CEHH and Ptarmigan Street (stopping at the fitness center on the way) to help address increasing traffic associated with the YKHC campus. This would mostly travel through City land. - An east-west connection across the Donut Hole, connecting to the north or south side of H-Marker Lake Potential future connections should be considered as part of each LRTP process and tentatively mapped.

Strategy 2: Use the LRTP to prioritize and guide implementation of new surface transportation construction projects.

	Action A: Based on the map, create a prioritized list of new surface transportation construction projects.	This would likely start with the prioritized list from the 2020 LRTP, and the list could be adjusted as needed through future LRTP updates.
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	Action B: Incorporate the prioritized list of new transportation projects into the funding strategy (<i>Goal 6</i>).	Use the prioritized list of new surface transportation projects to inform the funding strategy to support the highest priority projects being funded first.
	Action C: Working with key stakeholders and the community, use the five-year LRTP update cycle as an opportunity to revisit and update the prioritized list of new road projects.	

GOAL 4: Design new and reconstructed streets with a focus on providing safe and comfortable routes for all transportation modes and all users.

Strategy 1: Ensure adequate ROW for sharing the road and implementing the Complete Streets concept.

	Action A: Ensure that new ROWs created as part of subdivisions meet minimum width requirements per code.	
	Action C: Consider developing a set of typical roadway cross-sections depending on roadway classification, for reference in City or private development projects involving new or reconstructed roads.	

Strategy 2: When implementing Complete Streets, prioritize the most safe and comfortable facilities for non-motorized transportation that space will allow.

	Action A: Ensure that Complete Streets (BMC 12.05) is being considered and used to the extent possible in the design of new and reconstructed roads in Bethel.	
	Action B: When deciding the location and type of non-motorized facilities to be included in a Complete Streets project, prioritize a separated pathway or boardwalk on at least one side over a shoulder for non-motorized users, when possible.	This is especially important when constructing facilities along busy gravel roads. Road dust is an issue for pedestrians and other non-motorized users on roadway shoulders. Also, separated facilities are safer and more comfortable. If the project is a reconstruction and it requires significant property acquisitions to have sufficient ROW, alternative mechanisms to provide non-motorized facilities (i.e., walkway easements) may be appropriate.

	When there is insufficient space for a separated pathway or boardwalk, create a shoulder or shoulders for walkers, bicyclists, and other non-motorized users.	
	Action C: Along existing and new shoulders for non-motorized transportation, implement measures to discourage the shoulders' use as parking or an unofficial turn lane.	On paved roads, this should minimally include a solid line to indicate the space is not a lane and should only be used by vehicles in an emergency. Other delineating techniques could be used when a painted line is not an option, such as reflective elements. Regardless of road surface material, "No Parking" or other signage indicating that the shoulder is intended for non-motorized use would also assist to demarcate space and make it clear that road sharing is a priority.
	Action D: If a shoulder or separated path for non-motorized users will be gravel, consider implementing methods to reduce dust impacts.	
Strategy 3: Add safety features to key non-motorized routes.		
	Action A: On a map, identify main non-motorized routes, including key shared roads as well as trails and boardwalks.	
	Action B: Using the map and community input, identify locations that need safety improvements such as crosswalks, additional lighting, and/or signage.	Some examples that have been identified include: - There is significant pedestrian traffic near the Cultural Center, including children who need to cross the road. - In locations where there are currently no set-aside facilities for non-motorized users, signage or striping can help remind drivers to be mindful of non-motorized users on the road.
	Action C: Plan safety improvements as individual projects and/or as part of other transportation projects, keeping in mind that federal Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) funding may be available.	ADOT&PF utilized this funding for signage and crosswalk striping near the schools in Bethel; when planning road projects, Bethel should seek to provide safety improvements whenever possible given that special funding programs exist to help with these types of costs.

GOAL 5: Improve and expand the trail system.

Strategy 1: Address trail and boardwalk maintenance needs more efficiently.

	Action A: Encourage the use of the Report a Problem feature on the City website for the public to report trail	By enlisting the help of trail users in the community to report issues, this could cut down on the need for maintenance staff or public safety personnel to go around town and inventory issues.
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	and boardwalk maintenance issues, including hazards or vandalism.	
	Action B: Initiate an Adopt-a-Trail and/or boardwalk and trail maintenance volunteer group to assist when City maintenance staff does not have capacity to respond to trail / boardwalk maintenance issues.	To assist City maintenance staff, the community could help with trail and boardwalk maintenance. This could be through an Adopt-a-Trail program with opportunities for sponsorship signage. This could also be a community service opportunity for younger people, and it would encourage more people to feel a sense of ownership over the public boardwalks, potentially reducing vandalism.
	Action C: As maintenance issues are reported and repairs are made, record any recurring maintenance issues (types of issues or problematic areas).	This information should be maintained by the Public Works Department. The data may reveal which types of trails or areas need the most maintenance, or which repair materials need to be ordered and how often. This may also indicate materials that don't hold up as well over time. The City has already reported that the wood construction used for boardwalks is expensive and is a maintenance issue; a goal is to use gravel or some similar surface material to lower cost of construction and maintenance.
	Action D: Alter trail maintenance and construction best practices over time to mitigate common maintenance issues.	If boardwalks continue to exist in Bethel, there may be a more weatherproof, synthetic treatment or material that could be tested. Otherwise, the City has expressed a desire to focus on gravel trails going forward; there is a project planned to replace the Pinky's Park boardwalks with gravel due to continuous maintenance challenges. Gravel trails sometimes settle over time, so additional types of fill or structural enhancements could continue to be tested as well as emulsifiers.
Strategy 2: Clarify the existing City-managed trail system.		
	Action A: Create an updated and easy-to-read map of existing formal City trails.	The trails map created for the past Comprehensive Plan may include trails that are not officially / legally under City jurisdiction – they may cross private land without easements, and maintenance responsibility may be unclear. The trails map created for the 2020 LRTP includes formal and informal trails, including snowmachine trails. A trails map is needed to support non-driver transportation and recreation in Bethel, but to avoid potential liability issues, the City should only map formally City-managed trails. This can be the starting point for taking steps to formalize other popular trails in Bethel and clarifying who is responsible for maintenance. This plan includes a map that is a starting point, and the Parks & Recreation Committee and Public Safety & Transportation Commission should be involved as the map develops over time.
	Action B: Clarify which users and modes of transportation are allowed on each trail.	Many existing trails in Bethel are currently shared amongst pedestrians, bicyclists, and small motorized users such as ATVs, motorcycles, and snowmachines. On City-managed trails, the City should clarify which users may be present to help all users stay aware of who to look out for on the trail. Boardwalks may not be built to accommodate motorized users, so they should be clearly identified for pedestrians and bicyclists only. Information on which users are permitted on different facilities should be provided to the public in various ways – see Actions C and D below.

