Commonly named COVID-19, a novel coronavirus was identified and quickly became a global pandemic. To help slow the virus’ spread and to protect the public health & well-being, rapid and extreme behavioral change measures were instituted. With these actions, economies around the world were immediately impacted. Social distancing, self-isolation, and quarantine measures have resulted in a rapid slowing of patronage of local businesses.

Additional health-based mandates, such as limiting gatherings of more than 10 people and the closing of dine-in restaurants & bars, has further affected incoming revenues needed for local businesses to survive. Those hardest hit have been our local small businesses, mostly ones in the tourism and hospitality industries. The immediate and unexpected loss of revenue has left businesses with significant budget shortfalls, as closing the doors does not halt expenses—utilities, rent, payroll, and other expenses are still due.

As a result, businesses are looking at their cashflow & reserves and having to make operational decisions, such as workforce downsizing, in the immediate or near term. Further, the remaining workforce is challenged with meeting childcare needs as schools and daycare facilities shut down—many doing so while also balancing and adjusting to working remotely from their homes.

The current forecast of the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to require extension of existing mandates or may require additional, more restrictive mandates to be put in place to further halt the spread of the virus. Understandably, such mandates are critically important for the health & safety of our residents; however, the continuation of these policies can be devastating on our local economy. Despite all this, it is also critical that essential services remain operable in order to address & mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. Our medical professionals, medical supplies, and basic living essentials are the tip of the iceberg that rely on the community network at all levels to provide those services. While others are focused on helping prevent the spread of the virus, treating those already infected and working to prevent the further spread of COVID-19, the FNSB can help to identify critical actions needed to keep our economy functioning as efficiently and safely as possible while planning for recovery.

The Fairbanks North Star Borough, through the work of the Economic Development Commission and with guidance from our local economic development organizations, is developing the Interior Alaska COVID-19 Economic Impact and Recovery Plan. This plan seeks to mitigate immediate economic impacts as a result of COVID-19 while planning for recovery through goals and strategic initiatives. The intent is for this plan to be a living document that is kept updated as tasks are completed or as the quickly evolving situations warrant.
COVID-19 Timeline

In December 2019, Wuhan, China was the epicenter of an outbreak of a new coronavirus, commonly called COVID-19. Since its discovery, it has spread to a global pandemic.

- **DEC. 31, 2019**
  Wuhan Municipal Health Commission, China, reported a **cluster of cases of pneumonia** in Wuhan, Hubei Province.

- **JANUARY 21, 2020**
  CDC announced the first travel-related case detected in the US.

- **FEBRUARY 29, 2020**
  CDC & Washington State reported the first COVID-19 related death in the US.

- **MARCH 11, 2020**
  WHO characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic; Gov. Dunleavy declared a state of emergency in Alaska.

- **MARCH 13, 2020**
  President Trump issued a proclamation declaring a national emergency concerning the COVID-19 outbreak; Gov. Dunleavy issued the first health mandate to prevent or slow the spread of COVID-19 in Alaska.

- **MARCH 20, 2020**
  FNSB issued a Declaration of Disaster Emergency.

- **MARCH 24, 2020**
  The City of Fairbanks issued a Declaration of Disaster Emergency.

- **MARCH 27, 2020**
  DHSS reported Alaska’s first in-state death related to COVID-19.

- **APRIL 2, 2020**
  The number of cases of COVID-19 hit 1 million globally.

- **APRIL 10, 2020**
  The City of North Pole issued a Declaration of Disaster Emergency.

- **APRIL 10, 2020**
  WHO announced on social media that China reported a cluster of pneumonia cases—with no deaths—and that investigations were underway.

- **APRIL 10, 2020**
  WHO declared COVID-19 as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).

- **MARCH 12, 2020**

- **MARCH 20, 2020**
  Gov. Dunleavy submitted a supplemental budget amendment to increase novel coronavirus preparedness.

- **MARCH 27, 2020**
Goals & Objectives

**Goal:** Support and strengthen the local economy for community recovery and growth from COVID-19 impacts.

**Objective:** To create an Interior Alaska COVID-19 Economic Impact and Recovery Plan focused on the following principles:

- Resilience through innovation
- Strong local businesses
- A safe & healthy community
- A fully-employed workforce

These principles will be realized through strategic initiatives and partnerships, and will focus efforts to mitigate impacts to:

- Residents
- business
- healthcare
- workforce
The following data points will be used to track the progress of economic recovery in Interior Alaska:

To track our local economic recovery progress, all data sets will use the data as of December 31, 2019, as a baseline.

