



VASHRAI K'OO (ARCTIC VILLAGE) COMMUNITY PLAN 2019-2021



PREPARED BY:

ARCTIC VILLAGE COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS OF ARCTIC VILLAGE
IN COOPERATION WITH TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



Cover Page:

Figure 1 Arctic Village School Painting

Figure 2 Arctic Village School Beaded

Table of Contents

Table of Figures.....	4
Resolution	5
Acknowledgements	6
Values.....	7
Vision	7
Executive Summary.....	8
Community Plan Implementation.....	8
Community Profile	9
History.....	9
Culture	10
Location	11
Climate.....	11
Geography	11
Population	12
Governance.....	13
Arctic Village Council	13
Non-Profit Corporation- Tanana Chiefs Conference	13
Arctic Village Governance.....	14
VPSO/ Law Enforcement.....	14
Public Utilities	15
Water and Sewer	15
Solid Waste	15
Communications.....	15
Power/Energy	16
Bulk Fuel	16
Electric	16
Public Facilities.....	17
Clinic	17
School	18
Emergency Services / Fire Protection / Search and Rescue	19
Post Office	19
Water Plant and Washeteria	20

Community Hall	20
Economy	21
Local Stores and Businesses	21
Composition of Employment.....	22
Housing	23
Transportation	24
External Transportation.....	24
Internal Transportation	24
Land Use and Environment.....	25
Land Ownership.....	25
Environmental Concerns	26
Wild Resource Harvest (Subsistence)	27
Community Well-Being	29
Churches	29
Additional Education	29
Cultural Events and Gatherings	30
Community Goals and Objectives.....	31
Goals and Priorities Preview	32
Housing	33
Land Use / Environment	34
Health and Well-Being	35
Infrastructure.....	36
Economy	37
References	38
Appendices	40
Appendix 1: Survey Questions 2017	40
Appendix 2: Community Meeting 2017 Sign-in Sheet.....	49
Appendix 3: Community Plan Meeting 7/31/2018 Sign in Sheet	50
Appendix 4: Arial View - Area Use Map Arctic Village 2010	51
Appendix 5: Arial View – Community Map Arctic Village 2010	52
Community Contact Information	53

Table of Figures

Figure 1 Arctic Village School Painting	Cover page
Figure 2 Arctic Village School Beaded	Cover page
Figure 3 Arctic Village Borealis	8
Figure 4 Gwich'in Hunters	9
Figure 5 Gwich'in Winter Home	9
Figure 6 Trimble & Mary Gilbert	10
Figure 7 Gwich'in Youth Dancers	10
Figure 8 Terrain in Arctic Village – Chandalar River	11
Figure 9 Sunset Arctic Village 2017	11
Figure 10 Arctic Village 2010 Census	12
Figure 11 Population per State of Alaska ALARI	12
Figure 12 Arctic Village Council (AVC) Office	13
Figure 13 Hills near Arctic Village	14
Figure 14 TCC VPSO Program	14
Figure 15 Arctic Village Landfill	15
Figure 16 GCI Cellular Tower	15
Figure 17 US Fish & Wildlife Service Bulk Fuel Tank	16
Figure 18 Arctic Village Power Plant	16
Figure 19 Vashraii K'oo- Nena Russell Clinic	17
Figure 20 Neets'aii Warriors Arctic Village School	18
Figure 21 AVS Mandolin Instrument	18
Figure 22 AVS Gwich'in Language Teaching Material	18
Figure 23 Boats of the Chandalar River	19
Figure 24 Arctic Village Post Office	19
Figure 25 Arctic Village Water Plant & Washeteria	20
Figure 26 Arctic Village Community Hall	20
Figure 27 Midnight Sun Native Store	21
Figure 28 Neets'aii Warrior Youth Center	21
Figure 29 Ground Squirrel	22
Figure 30 Occupied Arctic Village Home	22
Figure 31 Unoccupied Home in Arctic Village	22
Figure 32 Occupied Home in Arctic Village	23
Figure 33 Wrights Air Service-Cessna Grand Caravan Aircraft	24
Figure 34 Traffic in Arctic Village	24
Figure 35 Arctic Village Community & ANWR Visitor Center	25
Figure 36 AVS Contaminated Soil Project	26
Figure 37 Arctic Village Power Plant & Tank Farm	26
Figure 38 Porcupine Caribou- Porcupine Caribou News Picture	27
Figure 39 Arctic Village Sheep Management Area 2014/2016	28
Figure 40 Arctic Village Visitor Center Fish Chart	28
Figure 41 Arctic Village Episcopal Church Bishop Rowe Chapel	29
Figure 42 Culture & Wellness Camp 2017- Arctic Village	30
Figure 43 Arctic Village Hero's Park	30
Figure 44 Arctic Village Aerial View 2	31
Figure 45 Arctic Village Glacier Stream	31
Figure 46 Gazebo Owned by Tiffany Tritt	31
Figure 47 Gwich'in Nation Flag	31
Figure 48 Gwich'in Gathering 2016	31
Figure 49 Lake Fog in Arctic Village	31
Watermark-East Fork Chandalar River	Background

Resolution

Arctic Village Council Resolution Adopting Plan

Arctic Village Council

Resolution 19-18

Whereas, this plan was created through a public process which captured the goals of our community; and,

Whereas, this plan is a tool that helps us manage change in our community; and,

Whereas, this plan is intended to coordinate future community development and service delivery; and,

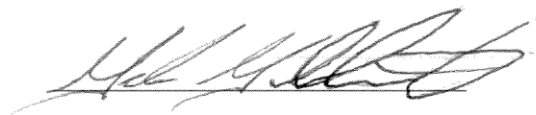
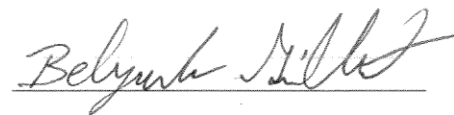
Whereas, this plan was created for public use and will be made publically available; and,

Whereas; we ask all public, private, and non-profit entities serving our community to recognized and use this plan; and,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the parties of this resolution agree to work together to pursue the goals expressed in this plan

Certification

We hereby certify that this resolution was duly passed and approved on June 11, 2019 with 5 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstaining.


1st Chief
Attest: Secretary/Treasurer

Acknowledgements

The Arctic Village Community Plan 2019 is a result of the cooperation between many different Arctic Village community and tribal members who contributed their thoughts and suggestions through the Community Feedback Survey and the Community Meeting held August 2018.

A special recognition for Marjorie Gemmill and Joel Tritt who played a key role in researching, creating, and working on this Community Plan during two Community Planning Specialists cycles: 2015 and 2017.

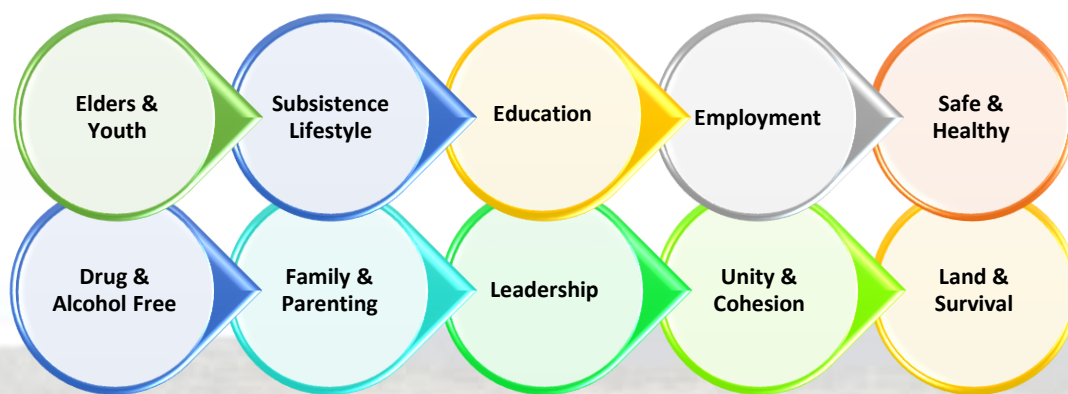
A special thank you to the Arctic Village Council; Tribal Administrator, Tiffany Yatlin; and Tribal Administrator Intern, Athena Chilcote for their help, support, and contribution to this document.

The final Arctic Village Community Plan 2019 was prepared by Tanana Chiefs Conference Tribal Development, Planning and Development Program with assistance from the Arctic Village staff.