	Action C: Make the trails map and information (including type of facility, users allowed, and distances) easily available on the City website.	
	Action D: Post signs with the trails map and information at key points within the trail system, such as at parks and recreation facilities.	
Strategy 3: Expand the trail system by formalizing popular trails and adding new trails.		
	Action A: For planning purposes, mark popular but informal trails on the map in dotted lines.	This information would be useful for community discussions about formalizing and expanding the trail system, but it should not be posted on the City website or around town in a way that might cause confusion over which trails are official and City-maintained.
	Action B: Investigate what would be needed to formalize informal trails.	This will include determining property ownership to be able to seek easements. If existing popular trails cannot be formalized, new alternative routes that connect the same locations could be proposed.
	Action C: Based on community input, add other potential new trail / boardwalk routes to the map in dotted lines.	These new routes could fill gaps in the system and could be informed by potential locations for future roads, such as through the Donut Hole.
	Action D: Coordinate with owners of properties that have informal or potential new trails through them to obtain easements or use agreements.	If there are certain routes that cannot be formalized, they may be rerouted through locations where property owners are more willing to allow passage through. The City could also consider the use of relocatable trail easements that allow flexibility of maintaining the trails as well as moving the trail easements as areas are further developed. For example, the City-managed waterfront trail is popularly used and well-maintained. However, the trail informally continues through private property at the south end. The owner has allowed people to use it but is not committed to creating a permanent trail as future development plans have not yet been determined and may not be compatible with a walking trail. The waterfront trail may need to more clearly end where it formally ends or be re-routed elsewhere.
	Action E: For trails within or through larger properties, consider forming agreements or partnerships for private management / maintenance of the trails.	For example, community members expressed a desire for the trail system on BNC land in southwest Bethel to be improved. Stakeholders indicated that this is a popular area for berry picking. The City could discuss with BNC whether they have interest in officially maintaining public access to these trails, and the City could potentially show the trails on the trails map (with a note that this area is BNC land and subject to their management).
Strategy 4: Improve safety and comfort on the trail system.		

	Action A: Identify and potentially add pedestrian amenities to more locations, including lighting and benches.	Lighting has been installed in some areas, but this should continue along more boardwalks or major trails. There is potential for benches to be funded by individual sponsorships (such as in exchange for a dedication plaque on the bench). These could be located along trails and/or at parks and other key public locations.
	Action B: Add amenities for bicyclists at parks and recreation facilities, such as bike racks and bike “fix-it” stations.	

GOAL 8: Evaluate site development codes to better support safe access for all transportation modes.

Strategy 1: Provide for adequate and safe parking facilities and practices.

	Action D: Clarify locations where street parking is not permitted using signage and/or announcements via the various City channels (in the event of ongoing compliance issues in specific areas, or changes).	Stakeholders have noted that people sometimes park on shoulders or along roads that pedestrians frequently use creating safety concerns for non-motorized users. Signage could be installed in certain areas, or rules around parking in shoulders could be developed and enforced.
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Chapter 5 – Regional Transportation

GOAL 1: Create a well-functioning airport area for travelers and businesses.

Strategy 1: Facilitate efficient and organized access to the airport.

	Action A: Advocate for clear loading and unloading areas for taxicabs and private vehicles at the main jet terminal.	As part of Action A in this strategy, assigned to the City Manager, responsibility for managing loading areas in the airport area will be determined. While this may be the responsibility of DOT or an airline operator, Public Works can help advocate for improvements to help with traffic flow.
	Action E: Advocate for more wayfinding signage in the airport area to direct parking and pick-up / drop-off traffic.	As part of Action A in this strategy, assigned to the City Manager, responsibility for managing signage in the airport area will be determined. While this may be the responsibility of DOT, Public Works can help advocate for improvements to help with directing traffic.

		Wayfinding signage could be for directing people to different airlines or parking areas, for example. During peak times (typically based on the Alaska Airlines jet schedule), the City has reported that the road gets narrow due to loading traffic.
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Chapter 6 – Utility Infrastructure

GOAL 1: Advance projects in Bethel to increase electricity production from alternative energy sources to reduce both costs and generation of greenhouse gasses.		
Strategy 2: Update City facilities to be more energy efficient.		
	Action A: When updating existing City facilities or constructing new City facilities, design must consider including alternative energy sources, such as solar or wind power instead of diesel.	It is important to note that AVEC needs to be informed of proposed alternative energy projects and provide approval. Until energy storage innovations are hopefully made in the future, facilities likely still need to be connected to the AVEC grid for when they are not generating sufficient electricity by alternative means.
GOAL 2: Based on the results of the Preliminary Engineering Report (2022), transition Bethel's water and sewer utilities to fully-piped systems serving all residences and businesses by 2035.		
Strategy 1: Complete each phase of projects outlined in the PER.		
	Action B: Identify available land and begin acquiring easements for future facilities, such as the truck fill station, pipes, and additional source water well.	
	Action C: Implement each phase of the PER.	Provide updates to the community so that they are aware of the progress.
Strategy 2: Focus on maintenance to protect the City's utility investments and avoid unnecessary costs.		
	Action A: Continue to maintain existing infrastructure for the hauled system while it is in effect.	This includes trucks, fill stations, and a supply of trained truck drivers to implement the system.

	Action B: Construct security fences around all water treatment plants.	
	Action C: Improve Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) compatibility of Bethel's water treatment plants and lift stations to reduce the manual monitoring tasks performed by staff.	
	Action D: Provide information to the community on how to use the piped sewer system, restrictions on what can be dumped into the system, and who is responsible for maintenance costs associated with different elements of the system.	Examine City code to determine if additional clarification is needed with regards to maintenance cost responsibilities.

Strategy 3: During the phases of the PER and beyond, manage the piped system to be as efficient and accessible as possible, as well as equitable in cost.

	Action A: Complete a rate study every 10 years; utilize results of the rate study to set rates appropriately.	
	Action B: Establish a process for non-residential properties to be informed about the piped system progress in their area and how and when to connect to the piped system.	Commercial properties in central areas will likely be required to plan and fund their own connections to the piped system as it comes to their area. Responsibilities between the City and property owners will need to be clear and transparent.
	Action E: If water usage becomes an issue due to water supply or excessive usage, install meters in conjunction with a tiered rate system to encourage less water usage and increase revenue.	

GOAL 3: Facilitate broadband development within the City of Bethel to advance community access to reliable internet service.

Strategy 1: Monitor the buildout of internet-related infrastructure in Bethel.

	Action A: Request information from GCI regarding locations of existing fiber optic cable within Bethel.	The City is aware that GCI has already installed a significant amount of cable in Bethel, including across Brown's Slough and Tundra Ridge. GCI likely obtained easements or rights from either
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		the City or other property owners / easement holders (such as sharing AVEC easements). It would be helpful information for the City to keep tabs on the existing system as it develops.
Strategy 2: When possible, streamline permitting of internet-related infrastructure.		
	Action A: Prioritize facilitation of rights-of-way within city-owned land or city-held easements for laying fiber optic cable (FOC).	

Chapter 7 – Public Facilities & Services

GOAL 6: Improve public safety facilities and services in Bethel.		
Strategy 1: Continue to improve fire and emergency medical infrastructure and services.		
	Action B: As the City's piped water system is expanded, install fire hydrants.	Like the Fire Department's action item to construct a new fire substation, more fire hydrants would also help lower insurance rates.

GOAL 8: Enhance the role of parks in the Bethel community.		
Strategy 1: Expand the City's capacity to manage and maintain parks.		
	Action C: Monitor general and ongoing maintenance issues related to parks (such as vandalism) and discuss ideas for solutions with the Community Parks & Recreation Committee.	As mentioned in the action item, vandalism is one example of a general issue related to parks that is difficult to prevent. One of the benefits of having multiple types of people / groups focusing on parks in the community (including the person the City Manager may designate to lead this effort per Action A in this strategy) is the ability to brainstorm solutions together; as this and other potential issues arise in the future, they should be raised for discussion.
Strategy 2: Expand and improve key central parks in Bethel with the goal of making them community landmarks and gathering spaces.		
	Action A: Create a new park on the former Kilbuck School site, as the neighborhood park for the Avenues / Alligator Acres area.	The site is currently being used for storage since the school burned down. There are several easements through the property and changes to the site that would be needed. Ideas for the park include a track or walking path, playground equipment, basketball courts, volleyball courts, and a gazebo. The park design could be site specific, perhaps with playground equipment referencing its history as a school.

