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Nome Economic Strategy Public Involvement Plan (PIP)

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Prepared For:
City of Nome, Alaska



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1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Project Overview

The City of Nome is developing an **Economic Development Strategic Plan**, to guide municipal resources and programs in ways that help shape the community's future, and drive economic growth. This process will bring together community members, tribal and civic leaders, business owners, regional organizations and partners, and municipal, state, and tribal governments. Together, their input will help inform and develop set of clear and attainable goals and objectives, with specific policy recommendations the City can implement which aim to:

- **Shape economic growth in line with the community's vision, culture, and values;**
- **Sustain and enhance infrastructure and public spaces** to support economic vitality;
- **Foster a business-friendly environment** where entrepreneurs and employers can thrive;
- **Retain and attract a skilled workforce** to strengthen the economy; and
- **Encourage investment** to fuel long-term prosperity.

1.2 Project Area

The City of Nome is located in Northwest Alaska on the southern coast of the Seward Peninsula. Nome is a first-class city that lies along the Bering Sea facing Norton Sound, and is approximately 12.5 square miles of land and 9.1 square miles of water within its corporate boundaries. This project will focus strategies and resources in the City of Nome, as well as the immediate vicinity as Nome serves as a hub for communities throughout the region.

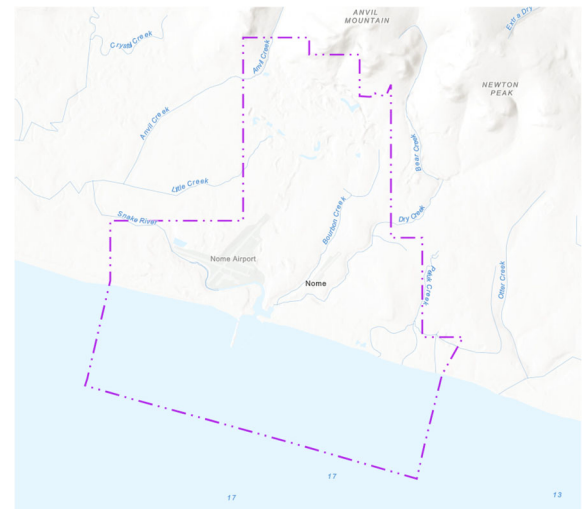


Figure 1. Nome City Limits, Nome Geohub

1.3 Background Plans and Studies

The City of Nome's Economic Development strategy will build on existing plans and analyses performed within the region. Recognizing an economic way of life with the land and ocean drives community health and well being, the project team will engage closely with the Bering Strait Development Council, the Alaska Regional Development Organization (ARDOR) tasked with preparing and implementing the regional economic development strategy.

Prior to initiating the public engagement process, the following documents will be reviewed and consulted:

- *Arts of the Bering Strait Region: the economic, social and cultural role of traditional arts and crafts (Kawerak)*
- *Bering Strait Business Resilience Data Report (University of Alaska Business Enterprise Institute, December 2022)*
- *Bering Strait Small Business Resilience Plan (UAA BEI)*
- *Bering Strait Community Needs Assessment (McKinley Research Group, March 2022)*
- *Bering Strait Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: 2025-2030 (Bering Strait Development Council, 2024)*
- *City of Nome Comprehensive Plan 2020 (Approved by Nome Common Council, May 2012)*
- *Bering Strait Region Priority Climate Action Plan (Deerstone Consulting for Kawerak, March 2024)*
- *Port of Nome Strategic Plan (Currently in development)*
- *NJUS Water/Sewer Master Plan (Currently in development)*
- *State of Alaska DOT Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (2024-2027 STIP, Amendment #2)*
- *Tribal Transportation Plans (various)*

1.4 Anticipated Schedule

The table below identifies key milestones in the project, and is subject to change.

PROJECT MILESTONE	TARGET COMPLETION
1. Organizing and Pre-Planning	March
2. Community Assessment, SWOT	April
3. Visioning	April
4. Goals and Objectives	June
5. Implementation 'Action Plan'	July
6. Public Review and Finalize Plan	August

1.5 Purpose of the Public Involvement Plan

This Public Involvement Plan (PIP) details the proposed formal and informal methods for communicating information with agencies, tribes, organizations, and the public for the project. The objectives of this plan are to:

- Provide opportunities for community members to be informed and participate;
- Serve as a guide for the project team to meet the project goal of achieving broad and meaningful public involvement; and
- Clearly define how and when information is shared to maintain timeline and budget.