Values

We, the Neets'aii Gwich'in people have always valued our way of life. The elders are our lifeline and the youth are our future, so we value both of these. Our cultural way of life is through subsistence, dancing and singing, language, and the land is what we need to protect. We value a traditional lifestyle while staying engaged with the modern society. We value education, active employment and we believe that if our young ones are well-educated they can help our tribe when they are ready. We value a drug and alcohol free lifestyle because we also value a community that is safe, healthy, and secure. We value our leadership and the unity and cohesion that it creates. We value our families and parenting. We have survived since time immemorial on what nature has provided, so we walk in both worlds.



Vision

“To protect and preserve our traditional, cultural, historical, spiritual values, and most of all, our Elders knowledge for our next generations to come.”

– Arctic Village Elder

Arctic Village envisions a strong, unified, and traditional community that is self-sustaining, self-reliant, and flourishing. Arctic Village community members will be kind, practice their culture every day, and work together to create something new and safe for the children. We will continue to respect our Elders, children, and families by passing on cultural knowledge. Arctic Village has protected this beautiful land and will continue to be advocates and guardians of the Porcupine Caribou herd. Arctic Village community members will continue to hunt, fish, gather, trap, and respect the animals, fish, birds, and spirit of the land. Arctic Village will be drug and alcohol free and always support a healthy lifestyle with traditional values at its core. Arctic Village will be economically strong, in a Western and Traditional sense, while keeping the community and environment clean, healthy, and sustained for future generations.

Executive Summary

The Arctic Village Council (AVC) was awarded a Community Planning Specialist contract from the Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) in 2015 to update their community plan. As a part of the contract TCC provided training and funding to the Arctic Village Tribal Council to employ a local resident to update their plan and collect public input to guide future community development.

This plan was completed through historical research and interviews to update the community profile that was collected and compiled June 2018 through August 2018. The goals were identified through a community feedback survey and a community planning meeting. A community meeting was held on July 31, 2018 to ensure that the goals created are an accurate representation of community needs and identified the ranking of each priority for the goals. The final Arctic Village Community Plan 2019 was adopted by the Arctic Village Council on June 11, 2019 as an official document.

Community Plan Implementation

The Arctic Village Community Plan is a living document that should be used to help move the goals, priorities, and objectives into action. The Arctic Village community plan should be updated yearly as goals, priorities, and objectives are completed and implemented.

The implementation of the Arctic Village community plan opens up capacity building and identifies future funding opportunities, including the TCC Village Planning & Development Grant Development Specialist position. TCC provides funding for the Tribe to employ a community-based grant writing specialist that works closely with the Council to write a grant for the community that carries out one of the top goals, priorities, and objectives in the Arctic Village community plan.



Figure 3 Arctic Village Borealis

Community Profile

History

The Neets'aii Gwich'in ("people of the mountains") have lived a traditional, nomadic lifestyle in the northeastern part of Interior Alaska. They were widely spread throughout the area hunting, fishing, trapping, and moving with the seasons, specifically with the caribou herds.

They traveled between the settlements, Arctic Village, Christian Village, Venetie, and Sheenjik. Reverend Albert Tritt, a Neets'aii Gwich'in born in 1880, confirmed that his people were nomads; who trekked to the Arctic coast, Rampart, Old Crow, the Coleen River, and Fort Yukon in the in the 1880s and 1890s. In 1909, a permanent settlement named Vashraii K'oo (English name, Arctic Village) meaning "creek with steep bank" was established by the first resident Chief Christian.

The population of Arctic Village fluctuated during the first 40 years, as the people continued to live a semi-nomadic life. The introduction of firearms in the early 1900s was a contributing factor to groups settling more permanently; there was no need to disperse in larger groups to hunt caribou.¹ In conjunction, external political and economic pressures such as the formation of the Venetie reservation in 1943, schools, church missionizing, and the fur trade encouraged further settlement into both Arctic Village and Venetie.

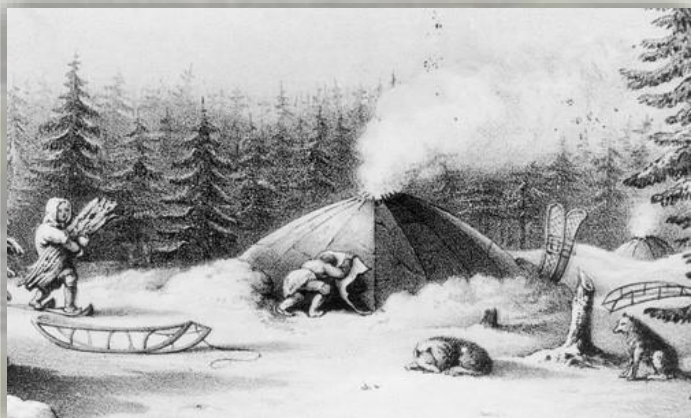


Figure 5 Gwich'in Winter Home

The Neets'aii Gwich'in discontinued their nomadic way of life after the 1950s. This resulted in the population of Arctic Village to nearly double in size and the log cabins replaced the traditional tents. The United States Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) added to the end of the nomadism, as they required parents to enroll their children into the school system. Promoting formal education during this time was intended to socialize Gwich'in children with western cultural values. This led to the first school to be built in 1959.



Figure 4 Gwich'in Hunters

¹ (Fairbanks Daily News Miner, 2011)



Figure 6 Trimble & Mary Gilbert

Arctic Village borders the south of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR); untouched land that became protected by the U.S. government under the Eisenhower Administration in 1960.²

When the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) was passed in 1971, Venetie and Arctic Village opted for title to the 1.8 million acres of land in the former reservation. Prior to ANSCA the community struggled with the U.S. Federal Government to defend and preserve its traditional lands, they petitioned the U.S. Department of the Interior many times to expand the Venetie reservation, however their requests were not recognized.³

Culture

Arctic Village is rich in culture and the preservation of the traditional way of life. Their culture includes but is not limited to language, native foods, hunting, trapping, sewing, building canvas canoes, spiritual values, storytelling, singing, and dancing. Arctic Village is known for its fiddle music as well. Some famous artists have come out of Arctic Village, such as Trimble Gilbert who performs Virginia Reels, Square Dances, and jig tunes. The people of Arctic Village continue these dances today. This type of dancing is popular and fiddle music is taught in the school to keep this tradition alive. Gwich'in (Kutchin) is the Athabascan language spoken in the northeastern Alaska villages of Arctic Village, Beaver, Birch Creek, Canyon Village, Chalkyitsik, Circle, Fort Yukon, and Venetie as well as in a wide adjacent area of the Northwest Territories and Yukon Territory.⁴



Figure 7 Gwich'in Youth Dancers

² (Inkley & Kolton, 2015)

³ (Dinero, 2003)

⁴ (Center, 2018)

Location

Arctic Village is located on the east fork of the Chandalar River in Interior Alaska. It is approximately 100 miles north of Fort Yukon and 290 miles north of Fairbanks. Arctic Village's total area is 69.9 square miles of which, 61.71 square miles is land and 8.12 square miles is water. The exact location is 68.126940 North Latitude and -145.537780 West Longitude. The community lies in the Barrow Recording District.⁵



Figure 8 Terrain in Arctic Village – Chandalar River

Climate

Arctic Village is characterized as a continental climate zone, hot summers, cold winters, and little rainfall, which is typical of the interior of a continent. The average temperature ranges between 65°F to 72°F during July. The average low temperature during January is well below zero, although it's regular to have extended periods of -50°F to -60°F. Extreme temperatures have been recorded, ranging from a low of -70°F to a high of 90 °F. Precipitation averages 9 inches, and snowfall averages 52.8 inches.⁶



Figure 9 Sunset Arctic Village 2017

Geography

Located at the foothills of the Brooks Range, Arctic Village, is an area mostly consisting of wooded hills with flat lands surrounding the Chandalar River. In the United States, the Brooks Range is considered an extension of the Rocky Mountains, whereas in Canada they are considered separate. The mountain range was named for the geologist Alfred H. Brooks in 1925. Arctic Village is south of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and known for its

remote, pristine terrestrial land containing a unique habitat of species: more than 200 birds, 37 land mammals, 8 marine mammals, and 42 species of fish.⁷ The village encompasses 61.7 sq. miles of land and 8.1 sq. miles of water. Arctic Village is only accessible by air or river.⁸

⁵ (Alaska, Community Info, 2018)

⁶ (Conference, TCC - Arctic Village, 2007-Present)

⁷ (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, 2013)

⁸ (AlaskaWeb, 2018)

Population

The 2010 U.S. Census, projected nearly 152 residents living in Arctic Village. Eighty-nine percent of the population is Alaska Native, with the majority being Neets'aii Gwich'in. The remaining five percent are white, and six percent are two or more races. There are a total of 86 males and 66 females in Arctic Village with the median age at 29 years of age, according to the 2010 census data. During the late 1980's Arctic Village saw a sharp increase in the number of births, at one point there were more youth in the community than adults. The current increase in population is attributed to those 1980's children now starting families within the community. Today the current population is estimated at 194 residents based on the statistical research collected by the State of Alaska each year.