		The site is large; there is also potential for housing to be developed on a portion of the property.
	Action B: Identify waterfront park investment opportunities to create an iconic and central civic space that represents Bethel.	The site at the intersection of 1st Avenue and Bluff Drive already has benches / picnic tables and marks the start of the City-maintained waterfront trail. The trail could be marked with public art and gateway features, and the park could be improved. It is very near the cultural center and library, so this could be a natural gathering space for outdoor events with an amphitheater or picnic shelter. The City has also identified the underutilized site owned by the Moravian Church behind Lomack Beach; this could also be developed as a waterfront park, and the site is large enough that there could be space to add parking.
	Action C: At Pinky's Park, add amenities that are focused on community gathering and comfort for all ages.	This could include a picnic shelter or gazebo with benches and tables, more trails, and placemaking features like signage and public art.
Strategy 3: Establish a network of Bethel parks to serve all neighborhoods.		
	Action C: Pursue the development of new City parks in underserved areas.	Beyond looking at the map of parks created as part of Actions A and B in this strategy, this will require community coordination, including: - coordination with neighborhood residents/community to identify a site - navigating potential ownership changes - brainstorming funding mechanisms, such as sponsorships from private entities or grants - determining park maintenance cost and how maintenance will be managed and funded - addressing potential liability concerns associated with the new park space, depending on whether the City is managing maintenance
Strategy 4: Improve park facilities for sports and other recreational activities.		
	Action A: Continue to upgrade and add facilities to Pinky's Park, including new playground equipment and potentially new gravel trails to replace run-down boardwalks.	As noted in Strategy 1, Pinky's Park is a main park for the community including the Big Dipper multipurpose field used for soccer, frisbee, and football and other amenities. Recently, a volleyball court was added to its collection of sport facilities. The community has expressed a desire for further improvements to the park; the City has obtained grant funding for new playground equipment to be installed in summer 2023 and is currently in the process of applying for funds to improve Pinky's Park trails. Other Pinky's Park improvements the City could potentially pursue include:

		- Artificial turf for fields to reduce maintenance needs – grass doesn't survive long and becomes very uneven. Artificial turf would likely need to be engineered, but is becoming less expensive. - New ice rink
	Action B: Consider creating additional facilities such as a recreational campground, dog park, non-motorized winter recreation such as cross-country skiing or mushing, additional skate park facilities, or new sports fields or courts.	Some additional facilities could be established with the help of partnerships, such as with non-profit organizations willing to sponsor their maintenance.

Chapter 8 – People & Economy

GOAL 2: Minimize potential negative impacts to Bethel from the Donlin Mine efforts and maximize potential benefits.

Strategy 2: Work with the Donlin project to plan for additional traffic associated with Donlin Mine.

Action C: Coordinate with DOT&PF to monitor potential impacts to the capacity of Chief Eddie Hoffman Highway and whether improvements would be needed.	Monitoring capacity and potential needed improvements to Chief Eddie Hoffman Highway could be included in the MOU that the City Manager will coordinate, discussed in Strategy 1, Action A. <i>For further discussion of roadway transportation planning considerations, see Chapter 4 – Local Transportation.</i>
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GOAL 4: Support locally-specific cultural activities and attractions in Bethel.

Strategy 1: Work with community organizations to continue to highlight Yup'ik culture in Bethel.

Action B: Seek opportunities to incorporate Alaska Native place names and art into public spaces in Bethel, such as parks and trails.	
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Strategy 2: Work with community organizations to continue to highlight Yup'ik culture in Bethel.

	Action A: Pursue the expansion of the fitness center to make space for more sports activities, such as basketball.	<i>Also see Chapter 7 – Public Facilities and Services – Parks and Recreation section.</i>
	Action B: Pursue the expansion of organized winter sports facilities and activities, such as mushing and cross-country skiing.	<i>Also see Chapter 7 – Public Facilities and Services – Parks and Recreation section.</i>
Strategy 3: Celebrate natural and historic resources and sites in Bethel.		
	Action A: Emphasize preservation of natural landscapes and native plants in the management and design of open spaces and parks.	<i>Also see Chapter 7 – Public Facilities and Services – Parks and Recreation section.</i>

APPENDIX 12:
TRANSIT MANAGER ACTION ITEMS

APPENDIX 12 – TRANSIT MANAGER ACTION ITEMS

Chapter 4 – Local Transportation

GOAL 7: Improve the public transit system to be more convenient and responsive to the community's needs.		
Strategy 1: Use data collection to inform changes to the transit system or back up capital needs and potential grant applications.		
	Action A: Expand data collected on ridership to reflect times of day and days of the week.	The Transit Manager currently collects total number of passengers using each stop on a monthly basis. This shows which stops are most popular and what areas rely on transit service the most. However, additional data such as daily passenger counts could help inform if there are days of the week when more frequent service would be most useful for transit riders.
	Action B: Expand data collected on ridership to reflect how many passengers enter or exit the bus at each stop.	Currently, the transit system counts passengers per stop, but does not differentiate between passengers entering or exiting the bus. Adding this distinction in the data could help determine which stops are the most popular trip origins versus destinations.
	Action C: Create a comment form on the City website's transit page to collect questions, comments, or issues reported by riders.	Transit riders may have suggestions to improve the system.
Strategy 2: Improve access to information about the transit system.		
	Action A: Post signs with schedules and routes at bus stops and inside key community facilities.	Durable printed versions of the schedule and route could be posted at bus stops as well as on bulletin boards in key community facilities. These could include a QR code that people could scan with smartphones to access the Transit page of the City website. The City has reported frequent vandalism of signs at bus stops, so City maintenance staff could monitor this and make repairs when needed.
	Action B: Continue to print transit information in the newspaper periodically, and also consider printing it in the City newsletter.	
	Action C: Incorporate transit information into visitor information on the City's website.	See Chapter 8 – People & Economy.
	Action D: When there are updates to routes or schedules, share within the City to be posted on City	

	social media (as well as in the newspaper and City newsletter to continue to remain accessible to those not using social media).	
Strategy 3: Make changes or expansions to the transit services provided.		
	Action A: Consider adding a stop at the airport or partnering with another organization to add another transit link between the airport and the central city.	While a stop at the airport is commonly suggested, it was tested in recent years. The stop seemingly had low ridership, making it difficult to justify funding that stop, and there is no designated space for luggage on buses. Most people who do not drive to the airport use taxi cabs or YKHC's shuttle. If a stop is implemented again, the following strategies could be used: - The City could work with the airport to post wayfinding and signs showing transit routes and schedules. - The schedule could be limited to times based on the passenger jet schedule. - The stop could be located slightly up the road at Tower Road to avoid congestion in front of the terminal. - See Strategy 4, Action B for ideas related to luggage space. Alternatively, the City could pursue a partnership with YKHC's shuttle to provide a transfer pass to allow people to pay to ride to YKHC and then transfer to the existing transit services there at the hospital.
	Action B: Annually, consider altering the transit route(s) to include additional stops that are commonly requested by community members, such as the Fitness Center.	There used to be a second transit route in addition to the current transit route. It served the City Subdivision area, including the Fitness Center, Pinky's Park, the vocational school, and the surrounding area; these stops are commonly requested. An additional bus was recently purchased, to arrive in the next couple of years, so some of these stops may be reinstated in a second route. If / when routes are changed or expanded to include new destinations like the Fitness Center, this should be advertised to help raise awareness and garner ridership to these destinations. Over time, routes should be examined and reconfigured to incorporate new stops in the most strategic and efficient way. For example, Tundra Ridge Road could influence the shape that routes take. All new road connections should be considered as they are completed.
	Action C: Review ridership data and/or community comments to consider running the transit system later into the evening.	This was provided in the past when there were two transit routes and may become more feasible going forward. Evaluate running transit services to 8pm or 10pm. This may be the key to more people using transit to access destinations such as the Fitness Center. It may be possible to organize evening routes to skip stops not typically used in the evening. This would need to be informed by the data collected.