2.0 COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND POTENTIAL PARTNERS

The primary goal of economic development initiatives is to improve the well-being of a community through efforts that entail job creation, job retention, tax base enhancements, and quality of life. Therefore, every resident, business, and organization in Nome and the broader region is likely to be impacted. A way of life in relationship with nature and the environment is central to the identity of diverse residents of Nome, therefore it is critical Nome residents to help define development that will enrich well-being and quality of life. The values of cooperation, hard work and partnership are the foundation for opportunity.

The initial list below includes individuals and entities the project team will seek to engage throughout the planning process. It includes tribal agencies, regional non-profits, businesses, residents, and the general public. Contact information will be collected and updated in a 'Community Engagement' register to manage communications effectively, and will be continuously expanded and updated throughout the project. Outreach to the following entities is anticipated or has been conducted to help inform the City of Nome's strategic process and plan.

2.1 Public, Private and Other Potential Partners

- Bering Strait Development Council
- Nome Chamber of Commerce
- Northern Air Cargo
- Alaska Airlines
- Arcadis
- Bering Air
- Saltchuk
- Bristol Engineering Services
- Electric Power Systems, Inc.
- Graphite One
- Local Business Owners
- Marine Exchange of Alaska
- Northrim Bank
- Wells Fargo
- CU1
- Rural Credit Services

2.2 Municipal and State Government Agencies

- Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (AK DOT+PF)
- Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC)
- Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (ADIEA)
- Alaska Sea Grant
- Alaska Small Business Development Center
- City of Nome
- Nome Joint Utility System (NJUS)
- Northwestern Alaska Career and Technical Center (NACTEC)
- North Pacific Fisheries Management Council
- North Pacific Research Board
- Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation (NSEDCC)
- Alaska Resource Development Council (RDC)
- University of Alaska
- Nome Community Center

2.3 Tribal Governments and Organizations

- Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC)
- Bering Straits Native Corporation (BNSC)
- Native Village of Council
- Native Village of Elim
- Kawerak Inc.
- King Island Native Community
- Native Village of Council
- Native Village of Solomon
- Nome Eskimo Community
- Norton Sound Health Corporation (NSHC)
- Native Village of Savoonga
- Native Village of Shaktoolik
- Sitnasuak Native Corporation (SNC)
- Solomon Native Corporation
- King Island Native Corporation
- Solomon Native Corporation
- Council Native Corporation

2.4 Engaging our Elders

Generations of Nome residents have built our community; and survived through periods of boom and periods of bust. It is important for this strategic plan to create spaces and opportunities for the community's Elders to share their stories, ideas, and knowledge. In respect with cultural values across

Nome residents, elders are our knowledge holders and have built the institutions that govern Nome. The team will explore opportunities such as ‘Elder Storytelling’ and other methods of ensuring the community’s elders voices are consulted, and included in the strategic planning process.

2.5 Hearing from the Next Generation: Nome’s Youth

Engaging with the community’s youth – particularly middle and high school aged children is another pillar important to Nome’s development. The project team will schedule a specific event and/or survey inviting Nome’s young people to share their own aspirations and recommendations for the community’s future.

“Thank you for this meeting. We cannot do it alone, and are here ready to work together to get Nome back to that wonderful place we call home.”

- March 21st Leadership Roundtable participants

3.0 COMMUNICATION METHODS

The subsequent sections outline the proposed methods for disseminating project information to agencies and individuals. The project team will evaluate outreach strategies and, if necessary, choose additional tools to engage the public and agencies effectively. Public surveys will be utilized to solicit direction and feedback from residents, the business community and issue specific taskforces.

3.1 'Community Engagement' Register & Mailing Lists

Contact details will be managed in a Community Engagement Register, encompassing interested agencies, organizations, businesses, and individuals affected by the project. This will serve as the distribution list for project-related communications via mail or email.

3.2 Project Updates on City Website

Project information will be periodically uploaded to the City of Nome website. The website will be maintained with the project overview, current schedule, meeting information, project documents, information about public involvement activities, and contact information for the project team.

The project website will include mechanisms for stakeholders to request to be added to the project's email distribution list and to submit public comments.

3.3 Project Email

A project email address will be included on all communication materials. The email address will be linked to an internal distribution list including members from the project team.

3.4 Email Newsletters, & Social Media

Prior to each public meeting an electronic version will be emailed to the addresses in the Community Engagement Registry list. Public meeting notice will include information about the project, contact information, and time, date, and location of the upcoming public meeting.

Additionally, e-newsletters will be distributed at relevant project milestones. E-newsletters will be used to provide the public and other interested persons with project updates.