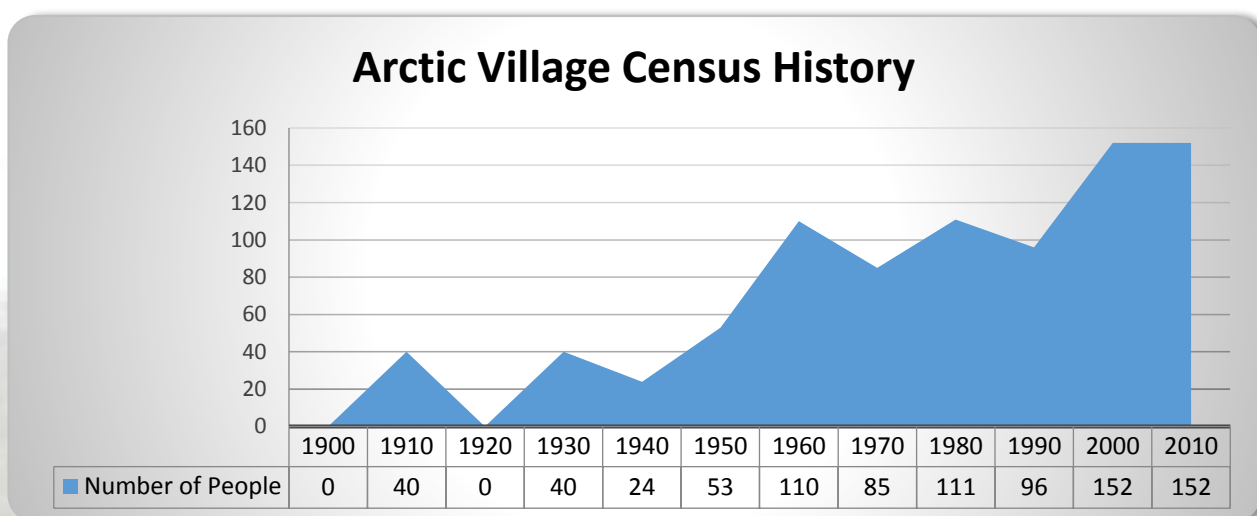


Figure 10 Arctic Village 2010 Census

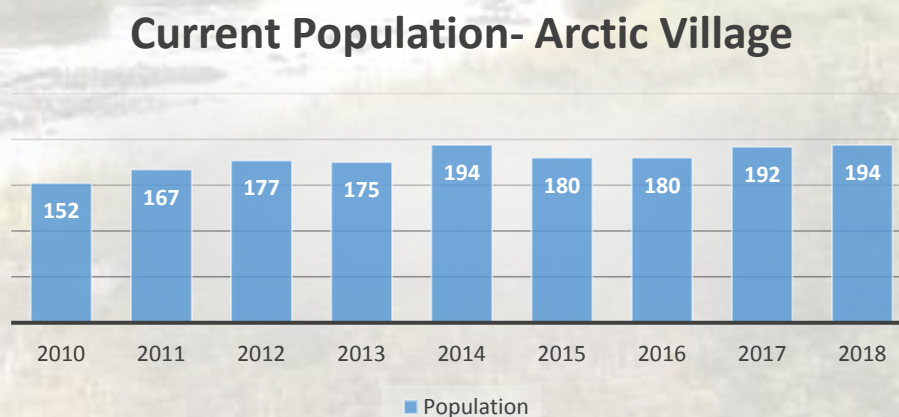


Figure 11 Population per State of Alaska ALARI

Governance

Arctic Village Council

The Arctic Village Traditional Council (AVC) consists of eleven staff members and is overseen by a seven member council, with two alternates. Council positions include: First Chief, Second Chief, Secretary, Treasurer, and three board members. Council positions are 2-year terms, which alternate yearly and are held each October. Eligible applicants must reside in Arctic Village, and be an

enrolled tribal member. AVC oversees the administration of the following tribal programs and services on behalf of the community:



Figure 12 Arctic Village Council (AVC) Office

- Water Plant
- Washeteria
- Power Plant
- Solid Waste Management (IGAP)

- Tribal Family Youth Specialist
- Tribal Workforce Development Specialist
- Elder Nutrition Services

- Transportation
- Housing
- Midnight Sun Native Store
- Other Services

Arctic Village does not have a city government. They do not have membership in the regional corporation, Doyon Limited; however they are affiliated with the nonprofit organization, Tanana Chiefs Conference.

Non-Profit Corporation- Tanana Chiefs Conference

The history of Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) dates back over a hundred years when indigenous leaders of Alaska would band together to protect their native land rights. TCC became an official non-profit corporation in 1962 and began working toward meeting the health and social service needs of Tribal members and beneficiaries. The TCC region covers an area of 235,000 square miles, equaling to about 37 percent of the entire state, slightly smaller than the state of Texas. Within the TCC region are six sub-regions: Lower Yukon, Upper Kuskokwim, Upper Tanana, Yukon Flats, Yukon Koyukuk, and Yukon Tanana. McGrath lies in the Upper Kuskokwim sub-region.

Arctic Village Governance

Arctic Village and the village of Venetie are both located on the former Venetie Indian Reservation. When the reservation was terminated by the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act in 1971, two village corporations were formed and later dissolved into one, once the land was transferred to the Native Village of Venetie Tribal Government (NVVTG). The Native Village of Venetie Tribal Government Tribal Council is made up of members from both Arctic Village and Venetie Village and is primarily responsible for matters related to the 1.8 million acres of fee land and tribal enrollment.

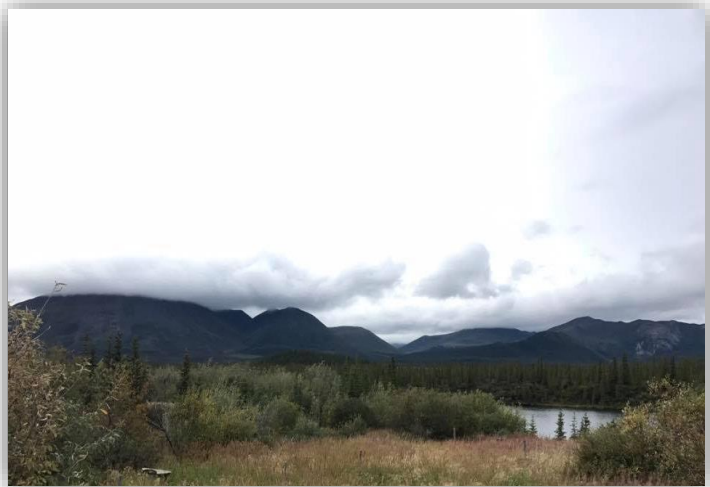


Figure 13 Hills near Arctic Village

In addition to being under the Native Village of Venetie Tribal Government, Arctic Village is served by a Village Council consisting of 7 elected members. The Arctic Village Traditional Council is responsible for the domestic relations, health, safety, and other issues in Arctic Village.

The Native Village of Venetie Tribal Government, Arctic Village, and the village of Venetie have a strong history of collaboration. In 2017, the groups have worked together to organize a conservation district to preserve lands and wildlife. In 2018 they are working together to form an intertribal court system among the three organizations.



Figure 14 TCC VPSO Program

VPSO/ Law Enforcement

The village of Arctic Village does not have a Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) or an Alaska State Trooper stationed in the community. Arctic Village residents are eligible for the VPSO program, pending qualifications. In cases of an emergency, the dispatch office for the AK State Troopers are notified; the Fairbanks dispatch office is 290 miles south of Arctic Village.