	Action D: Consider decreasing headways from one hour to half an hour, either throughout the day or during times of peak use.	This could potentially be implemented only during peak times, informed by the ridership data that is gathered as part of Actions in Strategy 1.
Strategy 4: Maintain and improve the transit fleet.		
	Action A: Use a database to track maintenance needs and expected lifespans of buses and make repairs and/or replace buses as needed.	Due to poor road conditions in Bethel, buses need frequent repairs and wear out very quickly. If routes expand, this will lead to even more wear and tear on buses. Besides continuing to strive for better roads, Bethel will need to regularly plan for repairs and purchasing new buses. Buses sometimes take a couple of years to arrive, and the City noted that ideally there would be one more vehicle in the fleet than the number of routes, so this needs to be proactive. To help track all of this information, the Transit Manager should use a database to track the year buses were purchased, their expected lifespan, and repairs needed and/or completed.
	Action B: Consider adding features to buses to improve accessibility and convenience.	The City noted that typical wheelchair lifts for buses break quickly, and there are no local businesses able to fix them. Alternative lift designs or incentivizing a local business to undertake repairs is recommended. Also, additional storage capacity on buses would assist with improving passenger use and comfort, including: - Luggage or cargo space, especially if a stop is added at the airport. This could also help with people transporting groceries. - Bicycle racks The Public Works department should work with the Grant Manager to explore grant applications to fund new buses (which could potentially include installation of cargo space or bicycle racks, since the need for funding to cover these improvements could be discussed in grant applications).

Chapter 5 – Regional Transportation

GOAL 1: Create a well-functioning airport area for travelers and businesses.		
Strategy 1: Facilitate efficient and organized access to the airport.		
	Action C: Consider adding a transit stop around the airport.	See the Public Transit Section in Chapter 4 – Local Transportation for considerations about this potential stop.

APPENDIX X:
TO-BE-DETERMINED RESPONSIBILITY
ACTION ITEMS

APPENDIX X – TO-BE-DETERMINED RESPONSIBILITY ACTION ITEMS

Chapter 5 – Regional Transportation

GOAL 1: Create a well-functioning airport area for travelers and businesses.

Strategy 1: Facilitate efficient and organized access to the airport.

	Action D: Create a guide to transportation options available to/from the airport with a map of where to access them, to be distributed and displayed in buildings for the passenger airline(s).	The guide should include parking options, taxicab pickup areas and phone numbers, the nearest transit stop, the hospital shuttle, car or other vehicle rental services, the location of passenger airlines at the airport, and any other transportation options available around town. The guide should be posted in the Alaska Airlines terminal and elsewhere if deemed helpful.
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Strategy 2: Facilitate adequate parking at the airport.

	Action A: Once parking management is determined, advocate for exploring the potential of designating short-term and long-term parking lots and an associated parking fee system with time limits.	Designating short term and long term parking may help with the issue of limited parking around the airport. Because of fees, those planning to be traveling for a while may choose to find another way to the airport instead of leaving their vehicle there.
	Action B: Once parking management is determined, advocate for the completion of a parking study to evaluate whether more parking is needed near the main jet terminal and if so, make plans to provide additional parking space.	

GOAL 6: Support the improvement and expansion of other modes of regional transportation.

Strategy 2: Work with the regional transportation coordination group to improve reliability of ice road maintenance.

	Action A: Create a map of the typical ice road route, including all the villages it connects.	Identify a representative from each village that the ice road connects to participate in the coordination group.
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Commented [KS1]: QUESTION FOR THE CITY:
Who should be responsible for these action items?

Commented [KS2]: QUESTION FOR THE CITY /
STAKEHOLDERS:
The City Manager can lead efforts to coordinate the group, but who within the City should lead the other efforts listed below?

We could list them on the City Manager action items if that is most appropriate at this time before they are delegated? Or, should we delegate them to departments such as Planning, Public Works, or the Port in the plan?

	Action B: Create a typical snow-clearing schedule, including what party or parties are responsible for clearing and marking.	In the past, Lynden would periodically plow the river to support their shipping needs, which resulted in easier access for anyone using the ice road. Napaimute Corporation is planning to take charge of ice road maintenance and recently received additional funding for the effort. With maintenance schedule and responsibility information shared amongst the coordination group, it will be easier to collaborate and work together to fill in any gaps (such as for funding).
	Action C: Collect data on past years' freezing and break up and monitor freezing, ice thickness, and break up each year. Share this data and changes over time to help reduce the risk of incidents where vehicles fall through the ice.	
Strategy 3: Work with the regional transportation coordination group to improve the reliability of the trail network.		
	Action A: Work with the group and DOT&PF to develop a map of the most used trails between Bethel and the surrounding villages, including user groups, trail markers, hazards, and other landmarks.	Many of the trails outside of Bethel primarily run through DNR and other federal agency land; these agencies may have their own trail system and maps. ONC has also worked on mapping and marking historic routes. The coordination group should consult with and collect prior efforts of these agencies when developing the map. The map should include pedestrian, ATV, and snowmachine trails. It should also mark creek crossings to encourage caution.
	Action B: Identify whether easements are needed for places where trails cross private property, and coordinate with property owners.	If a trail crosses public agency land (like DNR or other federal agencies), mark the agency managing the trail on the map.
	Action C: Create a regional trail maintenance strategy that is responsive to different seasons, various types of trail users (snowmachine versus ATV, for example), and changing conditions over time.	This may be able to be funded by tribal transportation funds, especially since trails are often used to travel between villages. It is important to note that these trails are located in the tundra and may have challenging conditions. Due to climate change, there is a decreasing portion of the year during which snowmachines can be used; increasing ATV use may damage the tundra ecosystem and become an increasing maintenance issue down the road. The coordination group should discuss these issues to reach appropriate solutions.
Strategy 4: Facilitate potential regional transit opportunities as they arise.		
	Action A: Coordinate with the hovercraft operator to determine if they may consider providing passenger transit again in the future.	The hovercraft can travel on difficult terrain in the region including tundra, water, snow, and ice. As climate change makes conditions less predictable, it could become even more useful to transporting cargo in the area. The hovercraft used to have approximately 12 passenger seats, and the transportation coordination group can work with the operator to determine if there are opportunities to once again provide passenger transportation.

Chapter 6 – Utility Infrastructure

GOAL 1: Advance projects in Bethel to increase electricity production from alternative energy sources to reduce both costs and generation of greenhouse gases.

Strategy 3: Encourage efficiency updates for private energy users.

Action A: Develop outreach materials to encourage commercial and residential users on energy efficiency best practices and grants that may be available for installing private alternative energy facilities.	The Cold Climate Housing Research Center may have some useful information to contribute to these outreach materials. Coordination with AVEC will also be needed.
Action B: Work with AVEC to develop and share a guide to approval processes required for private alternative energy facilities and opportunities to sell excess power back to the grid.	Independent power producers may be eligible to have their AVEC bill reduced, and there could be opportunities to sell surplus power back to the grid. Information about necessary processes and related opportunities should be shared on the City website.