**ECONOMIC GOALS & INDICATORS**

**RESIDENTS**
- Fairbanks Community Food Bank metrics
- Number of home sales & average value
- Vacancy rate & average rent fee
- Cost of Goods (using quarterly)

**BUSINESS**
- Sales Taxes
  - Marijuana
  - Alcohol
  - Tobacco
- Bed Tax
- Number of commercial loans

**HEALTHCARE**
- Number of new COVID-19 cases
- Number of total cases
- Rapid testing turnaround time
- Number of recovered patients
- Active healthcare mandates

**WORKFORCE**
- Unemployment ratio
- Average wage per Alaskan
- Number of local job listings
Objectives & Plan Strategies

The following are strategies and tasks that are designed to achieve the goals outlined in this plan while focusing on the impacts to residents, local businesses, healthcare, and the local workforce.

### RESIDENTS

- **R1.** Build a dashboard to communicate goals, objectives, and measurable data points
- **R2.** Identify supply chain shortages and seek local options
- **R3.** Data collection & analysis to understand demographic, behavioral, and buying habit changes post-COVID-19
- **R4.** Encourage a complete and accurate count of the 2020 Census through continued promotion of responding online

**Increase sustainability, energy efficiency, and quality of life**

- **R5.** Increase the Borough’s role in support of North Slope and statewide energy development
- **R6.** Support Solarize Fairbanks
- **R7.** Implement air quality and energy efficiency tax credit programs

**Maximize local infrastructure and development plans**

- **R8.** Complete the Downtown Plan
- **R9.** Support the removal of the Polaris site
- **R10.** Revitalize nuisance and derelict properties
- **R11.** Promote planned development of housing, transportation, communication, environmental, and utility systems
- **R12.** Revise Title 17 and Title 18 in Borough code to be easier to administer
- **R13.** Encourage expansion of the rail system to Canada and through northern and western Alaska
- **R14.** Prioritize weatherization and energy efficiencies in public facilities

### BUSINESS

**Retain and expand existing local businesses**

- **B1.** Develop and implement a survey to monitor economic impacts and identify critical needs
- **B2.** Identify and prioritize industry clusters needing assistance
- **B3.** Identify obstacles to establishing and sustaining local businesses
- **B4.** Create appropriate support programs for each cluster
- **B5.** Promote entrepreneurship
- **B6.** Provide information on businesses that may be for sale
- **B7.** Encourage new businesses and new construction in the FNSB

**Ensure access to capital**

- **B8.** Provide access to information on and promote applications to available financial assistance
- **B9.** Develop a bulletin on federal, state, & local assistance for businesses
- **B10.** Identify and support potential funding assistance programs for local small businesses

**Support “Buy Local” initiatives**

- **B11.** Identify priority actions to grow the Buy Local initiatives
- **B12.** Enhance marketing and promotion efforts of Buy Local initiatives
- **B13.** Encourage local anchor institutions to increase local purchasing and hiring

**Maintain and strengthen Interior Alaska as a tourist destination**

- **B14.** Fund destination marketing efforts by Explore Fairbanks

**Establish FNSB as the economic center for Interior Alaska**

- **B15.** Update and maintain the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
- **B16.** Retain the presence of the University of Alaska administration
- **B17.** Promote the importance of the military’s presence in Interior AK
- **B18.** Expand existing and create new economic ventures with Interior and Northern Alaska communities
- **B19.** Create Economic Enterprise Zones
- **B20.** Promote existing Opportunity Zones and Military Facility Zones
- **B21.** Diversify the economy
HEALTHCARE

Businesses and public spaces transition back into operations in a safe & responsible manner

H1. Develop guide to safe, sustainable business and public spaces re-opening best practices
   a. Provide guidance on how to re-open safely (i.e. proper sanitation, social distancing, PPE)
   b. Promote business recovery plans
   c. Ensure appropriate access to needed PPE and sanitation supplies & equipment

H2. Develop a community readiness assessment for businesses and public spaces

H3. Connect businesses capable of alternative manufacturing with community needs

Residents transition back into the community in a safe & responsible manner

H4. Implement community needs assessment

H5. Develop a public health and safety campaign with community health partners

H6. Promote COVID-19 rapid testing

H7. Provide public facilities to meet basic hygiene needs: clean drinking water, handwashing, restrooms, and showers