Public Utilities

Water and Sewer

The Washeteria is the only facility with running water in Arctic Village apart from the school, which has a 17,000 gallon and a 7,000 gallon water holding tank. Water from the Chandalar River is treated for public use; residents have access through a watering port to haul water for personal use. Homes and even the clinic in Arctic Village lack plumbing. Residents either use outhouses or honey buckets which they are then required to take to a dump site. Many residents identified running water and sewer as one of their highest priorities.

Solid Waste

A high priority for residents of Arctic Village is to ensure that solid waste produced in the village is properly managed and disposed of. The existing solid waste plan is going well; the Arctic Village Council EPA-IGAP program helps with the operation of the current solid waste project. The council was awarded from State of Alaska,



Figure 15 Arctic Village Landfill

In addition, AVC purchased a burn barrel that is now being used. There are employment opportunities for a position to haul the garbage to the landfill and another position for someone to burn the waste. Recyclable items are put off to the side. The remaining disposal is burned, with the ashes being dumped into the pits of the landfill.

Communications

GCI provides cell phone and internet packages. United Utilities, Inc. services the telephone lines provided in Arctic Village. Basic television channels, such as news and educational programs are provided through Alaska Rural Communications Service (ARCS). The State of Alaska has funded the ARCS satellite system, which is low-powered transmitters that provide free over-the-air service to communities across all regions of Alaska.⁹



Figure 16 GCI Cellular Tower

⁹ (Broadcasting, 2018)

Power/Energy



Figure 17 US Fish & Wildlife Service Bulk Fuel Tank

Bulk Fuel

The bulk fuel storage tanks in Arctic Village include: Yukon Flat School (31,000 gallons); Village Electric (12,000 gallons); Village Office (5,455 gallons); Village Fuel Sales (2,100 gallons); and U.S. Fish & Wildlife (4,105 gallons). Every three weeks heating fuel is delivered by airplanes and gasoline is delivered every two to three months.¹⁰

Electric

The electricity of Arctic Village is provided by Arctic Village Electric Cooperative (AVEC), and is powered by diesel generators. In 2019, the cost of heating fuel was \$12.00 per gallon and the cost of regular gasoline was \$10.00 per gallon. Due to the high price of energy, Arctic Village is very interested in developing alternative energy sources. A kilowatt hour of electricity currently costs a \$1.00.¹¹ There



Figure 18 Arctic Village Power Plant

has already been some experimentation with solar panels in the village and the latest housing program was involved in the project. The Nena Russell Clinic is powered in part by solar panels to help offset some of the operational costs.

¹⁰ (Alaska, Community Info, 2018)

¹¹ (Alaska, Community Info, 2018)

Public Facilities

Clinic

The Nena Russell Clinic is operated by the Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments (CATG). Within the Yukon Flats Region, CATG operates five clinics located in: Arctic Village, Beaver, Birch Creek, Fort Yukon, and Venetie. The clinics in Arctic Village, Beaver, Birch Creek, and Venetie are staffed by CHAs and/or Medical Office Assistants with periodic visits by mid-level providers, such as, a



Figure 19 Vashraii K'oo- Nena Russell Clinic

nurse practitioner or physician assistant.¹² The current facility was built in the 1990's and was renovated in 2009. The renovations included weatherization upgrades to the walls and windows and the installation of a new floor. The Nena Russell Clinic does not have any running water and no longer has the capacity to meet the health needs of the community. Arctic Village would like to see construction of a new clinic.

Nena Russell Clinic operates with a receptionist and a full-time and part-time Health Aide. The Health Aide is responsible for conducting most procedures with consultation from doctors available by audio-conference in Fort Yukon. If there is no doctor in Fort Yukon, they would call Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center. Routine dental exams are administered to the community through semi-annual visits from the dental staff from the Yukon Flats Health Center (YFHC). The Arctic Village IHS funding is through the YFHC in Fort Yukon. For more serious cases, dental and/or eye needs, the patient is referred to the YFHC. If the issue is not resolved the patient is either referred to Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center in Fairbanks, or the Alaska Native Medical Center in Anchorage. It is more common for patients to be referred to or medevac to Fairbanks because of the relative close proximity to Arctic Village.

¹² (Governments, 2018)

School

The Arctic Village K-12 School is one of six schools in the Yukon Flats School District. Arctic Village School (AVS) is home to the Neets'aii Warriors and has a total of 33 students who attend Kindergarten through 12th grade.¹³ The staff consists of three full-time teachers, one part-time teacher, and three teacher aides.



Figure 20 Neets'aii Warriors Arctic Village School

The current school was built in 2008, and costed approximately \$14.5 million to construct. The new school is the only building in the community, besides the Washeteria, that is equipped with a piped water and sewer system.¹⁴ The building features four classrooms, a gym, kitchen, and library. The adjacent old school facility was renovated during the same time as the new construction and now serves as a teacher housing unit.

Residents seeking a higher education attend the University of Alaska campuses in Fairbanks, Anchorage, or Juneau or can enroll in online classes. Certificates and trainings can be held in the community through the University of Alaska Interior Aleutians Campus when community interest is shown and the enrollment number requirements are met. In 2014, UAF was able to offer a traditional drum-making class in the community and approximately ten residents attended. Nearby, Fort Yukon has a UAF rural campus facility that hosts classes via distance education and will host additional classes of interest.



Figure 21 AVS Mandolin Instrument



Figure 22 AVS Gwich'in Language Teaching Material

¹³ (District, 2018)

¹⁴ (Lanning, 2012)

Emergency Services / Fire Protection / Search and Rescue

The community lacks a formal response for fires and search and rescue efforts. During this time, if a search and rescue incident occurs, residents use their personal vehicles or boats to respond. The Nena Russell Clinic received approval from the Council of Athabaskan Tribal Government (CATG) board to purchase a vehicle for the Health Aide, for emergency type of responses. A majority of the residents own their own handheld radio devices that can be used during search efforts.

Each summer the community offers a youth employment program through TCC; the program helps with job skills, training, and an opportunity to create income. Through the summer youth program, 10 teenagers (ages 15-18) are hired to do tree brush clearing. By doing this, fire hazards have reduced greatly around the community.



Figure 23 Boats of the Chandalar River

Post Office



Figure 24 Arctic Village Post Office

regular staffer takes time off. A majority of the mail received into the community is delivered by Wrights Air Service, Monday through Saturday. Everts Air delivers additional larger mail and freight items periodically.

The Arctic Village Post Office hours of operation are:

Monday through Tuesday

09:00 am - 12:00 pm

01:00 am - 05:00 pm

Wednesday through Friday

09:00 am - 12:00 pm

01:00 pm - 04:00 pm

Saturday

09:00 am - 01:00 pm

Sunday and holidays - Closed

It is staffed by one full-time member and one temporary replacement for when the

Water Plant and Washeteria

The new water plant and Washeteria built in 2016, is owned and operated by the Arctic Village Council. The construction project was made possible by the Arctic Village Traditional Council, State of Alaska Village Safe Water Program, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The facility has four washers, four dryers, a clothing folding table, and two bathrooms. The bathrooms each have a shower / tub, sink, and toilet.



Figure 25 Arctic Village Water Plant & Washeteria

Community Hall

The Arctic Village Community Hall was built in 1988, the same year Arctic Village held their first Gwich'in Gathering in a 100 years. The community hall is mostly used for community events for example, fiddle dancing and tribal meetings. In the summer months it's also used for the week-long vacation bible school. On occasion, the community invites other organizations to host their regional meetings; CATG held an annual meeting at the community hall with all their staff and board members. Another time, the Eastern Interior



Figure 26 Arctic Village Community Hall

Advisory Committee met in Arctic Village to discuss the Red Sheep Creek subsistence hunting area near Arctic Village. The community hall needs building upgrades. It hasn't been used much in recent years, due to the fact that it takes a large amount of dry wood to heat up.

Economy

Local Stores and Businesses

Arctic Village has a local store called Midnight Sun Native Store. The Midnight Sun Native Store is owned by Arctic Village Traditional Council and works with Alaska Native Industries Cooperative Association to get supplies. The store sells mostly groceries and some household items. They receive supplies mostly through by-pass mail through the airlines.