Commented [KS3]: QUESTION FOR THE CITY:
Who should be responsible for these action items?

Chapter 7 – Public Facilities & Services

GOAL 7: Target specific public safety concerns within Bethel.

Strategy 1: Improve maritime safety through educational programs.

Action A: Continue to work with the fitness center to offer swim classes for all ages.	In the past, there have been some efforts to provide swim lessons, and these should continue. Given its location on the Kuskokwim River, with many creeks and other water bodies in the vicinity, Bethel and regional residents should be prepared with swimming and boating skills to prevent drowning. Some communities require swim lessons as a school graduation requirement. Another model could be offering and encouraging classes for all ages for a fee, with scholarships available.
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Strategy 4: Support organizations that provide services to people experiencing homelessness in Bethel.

Action A: Continue to support the Bethel Winter House nonprofit organization.	The Winter House facility provides nighttime shelter during the winter for people experiencing homelessness, as well as limited services during other months, depending on funding. The organization runs almost entirely on donations and volunteer work, so any support with funding/grants, projects, and raising awareness about the Winter House efforts that the City can
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Commented [KS4]: QUESTION FOR THE CITY /
STAKEHOLDERS:
What, if any, City departments are currently related in these efforts? Who should be responsible for these action items?

	provide is helpful. This could include working in partnership with the Bethel Community Services Foundation, which leads the Bethel Housing & Homelessness Coalition.
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GOAL 9: Enhance recreational facilities and programs in Bethel.

Strategy 1: Expand the facilities and operations of the Fitness Center to accommodate more activities and all ages.

Action A: Expand the fitness center with a gym and fitness track.	Currently, expansion of the fitness center is estimated to cost approximately \$20 million and could be eligible for BUILD grant funding. A plan has been drafted, and fundraising is underway.
Action B: Include programming within the fitness center oriented towards younger people.	Some younger people in the community may feel intimidated by the adults who primarily use the fitness center, so a greater effort should be made to include them and make them feel comfortable through classes and programs that are offered or specific hours for the youth to use the gym. This can help youth create lifelong healthier lifestyles.
Action C: Include programming within the fitness center and/or pool that is oriented towards seniors.	Certain times or specially designed classes could be set aside for senior residents to ensure safety. There could be special classes oriented towards older residents.

Strategy 2: Support expansions to childcare, teen activities, and senior activities.

Action A: Support upgrades and expansions to the Bethel 4-H Youth Center facilities and programming, including food programs, classes, and recreation for teens and afterschool youth.	UAF leases the building from the City, so this is their project. They did receive grant funding to help. This is a good example of a community partnership for the City to work with a separate organization to fill a community need. The center offers some "life skills" programming and could potentially work more with the City by providing volunteer community service and internship opportunities. At the center or elsewhere (since it is sometimes very heavily used), the City could also explore partnering with another organization to provide childcare programs for City and partner organization's children.
Action B: Support recreational programming dedicated to seniors, such as upgrades to the existing Senior Center Park or other programs.	The Senior Center Park is run by the Alaska State Housing Authority. As the older population in Bethel continues to grow, there may be a need for additional facilities and/or programming.

Strategy 3: Explore collaborations for recreational activities at other facilities in Bethel.

Action A: Explore opportunities to use school facilities for programming outside of school hours.	This has been limited in the past due to liability concerns, scheduling constraints, and the need for supervision. However, there may be staff that works for the school district that could help with childcare programming outside of school hours as well; this should be explored.
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Commented [KS5]: QUESTION FOR THE CITY AND STAKEHOLDERS:
Should these be designated as Public Works action items, or on a separate Parks & Recreation list (to be assigned by the City Manager to appropriate parties)?

Commented [KS6]: QUESTION FOR STAKEHOLDERS
Childcare was identified as a big need. Please let us know if you have other ideas for how the City can play a role in supporting the provision of childcare services in Bethel

	Action B: Support expansions to recreational facilities and resources, such as the Cultural Center and the Kuskokwim Consortium Library.	Libraries in many communities organize a variety of programming for the benefit of the community, not necessarily related to reading. This could include creative or “life skills” classes, or the establishment of a “materials library” where Bethel residents can check out household tools or electronic equipment.
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Chapter 8 – People & Economy

GOAL 1: Promote high-quality education and career training in Bethel, so that there are opportunities for locals and newcomers to access training and become employed in Bethel.

Strategy 1: Identify community priorities for education and career training.

	Action C: Identify gaps between community unemployment and community job openings.	This could be an opportunity to partner with low-income and/or social service providers, to connect economically vulnerable community members with work.
	Action D: Working with community partners and the business community, monitor which employment sectors are likely to increase in importance and which employment sectors are likely to decrease in importance in 2045.	For example, the City has noted that it is difficult to establish wind power facilities without local staff with the training needed to service the turbines; it may be expected that this sector would grow and thus more staff would be needed. Elder care may also be expected to grow, given that Bethel is a healthcare hub with a growing population of seniors.

Strategy 2: Foster a city-wide culture of emphasizing local hiring and training for specific local opportunities.

	Action A: Lead the community in the creation of a local “job board” that helps businesses find suitable hires.	<i>Also see strategies in Chapter 7 – Public Facilities & Services.</i>
	Action B: Create a focused internship and apprenticeship program that offers introductory training and support leading to employment with City of Bethel or through partnerships with community organizations or businesses.	This program could have an education component and be developed in partnership with LKSD, UAF, and/or the vocational school. This could allow job training as part of education programs that helps students find employment opportunities in their field earlier, particularly in those sectors which are most needed by the community and will be of increasing importance in the future.

Commented [KS7]: QUESTION FOR THE CITY / STAKEHOLDERS:
Who should be responsible for leading these action items?

GOAL 4: Support locally-specific cultural activities and attractions in Bethel.

Strategy 1: Work with community organizations to continue to highlight Yup’ik culture in Bethel.

Commented [KS8]: QUESTION FOR THE CITY / STAKEHOLDERS:
Who should be responsible for leading these action items?

	Action C: When possible, partner with Bethel Council on the Arts and Alaska Native organizations to sponsor cultural facilities and events in Bethel, such as arts and crafts markets, cultural exhibits, or the Camai dance festival.	These events can be a part of Parks and Recreation activities that add to the quality of life in Bethel; they also attract visitors to the community (<i>see the Visitor Experience section below in this chapter</i>).
Strategy 3: Celebrate natural and historic resources and sites in Bethel.		
	Action B: Create a guide to natural features, spaces and parks, as well as key subsistence resources located around Bethel, for the education and appreciation of residents and visitors.	<i>Also see Chapter 7 – Public Facilities and Services – Parks and Recreation section and the Visitor Experience section below in this chapter.</i>
	Action C: Identify and map buildings or historic sites that are of historic significance.	The Moravian Bookstore and other older Moravian buildings may be eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The City could work with community members to identify other places that are significant to the history of Bethel.
	Action D: Develop and implement an informational signage system for parks and significant places of interest.	

GOAL 5: Foster a thriving local business community.

Strategy 3: Create a business-friendly environment in Bethel.

	Action D: Work with the Chamber of Commerce to organize events that highlight local businesses, such as markets or events that encourage people to visit businesses around town.	Small businesses run out of people's homes could benefit from market-style events that bring people together to check out tables from different organizations. Other ideas could include several business organizing a time to provide scheduled events to encourage people to patronize several local businesses.
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Commented [KS9]: QUESTION FOR THE CITY / STAKEHOLDERS:
Who should be responsible for leading this action item?
Does it make sense for it to be the Finance Department?

GOAL 6: Support and expand tourism and visitation to Bethel.

