



---

# Nikolai Community Development Plan

---

2012-2022

---

Prepared by Tanana Chiefs  
Conference in cooperation with  
Edzeno' Tribal Council, City of  
Nikolai, and Nikolai Community  
Members

---

## *Table of Contents*

---

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	iii
<b>NIKOLAI COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS</b>	iv
<b>NIKOLAI EDZENO' VILLAGE COUNCIL RESOLUTION</b>	v
<b>CITY OF NIKOLAI RESOLUTION</b>	vi
 <b>COMMUNITY VISION STATEMENT</b>	 1
What makes Nikolai a special place to live?	1
What do you want Nikolai to look like in 20 years?	2
 <b>COMMUNITY OVERVIEW</b>	 3
History	3
Culture	3
Population	4
Governance & Public Administration	4
Edzeno' Tribal Council	4
City of Nikolai	5
MTNT Village Corporation	5
Location	5
Flooding and Erosion Concerns	5
 <b>INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	 6
Housing	6
Public Utilities	6
Water & Sewer	6
Landfill	6
Nikolai Light & Power	7
Communication	7
Bulk Fuel	7
Public Facilities	7
Clinic	7
Post Office	8
Public Library	8
Fire Safety	8
Education	8
Transportation	9

<b>ECONOMY</b>	11
Income Levels & Employment Characteristics	11
Available Jobs	11
Subsistence Levels	11
Industry & Capital Projects	12
Barriers to Economic Development	12
Local Assets	12
Potential for Growth	12
<b>OVERVIEW OF NIKOLAI PRIORITIES</b>	14
<b>ACTION PLANS</b>	15
<b>COMMUNITY CONTACT INFORMATION</b>	28
<b>NIKOLAI COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS</b>	29
<b>REFERENCES</b>	35

## **NIKOLAI COMMUNITY MAPS**

Prepared by: Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, Division of Community and Regional Affairs

- DCCED 2009 Nikolai Community Area Map
- DCCED 2009 Nikolai Community Map Sheet 1
- DCCED 2009 Nikolai Community Map Sheet 2

## *Executive Summary*

---

The Nikolai Community Development Plan (NCDP) is a visionary document that includes long term and ongoing priorities determined by Nikolai community members. Many different individuals contributed to this process in providing their feedback and vision for Nikolai's future. Special thanks to the Edzeno' Tribal Council for their input and support of this project, the City of Nikolai for their input and, and the Top of the Kuskokwim School for allowing the community to gather in the school. There are two main sections in the NCDP. The first section includes community profile information and the second section includes priorities that have been identified by Nikolai Community Members. The purpose of this document is to provide a starting point for long term priorities and does not include any detailed project planning information. Community Planning is an ongoing process as goals are reached and new priorities emerge. This community planning process began in June of 2011 with Nikolai Community members identifying what makes Nikolai a special place to live and what they hope it will look like in the future. This initial community visioning provided the framework for the priorities that are highlighted in the NCDP which were developed during community planning meetings held between August 29-31 and reviewed on December 8<sup>th</sup>. A complete list of community priorities can be found on page 17. Action plans for High Priority Goals, 1-5 Year Goals, and several Ongoing Goals were discussed and are also included in the NCDP. The Nikolai Edzeno' Tribal Council adopted the Nikolai Community Development plan on January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012 and the City of Nikolai Council adopted the plan on February 11, 2012. This plan was completed by the Tanana Chiefs Conference Community Planning Program.





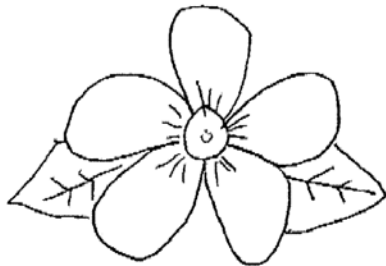
## *The Nikolai Community Planning Process & Timeline*

---

### Meeting Schedule

Meeting Date	Meeting Type	Number of Attendants
June 22, 2011	Edzeno' Village Council members and staff	7
June 23, 2011	Nikolai community planning kick off meeting	27
August 29, 2011	Edzeno' Village Council members and staff	8
August 30, 2011	Nikolai community action planning event	11
August 31, 2011	Nikolai community action planning event cont.	6
December 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2011	Community Draft Review Session	23
January 4 <sup>th</sup> , 2012	Edzeno' Village Council Adoption of Community Plan	7
February 11, 2012	City of Nikolai Council Adoption of Community Plan	7





## Nikolai Edzeno' Village Council

P.O. Box 9107

Nikolai, Alaska 99691

(907) 293-2311 phone

(907) 293-2481 fax

[beverly.gregorv@tananachiefs.org](mailto:beverly.gregorv@tananachiefs.org)