3.5 Media Communications

KNOM Radio

Ben Townsend, News Director: ben.townsend@knom.org

general email: news@knom.org

107 West 3rd Avenue

PO Box 988

Nome, Alaska 99762

Phone: [\(907\) 443-5221](tel:(907)443-5221)

Nome Nugget

Anna Lionas, reporter: news@nomenugget.com

Diana Haecker, Owner: diana@nomenugget.com

Send photos to photos@nomenugget.com

P.O. Box 610

Nome, Alaska 99762

Phone: (907) 443-5235

4.0 PUBLIC MEETINGS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This project will engage community members through a variety of methods and meeting types, as described below. Stephanie Queen Consulting (SQC) in partnership with the City of Nome project team will coordinate meeting locations, prepare meeting materials, and set-up. Meeting participation information and materials for all meetings will be posted to the project portion of the City website.

Interested individuals will be notified of upcoming meetings and opportunities to review documents via the following methods: radio and newspaper ads/stories on KNOM radio and Nome Nugget, email newsletters, and social media posts

4.1 Common Council Meetings and Public Open Houses

Common Council Presentation #1: Project Kick-Off and PIP Review (April 14, 2025)

The purpose of this presentation is to provide an overview of the strategic planning process, draft schedule, and Public Involvement Plan (PIP). The Mayor and Council will be invited to share feedback on the overall project approach and engagement strategy, and share any specific goals or expectations they have for the project.

Public Open House #1: Project Overview, Community Vision, and SWOT (April 19, 2025)

At the first public open house the project team will make a brief presentation about the strategic planning process, then community members will be invited to share their vision for Nome's future and weigh in on long-term economic priorities—from infrastructure and housing to workforce development, business attraction, arts and cultural identity, and downtown redevelopment. Input received from the public will be used to draft a shared community 'vision statement,' and identify the community's potential Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (i.e. SWOT analysis).

Common Council Work Session and/or Public Open House #2: Present the Draft Plan (July, TBD)

At a second public Open House and/or Common Council work session later in the summer, the project team will present the draft concepts from the plan, including: vision, goals and objectives, and action/implementation strategies. The purpose is to solicit feedback and comments from key decision-makers and the public, and kick-off a several-week public

comment period where community members will be able to review the draft concepts, and share their questions, comments, and feedback with the project team.

Common Council Presentation #3: Final Plan Presentation (August, TBD)

At this meeting, the final version of the Economic Development Strategy will be presented to the Mayor and Council for their consideration. This final plan will incorporate feedback and address comments from the public, as well as City leaders and decision-makers.

4.2 Other Meetings

Leadership and Engineering Roundtables, Friday, March 21, 2025.

In March, the City convened a set of roundtable discussions with local and regional leaders who shared their vision and aspirations for economic development. The second hour focused on updates about upcoming infrastructure projects and project planning in the City of Nome, from state, tribal and city engineers. The goal was to foster coordination and information sharing among engineers, city, tribal and state agencies, and development organizations as they prepare for the 2025 construction season in Nome in effort to strengthen relationships and improve opportunities for coordination and collaboration.

City of Nome Investment Summit, Friday, April 18, 2025.

On April 18, ahead of Open House #1, the City is hosting the first ever Nome Investment Summit, which will feature tribal leaders, state and federal partners, industry experts, and investors exploring opportunities in:

- Science and climate research
- Tourism and hospitality
- Workforce and housing development
- Public infrastructure
- Fisheries and critical minerals
- Military support and port development

4.3 One-on-one Interviews

To supplement information gathered during larger public open houses, the project team will meet with and interview key individuals one-on-one. The project team will collaborate and identify specific individuals to schedule interviews with, either via phone, Zoom, or in person.

4.4 Issue-Specific Task Forces (Working Groups)

After the initial Public Open House, the project team will invite small groups (typically 5-10) people with industry knowledge and expertise, to engage in issue-specific conversations. These meetings are

intended to bring together community members together to identify actionable goals, objectives, and implementation strategies.

Task force topics may include:

- Tourism
- Arts/Culture
- Small Business Support
- Community Development and Downtown Revitalization
- Healthcare
- Maritime, Marine Services, and the Port
- Rare earth minerals
- Housing
- Workforce Development
- Finance/Banking
- Transportation

4.5 Surveys

Coinciding with Public Open House #1, the project team will introduce a 'Community Vision' survey, which will be advertised and open to the public for several weeks. The survey will solicit information about community members' priorities and goals for economic development, and identify those features and assets within the community they most value. The survey will be available both online and in a hard-copy format, with results shared following the close of the survey period.