Strategy 1: Expand information and marketing for visitors.

Commented [KS10]: QUESTION FOR THE CITY / STAKEHOLDERS:
Who should be responsible for leading these action items?

	Action A: Provide general visitor information on the City website.	This should include information on lodging options, transit and cab information, airport information, dining, shopping, recreational opportunities, services that visitors may need to access, and so on. The information should be simple and easy to read, with contact and location information.
	Action B: Create visitor marketing materials specific to different visitor groups: Family-friendly – focused on people visiting friends and relatives (aka VFRs) with children and/or seniors in their groups Business travelers – focused on coffee / breakfast, lunch and dinner dining, catering for meetings, wifi hangout spots, the fitness center, and “quick” attractions to visit Nature tourists – focused on in-town attractions, equipment shops or rental services, and regional guiding services Visitors from villages – focused on resources they may be coming to access and include Yup’ik translation New residents – overview of key community resources as well as popular spots for locals and residents to help people who recently moved to “get to know Bethel”	Visitor marketing materials should also be included on the City website, and could be prepared with the City’s public relation contractor in collaboration with organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce. Separating types of attractions by who might be interested in them will make information more accessible and relevant to everyone visiting the website. The City can also work with organizations that consistently bring people to Bethel (such as the hospital) to distribute these marketing materials.
Strategy 2: Improve attractions for visitors.		
	Action A: Emphasize locally specific natural and cultural attractions.	See Goal 4 above.
	Action B: Work with the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations to develop a calendar of community events.	This can include cultural events, entertainment or educational events, and other types of events that would not appear on the City’s calendar or be consolidated in any other location. This could be coordinated with the administrators of the It’s going on in Bethel! Facebook group where people currently tend to advertise community events.

	Action C: Develop a beautification plan for the downtown area (roughly between the Cultural Center and Brown's Slough) and the waterfront.	Work with Chamber of Commerce to develop plans and find volunteer organizations that can help fund and participate in installing signage, planting and maintaining flowers, organizing public art, and trash pick-up. The beautification plan could identify specific projects that should occur seasonally, or phases for completing larger projects over time.
	Action D: Provide information about observing and/or harvesting local plants and animals.	This should include locations and times of year, such as where and when to watch specific bird migrations or when different types of berries are typically ready to pick. It could improve the accessibility of these activities and encourage visitors to seek natural attractions and/or guiding services in the region.

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City of Bethel
Finance Department
Monthly Manager's Report for January 2023

Date: January 1st – January 31st, 2022
To: Peter Williams, City Manager
From: Xavier Mason, Deputy Finance Director
Subject: Management Report, January 31st, 2022

The Finance Department's Monthly Managerial Report details the progress, challenges, and activities of the Finance Department for January 2023.

Current Events within the Finance Department

- The Finance Department has submitted a pivotal requested item for the FY21 audit pertaining to the Business Recovery Grant funding
- The Finance Department has begun the FY24 operational budget
- The Finance Department has completed the first draft of the FY24 Capital Improvement Plan and is prepared to present it to the City Council
- The Finance Department has begun pulling samples for the FY22 audit
- The Finance Department has begun and submitted some state and federal year-end reports and filings
- The Finance Department rehired an Accounting Specialist I
- The Finance Department hired a Temporary Staffer
- The City of Bethel is unable to continue participating in the Supplemental Emergency Medical Transportation (SEMT) Program. Side note, the Fire Department Chief worked very diligently with the Finance Department with this program for over a year.

Staffing/Recruitment

- Finance Director (one vacancy)
- Front Desk/Utility Billing (one vacancy)
- Temporary Position (two vacancies)

Training

The goal of the Finance Department is for our staff to be continuously and incrementally improving in our capacity to fulfill our duties. One of our objectives is to provide staff with opportunities for growth and exposure within all our sub-departments. The following is a list of group and independent trainings that were taken by members of the Finance Department during the month of January.

Group Training Sessions:

- The Finance Department had a team training session viewing a webinar “Building Better Team Communication”
- The Finance Department had a team training session viewing a webinar “Breaking Bad Communication Habits”

Independent Training(s):

- The General Ledger Accountant
 - Utilized Udemy to review how to use autofill, flash fill, inputting, and editing comments and notes in Excel. Additionally, he reviewed how to record notes, mortgage, and bonds payable journal entries
- The Deputy Finance Director viewed the following webinars:
 - Handling Personality Clashes in the Workplace
 - Employee Retention Strategies that Work
 - How to Manage Employee Burnout
 - Leadership in Times of Crisis
- The Accounting Specialist II attended Recorder Training presented by the City Clerk’s Office
- Utility Billing Personnel viewed a Caselle webinar “Customer Inquiry Tips & Tricks”
- Accounts Payable provided an overview of how to generate Personnel Action Requests and the correlating general ledger accounts

Select Tasks & Statuses by Sub-Department

Utility Billing

Tasks	Frequency	Status
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Collections	Monthly	Behind.
ORS'	Daily	Current.

Payroll/AP

Tasks	Frequency	Status
Personnel Action Requests	As Needed	Current.
Deferred Compensation	Bi-weekly	Current.
Payroll	Bi-weekly	Current.
Accounts Payable	Weekly	Current.

Sales Tax

Tasks	Frequency	Status
Applying Business License Payments	Daily	Current.
Mailing Delinquency Notices	Monthly	Current.
Constructing Aging Reports	Monthly	Current.
Applying Business License Renewals	As needed	Current.
Drafting Payment Plans	As needed	Current.
Applying Payments	Daily	Current.
Reviewing & Processing Exemption Cards	As needed	Current.

General Ledger

Tasks	Frequency	Status
Journal Entries	Monthly Recurring	Current (December).
Budget Amendments (from budget ordinances)	As needed	Current (December).
Cash Reconciliations	Monthly	Current (December).
Investment Reconciliations	Monthly	Current (December).
Create Allocations & Run Checkout	Monthly	Current (December).

DOJ Grants	Quarterly	Current (December).
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Internal Improvements

The following is a list of internal tasks, actions, projects, or changes that we have made within the Finance Department for the purpose of improving operations:

- The Finance Department voted Starla Solem as Employee of the Quarter based upon the following criteria: quality of work; treatment of others; and attendance.
- Taught the Planning Department how to take their own payments (accounts receivable)
- The Finance Department is doing some intensive training (beginning with effective communication) so that we can build up our newest team members and our own capacity so that we can improve processes and procedures.
- The Finance Department has developed a list of customers that are only allowed to communicate to us via phone or email due to their abusive behavior. One person went so far as to challenge the Deputy Finance Director to a duel.
- The Finance Department has added the ability for the Central Treasury account to be utilized as a Sweep Account (the ability to accrue interest overnight). With the current interest rate, the anticipated profits from the sweep are approximately \$55,000 and will likely cover all banking expenditures

Small & Big Wins

Sales Tax (2 people)

- Two business accounts were closed
- 155 delinquent account holders were contacted
- 73 business licenses were renewed
- 27 delinquent accounts were cleaned up
- 31 business license applications have been stalled due to the following: incomplete forms, outstanding fees/returns, outstanding fees/returns, missing the business license fee
- Concluded the amnesty program established by Ordinance 22-34 with the following results (these were previously provided to the City Council):
 - o Summary of the Amnesty Program
 - 21 entities were granted amnesty