Midnight Sun Native Store hours

Monday-Saturday

10:00 am to 06:00 pm

Sunday

01:00 pm to 06:00 pm.



Figure 27 Midnight Sun Native Store

The youth group in Arctic Village utilize the Neets'aiti Warrior Youth Center and occasionally raise money for the group by selling burgers and other snack foods. The Youth Center is located in the same building as the store.



Figure 28 Neets'aiti Warrior Youth Center

Composition of Employment

In Arctic Village 78% of the residents are employed and the local government provides 80% of the jobs. In 2016, the percent of resident workers by wage range includes: 32% under \$5,000; 18% \$5,000 to \$9,999; 26% \$10,000 to \$19,999; 15% \$20,000 to \$49,999; and 8% \$50,000 and over.¹⁵

Arctic Village is primarily a cash economy but it also relies on wild resource harvest for an alternative food source.

Arctic Village residents hunt for caribou, moose, sheep, porcupine, rabbit, and ptarmigan. Freshwater fish, waterfowl, and berries are harvested and stored for the winter months. The Arctic Village

School, Nena Russell Clinic, Arctic Village Council, and Midnight Sun Native Store are the primary local employers. Seasonal employment includes construction, firefighting, guiding, and conducting wildlife surveys for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services.



Figure 29 Ground Squirrel

2016 Worker Characteristics	
Residents employed	87
Female workers	35
Male workers	52
Workers age 45 and over	30
Workers age 50 and over	23
Total Wages	\$1,302,019
Sector employed in	
Private	14
Local government	70
State government	3
Peak quarterly employment	72
Workers employed all 4 quarters	31
New hires	48
Unemployment insurance claimants	32

Table 1 ALARI Details- Arctic Village

Some Arctic Village residents trap furs or sell firewood for income and depending on the prices of furs, trapping can be fairly profitable. The price of a cord of wood (4 feet by 4 feet by 8 feet) goes for \$450.00. Some of the positions employed through the Arctic Village Traditional Council are: Tribal Family Youth Specialist (TFYS), Tribal Workforce Development Specialist (TWDS), Elder Nutrition Cook, Housing Director, Tribal Administrator (TA), TA Assistant, Washeteria Operator, and Power Plant Operator.

¹⁵ (Alaska, ALARI details - Arctic Village CDP, 2018)

Housing

The community of Arctic Village has a total of 75 housing units, and out of those 75, 48 are occupied, 27 houses are vacant, and 9 houses are used seasonally. In Arctic Village 58.3% of occupied housing units are family households. 71.4% are owner-occupied family housing units, and 23.1% are rentals, occupied family housing units. 28 homes have no-bedroom, 14 homes have 1-bedroom, 23 homes have 2-bedrooms, 9 homes have 3-bedrooms, and 1 home has 4-bedrooms. The average household size of an owner – occupied unit is 3 people, and the average household size of a renter – occupied unit is 2 people.

In Arctic Village nearly one-third of the homes (20 homes) were built between the years 2000 – 2009. This housing activity accounts for 26.7% of the homes built in the area. 35 homes are owner – occupied, and a majority of them have a \$50,000 to \$99,000 dollar value. In Arctic Village 3 occupied units pay rent, and of those 3 units, 2 pay less than \$500, while the third unit pays \$500 - \$999 per month. All of the 48 occupied housing units rely on wood as their main source of heating their home. 48 occupied homes lack complete plumbing facilities, and 45 lack complete kitchen facilities.¹⁶



Figure 30 Occupied Arctic Village Home



Figure 31 Unoccupied Home in Arctic Village



Figure 32 Occupied Home in Arctic Village

¹⁶ (Commerce, 2018)

Transportation

External Transportation

Arctic Village is not connected to any Alaska road systems. Air transportation provides the only year – round access to the community. The Arctic Village Airport (AVA) gravel runway



Figure 33 Wrights Air Service- Cessna Grand Caravan Aircraft

is open to the public and is 4,500 feet long by 75 feet wide. The AVA is owned by the Venetie Tribal Government and managed by Arctic Village. The main aircraft providers are Wright's Air Service, Tatonduk Outfitters Limited d/b/a Everts Air Alaska and Everts Air Cargo (Small Aircraft Service). In addition to passenger services, both airlines provide freight and mail to the village. Ice fog is a frequent barrier with air service during the winter months.¹⁷

Internal Transportation

Local transportation is mainly by ATVs, UTVs, and snowmobiles. Some Arctic Village residents maintain dog teams that are used in the winter for travel. Arctic Village has 15 miles of roads within the community and additional roads are currently being added to their National Tribal Transportation Facility Inventory (NTTFI), pending approval by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) – U.S. Department of the



Figure 34 Traffic in Arctic Village

Interior Indian Affairs. Their Tribal Transportation Program road inventory has 223.4 miles of roads/trails. Some automobiles like work trucks are used for transportation of employees, tools, equipment, and supplies around the village. The Chandalar River provides river boat travel during the summer season. During the winter season the Chandalar River is not used due to freezing conditions and open holes that are dangerous to winter travelers.

¹⁷ (Alaska, Community Info, 2018)

Land Use and Environment

Land Ownership

When the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) was passed in 1971, Venetie and Arctic Village opted for title to the 1.8 million acres of land in the former reservation, which they own as tenants in common through the Native Village of Venetie Tribal Government (NVVTG).¹⁸

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) is across the river from Arctic Village. ANWR is an American treasure that is internationally known for its ecological importance and pure beauty. In ANWR, there are forty-five species of land and marine mammals that live in the Arctic Refuge, including wolf, polar bears, moose, bowhead whales, and mountain sheep. The 19.5 million acre refuge encompasses an area the size of South Carolina. Even though 8.9 million acres are protected as wilderness, the 1.5 million acre coastal plain which is the biological heart of the refuge, remains vulnerable to industrial development. Big oil companies and some members of the U.S. Congress want to drill in the coastal plain which would put the future of the Porcupine Caribou Herd at risk.¹⁹

Subsistence in Arctic Village is being affected by global warming. Studies have been conducted by Alaska Department of Fish and Game, with the help of the Council of Athabascan Governments, Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge, Yukon Flats Tribal Governments, and Yukon Flats Moose Management Planning Committee. Moose in the Yukon Flats Region have been on a decline in recent years due to black bears, grizzly bears, and the illegal harvesting of cows. The planning area includes 39,000 square miles in the upper Yukon River drainage in northeast Alaska and encompasses the Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge and part of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. By setting aside this land that are plentiful in good grazing grounds for the moose it would help promote a healthy strong life for the moose and their offspring.²⁰



Figure 35 Arctic Village Community & ANWR Visitor Center

¹⁸ (Conference, TCC: Venetie, 2018)

¹⁹ (Committee, 2018)

²⁰ (Conservation, 2002)

Environmental Concerns



Figure 36 AVS Contaminated Soil Project

From 1992 to the present, Arctic Village community has been working to clean up the contamination around the Arctic Village School tank farm, which has a history of diesel spills, leaking pipes, and overfills that appear to be typical causes. Many of these spills are due to poor housekeeping and handling practices. A majority of the contamination at the school tank farm was caused by a small hole in Tank 5 and minor spills and leaks from the fuel lines.²¹

At Porcupine River DEW (The Department of Environment & Waterways) Staging Camp the U.S Army Corps Engineers of Alaska is responsible for abandoning equipment in 1957. Fuels from the abandoned equipment have leaked into the environment. EPA issued a No Further Remedial Action Planned determination on May 11, 1998.²²

The Airport Power Plant and Utility Tank Farm was investigated and cleaned from 2001-2014. Near surface contamination was identified and associated with onsite fuel management activities. Staining was present around the floor



Figure 37 Arctic Village Power Plant & Tank Farm

of the building and diesel range contamination was identified in soil above cleanup levels. As of 2015, no further cleanup activities have taken place.²³

On March 28, 2003 the standby generator facility for the Arctic Village School (AVS) complex was destroyed in a fire. The building was reconstructed and during the course of the investigation contaminated soil was discovered at the site. The Yukon Flats School District has requested funds for cleanup and remediation work at the site in conjunction with the

²¹ (Alaska, Site Report: Arctic Village School, 2018)

²² (Alaska, Site Report: Porcupine River DEW Staging Camp, 2018)