WORKFORCE

W1. Compile an assessment of Interior Alaska’s employment needs and job requirements

W2. Increase the average wage per industry cluster

W3. Encourage application for federal and state assistance, such as Unemployment Insurance

W4. Encourage remote work to keep the workforce employed as much as practicable

W5. Work with employment offices and workforce providers to mobilize and fill employment openings at essential businesses

W6. Provide workforce development training with COVID-19 funding for individuals out of work

W7. Support dependent care programs & providers (childcare, special needs, and elder care) as an essential component of a strong and available workforce
Immediate, Short-Term, Medium, and Long-Range Tasks

Tasks will be broken into urgency identifiers that will be revisited every two weeks. The groupings of tasks are as follows:

### IMMEDIATE  (started & completed in a 1-2 week period)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>Build a dashboard to communicate goals, objectives, and measurable data points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R4</td>
<td>Encourage a complete and accurate count of the 2020 Census through continued promotion of responding online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>Develop and implement a survey to monitor economic impacts and identify critical needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>Identify and prioritize industry clusters needing assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B8</td>
<td>Provide access to information on and promote applications to available financial assistance programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>B9</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>H1</td>
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<td>Connect businesses capable of alternative manufacturing with community needs</td>
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<tr>
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<td>W7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### SHORT-TERM  (started & completed in a 3-6 week period)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>Identify supply chain shortages and seek local options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3</td>
<td>Identify pain points for existing local businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4</td>
<td>Create appropriate support programs for each industry cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B10</td>
<td>Identify and support potential funding assistance programs for local small businesses</td>
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<tr>
<td>B11</td>
<td>Identify priority actions of existing Buy Local campaigns</td>
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<tr>
<td>B13</td>
<td>Encourage local anchor institutions to increase local purchasing and hiring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2</td>
<td>Develop a community readiness assessment for businesses and public spaces</td>
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<tr>
<td>H3</td>
<td>Implement community needs assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7</td>
<td>Provide public facilities to meet basic hygiene needs: clean drinking water, handwashing, restrooms, and showers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W4</td>
<td>Encourage remote work to keep the workforce employed as much as practicable</td>
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<tr>
<td>W5</td>
<td>Work with employment offices and workforce providers to mobilize &amp; fill employment openings at essential businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W6</td>
<td>Provide workforce development training with COVID-19 funding for individuals out of work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### MEDIUM (started & completed in a 7-26 week period)

- R3. Data collection and analysis to understand demographic, behavioral, and buying habit changes post-COVID-19
- B5. Promote entrepreneurship
- B6. Provide information on businesses that may be for sale
- B14. Fund destination marketing efforts by Explore Fairbanks
- B19. Create Economic Enterprise Zones
- B20. Promote existing Opportunity Zones and Military Facility Zones
- W1. Compile an assessment of Interior Alaska’s employment needs and job requirements
- R14. Prioritize weatherization and energy efficiencies in public facilities

### LONG-RANGE (started & completed in a 27-52 week period)

- R5. Increase the Borough’s role in support of North Slope and statewide energy development
- R6. Support Solarize Fairbanks
- R7. Implement air quality and energy efficiency tax credit programs
- R8. Complete the Downtown Plan
- R9. Support the removal of the Polaris site
- R10. Revitalize nuisance and derelict properties
- R11. Promote planned development of housing, transportation, communication, environmental, and utility systems
- R12. Revise Title 17 and Title 18 in Borough code to be easier to administer
- R13. Encourage expansion of the rail system to Canada and through northern & western Alaska
- B7. Encourage new businesses and new construction in the FNSB
- B15. Update and maintain the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
- B16. Retain the presence of the University of Alaska administration
- B17. Promote the importance of the military’s presence in Interior Alaska
- B18. Expand existing & create new economic ventures with Interior and Northern Alaska communities
- B21. Diversify the Economy
- W2. Increase the average wage per industry cluster
Special thanks to our Economic Development Commission:

Mayor Bryce Ward, Chair

Mike Meeks

Abigail Riggs

Paul Robinson

Russell Talvi

Frank Tomaszewski, Assembly Member

Mindy O'Neall, Assembly Member

View an online version with a virtual dashboard and other resources at:
https://covid-fnsb.hub.arcgis.com/