- \$26,648.02 was forgiven in penalties, interest, and fees
- \$11,138.88 in sales taxes were remitted
- Four of the forgiven entities are still in the process of filing and their submissions are not included in the above summary
- Trends from the Amnesty Program via analysis
 - Some entities are requesting forgiveness for specific months. For example, they have filed monthly for the past two years and skipped two months within a 48-month period.
 - A number of entities submitted 2-3 years' worth of returns, with the bulk of them filing \$0 as gross income (this means that they have no remittances but accumulated in penalties, interest, and fees)
 - Most of the entities (north of 80%) that asked for forgiveness, have filed previously
- There are many businesses filing exemptions incorrectly. However, we have been working with the filers to correct their errors.
- January is when yearly filers submit their sales tax returns, so we have taken in a lot of yearly sales tax returns
- We are attempting to use the Finance Committee to address the concern that the BMC codes (4.14 and 5.04.050), does not permit the city to charge late filing fees to gaming and transient lodging. Additionally, we can't charge interest and penalties to gaming activities.
- Improved the workflow of renewing business licenses
- Improved the analyzation process of exemption forms
- Assisted the Grant Manager with the administrative duties for the Community Action Grant
- Prepared four sales tax liens, with assistance from the City Attorney, that will be submitted in February
- Sent an amended Notice of Audit Findings and Statement of Balance Due to a company that was previously audited
- Audited two local businesses
- Denied one sales tax filer an appeal to forgive their remittances, interest, penalties, and fees

Utility Billing (1 person)

- Focused this month on ways to improve customer service
- Submitted approximately 30 O.R.S. to the Hauled Utility Department

- Processed two tank inspections
- Processed four new applications
- Processed 19 change requests
- Processed seven account closures
- Processed 38 Temporary Service Holds
- Processed approximately 62 Extra Calls
- Corrected approximately 34 accounts
- Issued over 1,200 utility bills
- Assistance for rent and utility payments can be found at:
 - o <https://www.ahfc.us/blog/posts/ahfc-invites-new-rent-relief-applications>
 - o Low Income Household Water Assistance Program
 - This is a program from the State of Alaska that assists individuals in making payments for their water and sewer services.

Payroll/AP/AR Dock (2 people)

- Reviewed and approved approximately 140 check requests
- Tested an ACH payment for the purpose of determining feasibility of utilizing ACH payments in addition to traditional checks
- Logged over 30 AP related correspondences through January
- Coordinated with the City of Bethel Employees Association and the Human Resources Department regarding the distribution process for the PTO Disbursement and Option Election Form
- Submitted 1099s to the IRS and will begin distribution shortly
- Submitted W2s to the IRS and will begin distribution to staff shortly
- Began pulling the early payroll samples for the FY22 audit
- Finished filing three fiscal years' worth of payroll documentation into individual employee files (this will help tremendously with pulling samples for the audit)
- In discussions with the Police Department on when to conduct a training for Timesheets
- Began the distribution of the Collective Bargaining Agreement PTO election
- Continued the transition of undertaking P-Card Duties from the General Ledger Accountant
- Payroll is averaging between 1-3 minor mistakes (that are obviously corrected) per pay period.
Note: this is an amazing improvement and well below our historical average.

- A new form “Rental and Payment Agreement” was created and added to the onboarding paperwork for employees that live remotely and need housing in Bethel
- Identified areas of improvement for: checkout, deposit vouchers, and transmittals within payroll
- Worked with a vendor to increase our reduced line of credit

General Ledger (1 person)

- Reviewed how to create charge codes and charge groups with purchase card holders
- Created an automatic reminder for purchase card holders to submit their receipts
- Reclassed two Police Department employees’ payroll, benefits, and differing time periods to a Department of Justice hiring grant 625-60
- Worked with the Carmen Jackson Team with journal entries to clear up past accounts
- Entered nine budget modifications
- Entered the following
 - o 11 CD JEs
 - o 3 CD2 JEs
 - o 3 CD3 JE
 - o 14 CRJEs
 - o 39 JEs
- Entered investing transactions
- Reconciled the Xpress Bill Pay, Wells Fargo Payroll, Wells Fargo Utility Checking, and the Wells Fargo General Checking as well as the TVI, BNY, AMLIP Key Bank, and Wells Fargo Sweep Investment accounts

Other Activities

- Assisted with Ordinance 23-02 Amending BMC 14.03 Port Revenue
- Approved four travel authorization forms
- Attended several collective bargaining agreement negotiation workshops calculating various scenarios with wages, benefits, and personnel
- Worked with Department Heads to complete line-item transfers to balance smaller overbalanced accounts
- The Deputy Finance Director was voted in as Secretary for the Alaska Remote Sellers Sales Tax Commission

- The Deputy Finance Director was voted in as Treasurer for the Alaska Government Finance Officers Association

Interdepartmental Assistance

- City Clerk's Office
 - o Processed five passport payments
- Grants Department
 - o The Police Department, Accounts Payable, and the General Ledger Accountant worked together to figure out a better way to track Community Service Patrol expenses for the purpose of cost reporting for the grant.
 - o Assisted the Grants Manager and City Manager with determining percentage of salary to allocate to a grant
 - o Filing quarterly reports for various grants
 - o Journal Entry adjustments
 - o The Finance Department has been tasked with the Community Action Grant Exit Reports. Our tasks include:
 - Looking through each exit report and see if it is missing receipts, documentation, return of money unspent
 - Draft and send letters to applicants owing more information or owing money that has not been spent
 - Sending emails to applicants owing exit reports
 - Draft and send letters to applicants owing exit reports
 - Follow up on every account
- Human Resources
 - o Assisting with new employee paperwork
 - o Assisting with communications regarding the CBA PTO Cashout
- Planning Department
 - o Processed 19 permits, licenses, or fees
 - o Processed 0 site plan permits

- Police Department
 - o Uploaded the December PC Slips to Core FTP LE.
 - o Processed 47 taxi permit payments
 - o Processed 0 chauffeur payments

Challenges

- The Finance Department needs to continue training so that we may become more proficient at completing our daily tasks and duties.
- The Finance Department is severely short-staffed; however, we are really pulling together as a team to complete our objectives and satisfying customers.
- The Finance Department deals with very rude and irate customers regularly, so we posted signs saying: *"We Reserve the Right to Refuse Service to Anyone"*.

Goals for the near Future

- Utilizing data analytics to identify challenges and opportunities that can spur economic development.
- Revamping the Temporary Service Hold forms to make the wording less ambiguous
- At least one Zoom workshop instructing small business owners how to file their sales tax returns.

State of the Economy (Macro Economics)

The following are some excerpts from Adam Shapiro's, vice president at the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, views on the current economy and the outlook.

- Though cooling, the 12-month inflation remains at historically high levels. A portion of the inflation moderation is attributable to recent declines in energy prices, partially due to adjustments in the markets relating to the war in Ukraine. This is relevant to the budgeting process.
- Supply chain bottlenecks for materials and labor remain a constraint on production, although there are signs of easing. This is relevant to the procurement process, particularly Capital Improvement Items.
- The labor market remains tight. The number of jobs available remain well above the number of available workers. The tight labor market has put continued upward pressure on wages and labor market turnover. This relevant to staffing.



City of Bethel
Finance Department
Monthly Manager's Report for February, 2023

Date: February 1st – February 28th, 2022
To: Peter Williams, City Manager
From: Xavier Mason, Deputy Finance Director
Subject: Management Report, February 28th, 2022

The Finance Department's Monthly Managerial Report details the progress, challenges, and activities of the Finance Department for February 2023.