²³ (Alaska, Site Report: Arctic Village Airport Power Plant & Utility Tank Farm, 2018)

plans to build a new school in Arctic Village in 2003. In 2004, work at this site by Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) stopped due to withdrawal of funding by Alaska Energy Authority last season. As of 2016, this site is being addressed through the Arctic Village School cleanup project funded by the Yukon Koyukuk School District through funding from the Department of Education and Early Development. Progress is currently being tracked on the database through that site: Arctic Village School, Hazard ID, and File Number 700.38.001.²⁴

During a 1994 site visit ADEC staff identified significant staining around tanks and drums, and described soil beneath the building as being saturated with fuel at the Arctic Village former power plant (located between the post office and the village store). Two large above ground tanks (assumed to be empty) and numerous unmarked drums are abandoned on site and broken batteries were observed. The property is considered a high traffic area for residents. In 2011, the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council funded a Phase I ESA. The Native Village of Venetie Tribal Government was awarded DEC Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup services for SFY18. They received notice from State Historic Preservation Office that no historic properties are affected by the planned brownfield project.²⁵

In 2001, the Arctic Village Council gasoline sales tank farm site was identified for having near-surface hydrocarbon contamination on the east side of the gasoline sales tank where refueling occurred. Recommendations were provided to prevent future spills at the location. As of 2015, it is not clear if preventative measures were introduced, if cleanup occurred, or if the system is still active. The estimated amount of impacted soil is less than 20 cubic yards.²⁶

Wild Resource Harvest (Subsistence)

A majority of the population in Arctic Village survive off a subsistence diet consisting of: caribou, moose, fish, small game animals, berries, and other edible vegetation. To gather and harvest the food provided by the land is important in preserving the Neets'aii Gwich'in culture; they are especially connected to the Porcupine Caribou herd. The survival of the caribou herd and its protection from oil development is extremely important to the people of Arctic Village.



Figure 38 Porcupine Caribou- Porcupine Caribou News Picture

²⁴ (Alaska, Site Report: Arctic Village School Standby Gen., 2018)

²⁵ (Alaska, Site Report: Arctic Village Former Power Plant, 2018)

²⁶ (Alaska, Site Report: Arctic Village Council Gasoline Sales Tank, 2018)

For millennia Alaska Native people have depended upon our traditional lands and waters for sustainability.

Tanana Chiefs Conference supports the protection of ANWR and if one of the TCC villages' traditional food access is at risk of harm they will stand together to protect it.²⁷

The Porcupine herd is one of the largest migratory caribou herds in North America. In 2013, when the most recent photo census was completed, the herd had an estimated 197,000 caribou. In addition to being one of the largest herds, Porcupine caribou have the longest land migration of any animal in the world.²⁸

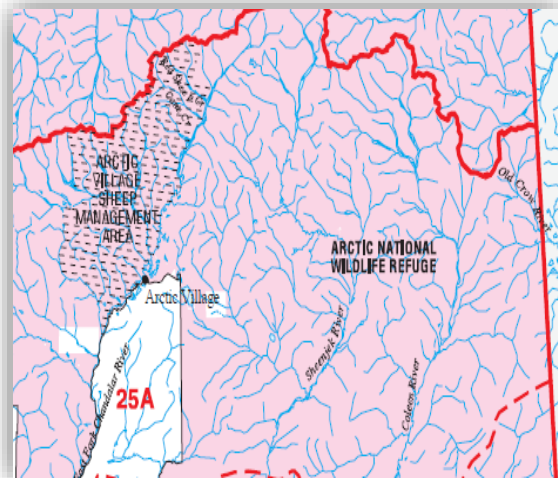


Figure 39 Arctic Village Sheep Management Area 2014/2016

The Chandalar River is another important resource that provides the community with several species of fish, such as whitefish and grayling. Residents actively fish for lake trout at Old John Lake during the winter.²⁹ The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conducted a study in Arctic Village from 2001-2003. Once the study was complete a report was created in 2005 on fish harvest and biological characteristics of the subsistence fishery because residents were concerned about declining fish populations.³⁰

Hunting Dall sheep within the Arctic Village Sheep Management Area is restricted to residents of Arctic Village, Chalkyitsik, Fort Yukon, Kaktovik, and Venetie.³¹



Figure 40 Arctic Village Visitor Center Fish Chart

²⁷ (Singh, 2017)

²⁸ (Game, 2017)

²⁹ (System, 1994)

³⁰ (J.F. Adams, 2005)

³¹ (Interior, 2018)

Community Well-Being

Churches

Arctic Village is predominately Episcopalian. The community has one church, the Bishop Rowe Chapel. The Arctic Village community members believed that this church was the only one that needs to be in Arctic Village, and it is even stated in their tribal ordinance. There is church service every Sunday at 11:00 am. The Reverend is Trimble Gilbert who is also the Tribal Chief and a respected elder in the community. Trimble always encourages the youth and young adults to help the community and the tribe. In the summer Arctic Village invites bible school teachers to help teach the children about the bible. Usually, it's a one week event in June that the children and bible school teachers really enjoy.



Figure 41 Arctic Village Episcopal Church Bishop Rowe Chapel

Additional Education



COUNCIL OF ATHABASCAN TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS

The Council of Athabascan Tribal Government offers extensive career training opportunities such as carpentry, tribal management, construction, firefighting, accounting, and many other programs. The Arctic Village Council also provides scholarships to any tribal member who would like to further their education.

Cultural Events and Gatherings

In 2017, Arctic Village established the John Fredson Leadership Camp with the help of TCC's Culture and Wellness Camp program. The camp is located on the timberline of the mountain where they focus on traditions and wellness activities, such as: leadership, good decision-making, respect, stories from Elders, tribal history, tobacco prevention, relationship building, caribou hunting, and skinning, trapping ground squirrels, sewing and beading, drum making, sewing and beading, and hiking. Participants included toddlers to elders from Arctic Village, Fairbanks, Fort Yukon, Venetie, Circle, Beaver, and Steven's Village.



Figure 42 Culture & Wellness Camp 2017- Arctic Village



Figure 43: Arctic Village Hero's Park

Arctic Village Hero's Park is a place dedicated to past Gwich'in leaders who have contributed to the Neets'aii Gwich'in way of life and who have advocated for the culture and traditions. Hero's Park was created in 2016 and presented at the Gwich'in Gathering in Arctic Village the same year.

Community Goals and Objectives



Figure 44 Arctic Village Aerial View 2



Figure 45 Arctic Village Glacier Stream

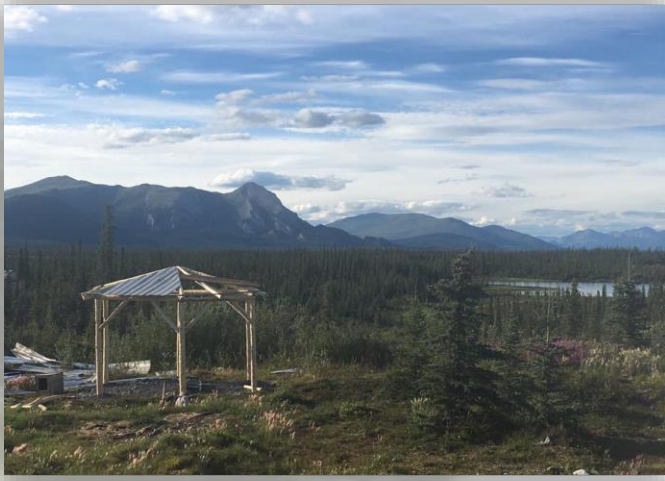


Figure 46 Gazebo Owned by Tiffany Tritt



Figure 47 Gwich'in Nation Flag



Figure 48 Gwich'in Gathering 2016



Figure 49 Lake Fog in Arctic Village

Goals and Priorities Preview

Goal (1) Housing

- Arctic Village residents will have affordable, safe, energy efficient homes.

Goal (2) Land Use / Environment

- Arctic Village residents will have land, waters, and air free of contamination.

Goal (3) Health and Well-Being

- Arctic Village is a community with talented leaders and residents who promote and support healthy living activities throughout the year.

Goal (4) Infrastructure

- Arctic Village will have upgraded, renovated, and maintained evolving infrastructures.

Goal (5) Economy

- Arctic Village is a strong community with opportunities to launch into a sustainable economic capacity and to expand the tourist industry.

Housing

Goal #1: Arctic Village residents will have affordable, safe, energy efficient homes.