Current Events within the Finance Department

- The Finance Department has completed 25% of the FY24 operational budget.
- The Finance Department has completed the FY24 Capital Improvement Plan. The City Manager then submitted it to the City Council for comment and review.
- The Finance Department, with assistance from the Carmen Jackson Team, has begun pulling samples for the FY22 Audit.
- The Finance Department has created and began implementing an action plan for the sales tax sub-department to accommodate for the loss of a pivotal team member, due to their relocation to another city.
- The FY21 Audit is still outstanding.
- Two members of the Carmen Jackson Team worked on location, with the Finance Department, while the Deputy Finance Director was on leave.

Staffing/Recruitment

- Finance Director (one vacancy)
- Accounting Specialist I (one vacancy)
- Temporary Position (one vacancy)

Training

The goal of the Finance Department is for our staff to be continuously and incrementally improving in our capacity to fulfill our duties. One of our objectives is to provide staff with opportunities for growth and exposure within all our sub-departments. The following is a list of group and independent trainings that were taken by members of the Finance Department during the month of January.

Group Training Sessions:

- The Finance Department attended a training about Harassment and Sexual Harassment held by the Director of Human Resources

Independent Training(s):

- The Deputy Finance Director attended an Ethics Training facilitated by UAA that was suggested by the City Manager to Department Heads.
- The Accounting Specialist II attended Recorder Training presented by the City Clerk's Office.
- An Accounting Specialist I watched a webinar entitled "How to Manage Time and Priorities."

Select Tasks & Statuses by Sub-Department

Utility Billing

Tasks	Frequency	Status
Collections	Monthly	Behind.
ORS'	Daily	Current.

Payroll/AP

Tasks	Frequency	Status
Personnel Action Requests	As Needed	Current.
Deferred Compensation	Bi-weekly	Current.

Payroll	Bi-weekly	Current.
Accounts Payable	Weekly	Current.

Sales Tax

Tasks	Frequency	Status
Applying Business License Payments	Daily	Current.
Mailing Delinquency Notices	Monthly	Current.
Constructing Aging Reports	Monthly	Current.
Applying Business License Renewals	As needed	Current.
Drafting Payment Plans	As needed	Current.
Applying Payments	Daily	Current.
Reviewing & Processing Exemption Cards	As needed	Current.

General Ledger

Tasks	Frequency	Status
Journal Entries	Monthly Recurring	Current (January).
Budget Amendments (from budget ordinances)	As needed	Current (January).
Cash Reconciliations	Monthly	Current (January).
Investment Reconciliations	Monthly	Current (January).
Create Allocations & Run Checkout	Monthly	Current (January).
DOJ Grants	Quarterly	Current (January).

Internal Improvements

The following is a list of internal tasks, actions, projects, or changes that we have made within the Finance Department for the purpose of improving operations:

- The Finance Department

- The Finance Department completed an ACH payment as a pilot to see if we want to do move towards more ACH payments in the near future.
- Created an account with the Social Security Administration for the purpose of submitting our year-end filings, this will help us tremendously next year.

Small & Big Wins

Sales Tax (2 people)

- 25 delinquent account holders were contacted.
- 13 business licenses were renewed.
- 5 late filing fee notices were released due to limited staff capacity.
- 30 delinquent accounts were corrected.
- 4 accounts were closed.
- 3 accounts were corrected from the original 31 that had been stalled due to the following: incomplete forms, outstanding fees/returns, outstanding fees/returns, missing the business license fee.
- Provided samples for the FY22 audit.
- Denied one taxpayer their appeal to forgive their interest, penalties, and fees because they applied outside of the dates that the amnesty program was conducted.

Utility Billing (1 person)

- Submitted approximately 38 O.R.S. to the Hauled Utility Department.
- Processed six tank inspections.
- Processed 11 new applications.
- Processed 24 change requests.
- Processed 19 account closures.
- Processed 42 Temporary Service Holds.
- Processed approximately 77 Extra Calls.
- Corrected approximately 43 accounts.
- Issued over 1,300 utility bills, albeit 23 days late due an issue with our third-party provider.

Payroll/AP/AR Dock

- Reviewed and approved approximately 150 check requests.

- Logged over 35 AP related correspondences through January.
- Continued the distribution of the PTO Disbursement as agreed upon with the City of Bethel Employees Association.
- Submitted 1099s to the IRS and distributed to vendors.
- Submitted W2s to the IRS and distributed to all City employees.
- Pulled a significant amount of payroll samples for the FY22 audit, with the Carmen Jackson Team.
- Entered more than 210 timesheets.
- Processed one wage garnishment levy.
- In discussions with the Police Department on when to conduct a training for Timesheets.
- Continued the transition of undertaking P-Card Duties from the General Ledger Accountant.
- Payroll is averaged about one incident each per pay period. Note: this is an amazing improvement and well below our historical average.
- With assistance from the Carmen Jackson Team, a social security issue, stemming back to 1974, was resolved.
- Began sending reports on a quarterly basis with anniversary dates to the different Directors for the purposes of conducting annual evaluations.
- Training videos were made for various Accounts Payable processes for tasks such as uploading the Positive Pay files.

General Ledger (1 person)

- Worked with the Carmen Jackson Team posting FY22 year-end entries and reversing entries.
- Entered zero budget modifications.
- Reconciled two payroll deposits that were different in the City's bank account and the accounting software Caselle, this was rather challenging.
- Posted the following journal entries:
 - o 2 accrual reversing entries posted for 07/22
 - o 2 correcting entries posted for 7/22
 - o 39 journal entries
- Accepted \$13,508 grant from the Department of Justice on behalf of the Grants Manager.

Interdepartmental Assistance

- City Clerk's Office
 - Processed ten passport payments.
 - Processed zero burial permits.

- Grants Department
 - Finance Department personnel have been tasked to serve as the Acting Community Action Grant Ex Officio for the month of February and March.
 - Filing quarterly reports for various grants.
 - Journal Entry adjustments
 - The Finance Department has been tasked with the Community Action Grant Exit Reports. Our tasks include:
 - Looking through each exit report and see if it is missing receipts, documentation, return of money unspent.
 - Draft and send letters to applicants owing more information or owing money that has not been spent.
 - Sending emails to applicants owing exit reports.
 - Draft and send letters to applicants owing exit reports.
 - Follow up on every account.

- Planning Department
 - Processed 21 permits, licenses, or fees.
 - Processed 0 site plan permits.

- Police Department
 - Uploaded the January PC Slips to Core FTP LE.
 - Processed 54 taxi permit payments.
 - Processed 3 chauffer payments.

Challenges

- The Finance Department is severely short-staffed and is recovering from an exodus of staff from the third and fourth quarters of 2022.

- Sales Tax has taken a particularly hard hit with the recent departure of a team member due to their relocation. The staffing shortage has made it difficult to keep on top of daily maintenance tasks for sales while also handling problem accounts and unique cases. Large amounts of paperwork and mail have been identified and is in the process of being sorted and processed. The volume of work towards the end of the month has been very high due to January's returns being due along with annual returns. The Finance Department intends to add two positions to their roster during the FY24 budgeting process. The addition of two personnel would help manage the load in sales taxes and utility billing - the departments with the highest turnover rates.
- The Finance Department deals with very rude and irate customers regularly, so we posted signs saying: *"We Reserve the Right to Refuse Service to Anyone"*.

Goals for the near Future

- Utilizing data analytics to identify challenges and opportunities that can spur economic development.
- Revamping the Temporary Service Hold forms to make the wording less ambiguous
- At least one Zoom workshop instructing small business owners how to file their sales tax returns.
- Setup an appointment platform and scheduling system for sales taxes.
- Establishing internal audits for each subdepartment for the purposes of training and identifying patterns of mistakes
- Developing a schedule-based system for the sales tax department, so that we can prepare in advance for the more complicated sales tax related inquiries.