Objective 1: Arctic Village will build affordable, family size homes to meet housing needs of growing families.

Action Items:

- Create and administer a housing survey in the community to identify how many homes are needed and what type of work is needed to sustain the current homes.
- Research and secure funding to accommodate current and future housing needs, such as the Indian Community Development Block Grant through HUD.

Objective 2: Seek funding for sawmill so that the residents can mill logs and produce lumber to build homes through Self-Help programs.

Action Items:

- Research, buy, and ship a cost-effective sawmill to Arctic Village.
- Identify individuals who wants to build their own homes or expand current homes;
- Seek volunteers to help with planning and logging efforts.

Objective 3: Support the new construction of two (2) new homes by 2021.

Action Items:

- Work with Arctic Village Housing, Tanana Chiefs Conference- BIA Housing Improvement Program (HIP), Interior Regional Housing Authority (IRHA) and Cold Climate Housing Research Center when applicable, and other agencies to secure funding to build homes.
- Obtain site control of vacant lots for housing projects.
- Assess local resources, materials, and use sawmill.

Land Use / Environment

Goal #2: Arctic Village residents will have land, waters, and air free of contamination.

Objective 1: Solid waste continues to be disposed of properly in the landfill as well as the backhaul of all hazardous products and recycling efforts.

Action Items:

- Improve recycling and litter prevention programs
- Monitor and track use of the landfill and encourage residents to upkeep their campsites.
- Awareness concerning the safe and sanitary disposal of garbage and sewage waste.

Objective 2: Research and obtain grant money to improve current heating in homes, or determine alternative, affordable, safe and environmentally friendly heating systems.

Action Items:

- Obtain funding to upgrade / replace current stoves in homes.
- Education and training on the process of seasoning wood for burning.
- Utilize alternative heating systems in current and future homes.

Objective 3: Increase knowledge of climate change, adaptation and renewable energy sources.

Action Items:

- Seek training opportunities through UAF, Alaska Climate Science Center.
- Seek funding through the BIA Tribal Resilience Program to increase adaptation planning and build capacity.
- Research feasible renewable energy sources and seek technical assistance through TCC Rural Energy Coordinator.

Health and Well-Being

Goal #3: Arctic Village is a community with talented leaders and residents who promote and support healthy living activities throughout the year.

Objective 1: Create a year-round calendar of healthy events for the community.

Action Items:

- Seek community input and create calendar including activities such as; mental health education & support, wellness & prevention, running, walking, nutrition classes, gardening, traditional herbs, skin sewing, beading, hunting, fishing, potlaches, and basket making.
- Create support groups; seek volunteers to create and lead walking groups, talking circles, and alcohol/narcotics anonymous with the aim towards recovery/healing.

Objective 2: Offer cultural and traditional activities for all age groups.

Action Items:

- Have a wellness & culture camp every summer and/or winter to teach hunting, fishing, gathering, camping, snow machining, trapping, and community unity.
- Apply to Doyon Daaga award, RurAL CAP and other related funding sources to create or revitalize an Arctic Village Dance group to transcribe and record song audio/video for future generations.
- Create subsistence mentorship for community members who want to enhance traditional lifestyle or to provide for self, family, and community.

Objective 3: Encourage local residents to be active by exercise and other healing techniques.

Action Items:

- Utilize school gymnasium for group exercise classes, such as aerobic, yoga, stretching, and meditation.
- Work with the Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments and Tanana Chiefs Conference to provide resources for healing.
- Promote the use of local hiking trails where residents can explore nature.

Infrastructure

Goal #4: Arctic Village will have upgraded, renovated, and maintained evolving infrastructures.

Objective 1: Research and apply for funding to purchase fire equipment and materials.

Action Items:

- Research and apply for state or federal funding that help with fire service infrastructure and equipment such as, portable water truck, basic fire supplies and a storage building.
- Utilize local resources for upgrades, renovation, and maintenance.
- Create a volunteer list of emergency responders and search & rescue; broadcast on radio, and use social media to find additional help.

Objective 2: Provide indoor water/sewer system for residents that is environmentally safe.

Action Items:

- Work in partnership with Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) to address immediate water and sanitation needs in Arctic Village.
- Collaborate with Arctic Village Housing to seek additional funding for the infrastructure of indoor plumbing projects.
- Assess the current residential outhouses and correct any sanitation issues or deficiencies.

Objective 3: Find training programs that teach residents how to upgrade, renovate, and maintain Infrastructures.

Action Items:

- Check with Alaska Native organizations like Tanana Chiefs Conference, FNA, and IRHA for training opportunities, such as sawmill operation and maintenance.
- Inquire upcoming training schedule and Rural Apprenticeship Outreach with Alaska Works Partnership Construction Education and Training.
- Check the spring/summer/fall class schedule with the University of Alaska, Interior Aleutians Campus on building maintenance.

Economy

Goal #5: Arctic Village is a strong community with opportunities to launch into a sustainable economic capacity and to expand the tourist industry.

Objective 1: Promote business, entrepreneurship and economic development training opportunities in Arctic Village

Action Items:

- Research start up requirements for Arctic Village Guiding Service and potential tourism attractions.
- Seek funding for economic development strategies through the Economic Development Administration, Planning and Local Technical Assistance program.
- Work with TCC's Tribal Development Department, Rural Economic Development Specialist to develop an Economic Development plan.
- Consult the TCC Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2016 (CEDS) to coincide with the economic development goals and actions items.

Objective 2: Create jobs, training, and higher learning opportunities for community members.

Action Items:

- Apply for TCC's Grant Development Specialist position to train a community member how to apply for grants and bring funding to Arctic Village.
- Provide local summer jobs for youth and adults; utilize TCC's Education and Training for job programs.
- Partner with CATG and provide scholarships for vocational training, certificate programs and higher education.
- Encourage residents to proactively pursue non-traditional business endeavors like e-commerce, telemarketing and web development design.

Objective 3: Tourism is a sustainable business and employment opportunity for Arctic Village.

Action Items:

- Conduct a tourism survey of what projects the community would like to see.
- Seek technical assistance through TCC Planning and Development Program to create a business plan for tourism in Arctic Village.
- Open a local gift shop showcasing authentic traditional artwork.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Survey Questions 2017

Arctic Village Feedback Survey

The Arctic Village Council has partnered with Tanana Chiefs Conference to develop an updated Community Plan. The plan is to help guide the community by setting goals and objectives. Please answer the questions to the best of your ability.

A. General Questions

1. How are you in your village?

|

2. Why do you stay in Arctic Village?

3. What do you like and/or don't like about the village?

4. Is there problems or concerns about your village?

5. Is the Council Office, store, clinic, school, and local post office doing okay in your opinion?

B. Education

1. If there's training programs available will you want training?

Yes ☐ No ☐

2. Is the kind of training you want available?

3. How do you think we can get people to educate or train themselves?

C. Housing

1. Is your housing needs being met?

2. Is your house a single person, full house, or overcrowded?

3. Could you tell us the ages in your household?

4. Are there enough homes in your village to meet demands?

5. Which is your primary concern regarding housing?

D. Transportation

1. How do you come in and out of your village?
2. How does your food and supplies come into the village?
3. How often do you leave the village?
4. For what reasons?

E. Economy

1. Are you working a paid job or subsistence living off the land?
2. How long have you been working or are you retired?
3. How do you provide for yourself or your family?

4. Are there any new projects happening now?

F. Land Use

1. Are there people in the village selling their land or allotment?
2. Are there people in the village living on their land or allotment?
3. What subsistence activities are most common in your village?

G. Environment

1. What environmental concerns do you have, that affect the air, water, land and natural resources?
2. Do you have environmental concerns that affect village residents (fish and animal population, weather, water quality, dust, etc.)?
3. Do you have recycling programs?

4. What other environment programs would you like to see?

H. Health and Wellness

1. Do you feel that the health and/or mental services provided to you are poor/ okay/ good?
2. What can be improved?
3. Are you satisfied with the current law enforcement in your village?
4. If not, what can be improved or fixed?
5. What kind of health and wellness programs would you like to see?
6. Are there any youth programs or youth activities going on in your village?
7. Can village residents do something with their youth to help keep them on the right track?

I. Infrastructure

1. How satisfied are you with the current water and sewer system?
2. What would you like to see changed?
3. Would you be interested in a haul system or a monthly fee for services?
4. How satisfied are you with your current Solid Waste Landfill?
5. Do you have access to internet at home? Yes ☐ No ☐
6. How satisfied are you with the current electric generator?
7. How satisfied are you with the current village health clinic or personnel? What would you like to see changed?

8. What type of emergency services do you have?
9. What change or other services would you like to see?
10. How satisfied are you with your current Washeteria?
11. What is the Community Hall used for?
12. Is the village growing in population or other ways?

J. Cultural Traditions

1. What activities does your village participate in?
2. What subsistence activities do you or your family do in the summer or winter?
3. Do you mostly eat native food or store good?
 - a. Which would you prefer?

4. Do you speak or understand (not speak) Gwich'in?
5. If you speak Gwich'in, how often do you talk to you kids?
6. Is there something in the way of you learning your native language?
7. What are some of the ideas you have for the kids?

K. Goal Areas

1. What are some projects that can be done to improve your village?
2. What are your first 3 priorities for your village?
3. What areas can the village improve or develop for your village?
4. What do you want your village to look like in five years?
5. What can be done to see these things happen in your village?

*There will be prizes available for those who return a **complete** survey back to the Community Planning Specialist, Joel Tritt.*

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Appendix 2: Community Meeting 2017 Sign-in Sheet

1 Abraham John	28
2 Jean A. Tritt	29
3 Martha Russell	30
4 Yolana John	31
5 Rodney Albert (1)	32
6 Kimberly Harper (2)	33
7 Marion Swaney	34
8 Wilbert Kendi	35
9 Debbie A. Tritt - Kendi	36
10 Sarah James	37
11 Louie John	38
12 Mark + David Hess	39
13 Corrina Christian	40
14 Kristen John	41
15 Bruce Johnson	42
16 Isaac Tritt	43
17 Bertha Ross	44
18 Allison Tritt	45
19 Dorothy Christian	46
20 unknown	47
21 James John	48
22 Winston Smyth	49
23 Anonymous	50
24	51
25	52
26	53
27	54

Appendix 3: Community Plan Meeting 7/31/2018 Sign in Sheet

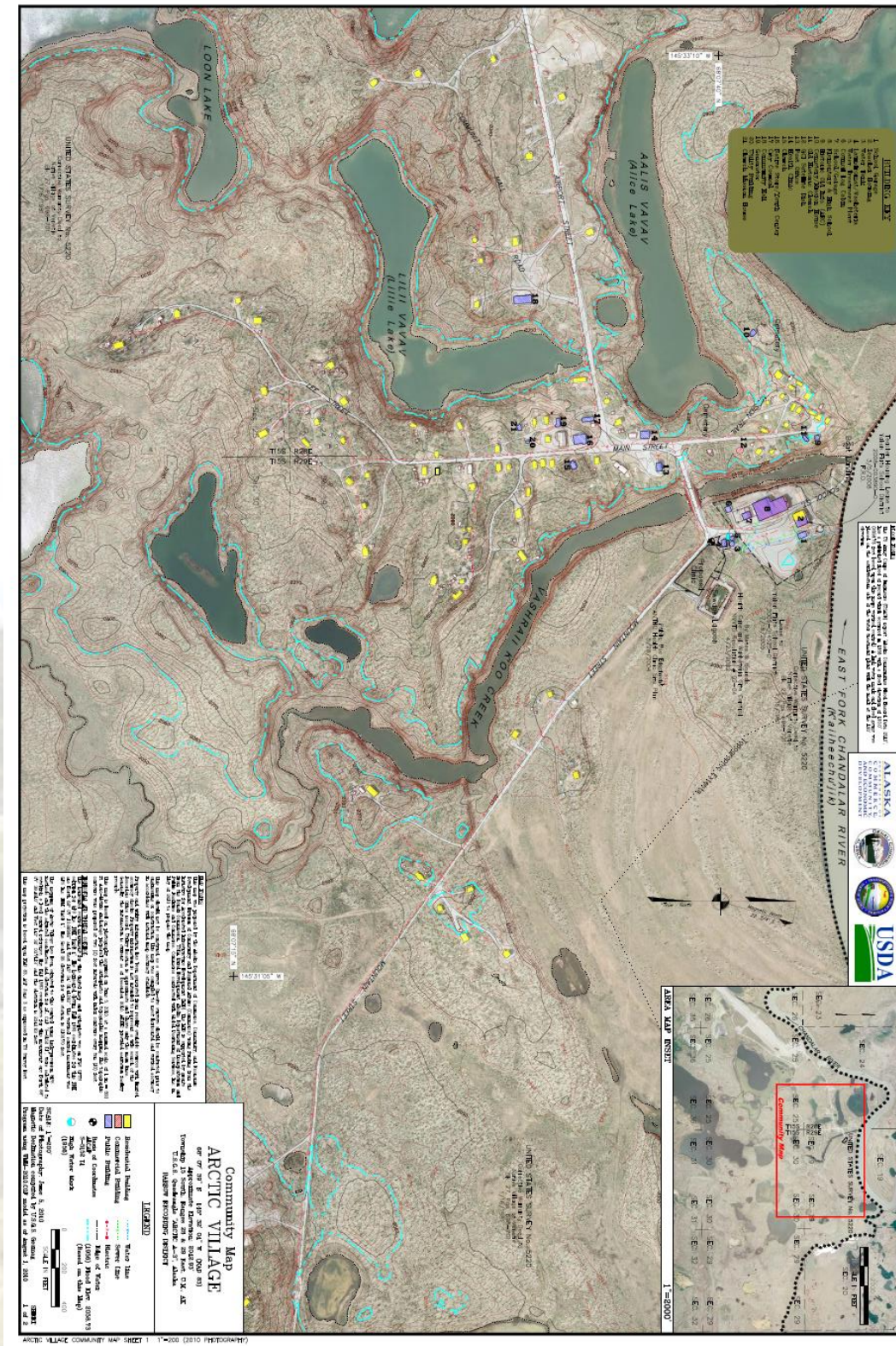
Arctic Village Community Planning Meeting Sign In 7/31/18

	Name: Please Print
1.	Kimberly Harper
2.	Rachel Gemmill
3.	Jerrald John 1st Council
4.	Tiliisia Sisto
5.	Dave Smith Jr 2nd chief
6.	Antonio Sisto II
7.	Autouco Sisto SR
8.	Lynette Barret
9.	Robbie Martin
10.	James John 1st chief
11.	Deenee Tritt A.V. Council
12.	Bethesda Hill
13.	Sarah Garner
14.	Uplana John
15.	Marion Swaney
16.	Athene Chilcote
17.	Mabelan Christian
18.	Dydeon James
19.	Donna Kott
20.	Franklin Tritt
21.	Mary John-Willroya
22.	Gil William P. Barn
23.	Rodney Albert
24.	Levan
25.	Brenda Gilbert
26.	

Appendix 4: Arial View - Area Use Map Arctic Village 2010



Appendix 5: Arial View – Community Map Arctic Village 2010



Community Contact Information

Arctic Village Council

Address: P.O. Box 22059, Arctic Village, AK 99722

Phone: (907) 587-5523

Phone Line 2: (907) 587-5329

Fax: (907) 587-5128

- Community Hall (907) 587-5525
- Power Plant (907) 587-5295
- Transportation (907) 587-5520
- Water plant / Washeteria (907) 587-5326
- Youth Center (907) 587-5330

Arctic Village Post Office

Address: 9998 Bridge St, Arctic Village, AK 99722

Phone: (907) 587-5314

Fax: (907) 587-5395

Arctic Village School

Address: P.O. Box 22049, Arctic Village, AK 99722

Phone: (907) 587-5211

Fax: (907) 587-5210

MIDNIGHT SUN NATIVE STORE

Address: P.O. Box 22060, Arctic Village, AK 99722

Phone: (907) 587-5419

Nena Russell Clinic

Address: P.O. Box 22050, Arctic Village, AK 99722

Phone: (907) 587-5229

Fax: (907) 587-5239

Tanana Chiefs Conference

Address: 122 1st Ave, Suite 600 Fairbanks, AK 99701

Phone: (907) 452-8251

Fax: (907) 459-3851

Website: <http://www.tananachiefs.org>

United Utilities, Incorporated - Service Assistance 1-800-478-2020

U.S. Department of the Interior – U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services - Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Phone: (907) 587-5060