### **RESOLUTION 2012-01**

#### **ADOPTING COMMUNITY PLAN**

- WHEREAS,** the Nikolai Village is the federally recognized governing body for the village of Nikolai, AK; and,
- WHEREAS,** this plan was created through a public process which captured the values and goals of our community; and,
- WHEREAS,** this community plan is important to the future growth and development of Nikolai, 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,** we ask all public, private and non-profit entities serving our community to recognize and use this plan; and,

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

#### **CERTIFICATION**

We hereby certify that this resolution was duly passed and approved ☒ in favor, ☐ opposed by the following parties:

Nick Alexia Sr. 1-4-12 Martha Runkle 1-4-2012

Nick Alexia Sr. 1<sup>st</sup> Chief,      Date

Martha Runkle, Secretary/Treasurer      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
City of Nikolai, Mayor- Joseph Kimball      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk, Winchell Ticknor      Date

**CITY OF NIKOLAI**  
P.O. Box 9147  
Nikolai, Alaska 99691  
Telephone: (907) 293-2113

**Resolution# 2012-04**

A Resolution to adopt Nikolai Community Plan

**WHEREAS**, this community plan is important to the future growth and development of Nikolai and,

**WHEREAS**, this plan was created through a public process which captured the values and 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,

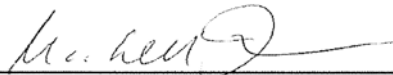
**WHEREAS**; we ask all public, private, and non-profit entities serving our community to recognize and use this plan; and,

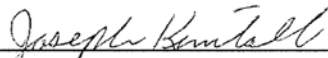
**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the parties of this resolution agree to work together to pursue the values, goals, and vision express in this plan.

**THIS RESOLUTION 2012-04** was presented on the ~~16~~<sup>18</sup> of February 10, 2012 at this meeting of the City Council in which a quorum of 7 of seven members were present. The members voting 7 Yea and 0 Nays and 0 Objections.

Certification

We hereby certify that this resolution was duly passed\_\_ in favor, \_\_ opposed by the following parties:

2-11-12  
ATTEST: City Clerk Winchell Ticknor DATE

2-11-12  
City of Nikolai Mayor Joseph Kimball DATE



## ***Community Vision Statement***

---

In the future we want the community of Nikolai to retain its remoteness where we can preserve our subsistence lifestyles, Upper Kuskokwim language and culture; be a healthy, sustainable community that has educational and employment opportunities and have access to good healthcare, housing.

### **Community Assets**

#### **What makes Nikolai a special place to live?**

#### **Statements by Nikolai Community Members**

- Subsistence lifestyle
- Family
- It is beautiful and peaceful, we are all related so we work together
- The people, the fishing, the scenery, it is quiet.
- I like Nikolai because this is where my family is from and where our ancestors used to live. I like it here.
- The people, we are close together.
- It is isolated.
- Nature, the fishing and hunting that we don't have anywhere else, like in the cities. It is more natural.
- The people, the land, being at the top of the Kuskokwim.
- The people, it is pretty peaceful here.
- You can boat everywhere since we are at the top of the Kuskokwim, out here you can shoot anything.
- The location of Nikolai, easy access to Anchorage or Fairbank, the people are friendly.
- The scenery you get out here.
- One of the best things in Nikolai is the Russian Orthodox Christmas time, we have been blessed with a whole lot more children, it is getting more populated, I am so glad.



**Boats on the Kuskokwim River.**

## **What do you hope Nikolai looks like in 20 years?**

### **Statements and ideas from Nikolai community members.**

- I want the people of Nikolai to be sober, I want all the kids to have a good education. I want it to be like this forever, I don't want it to be bigger, but there are a few more modern things that I would like to see here.
- I would like to see more jobs here, I would like to see the sustainability of our lands, good management of our fish and game, I want to see educational opportunities.
- I want to utilize our natural resources, we have gravel, it could provide jobs.
- I want to see a new clinic and tribal hall, I want to see a VPSO and new housing so there is something for people to come back to.
- We have world class salmon fishing, I would like to see more job opportunities, I would like to have more buildings and for people to come in and explore the landscape
- More jobs
- I want to see our language to come back I don't want to see it die.
- We need to work on our language now, our elders are not going to be with us forever.
- I want to see Denakkaanaga lol. and be on the board.
- It is always to come, you don't want it to change too much. It has already changed a lot and I am sure it will continue to change. We live off the land and that is a huge part of our lifestyle. The cost of food is so high. I would like to see a health clinic, internet, lower cost of gas.
- I would like to see our salmon rivers still be healthy. I hope it is still remote in the sense of not having any roads from outside to here.
- I like that it is still isolated.
- I agree with everyone about the subsistence fishing, a little more housing, a stop light, I like it the way it is, maybe grow a little.

## Community Overview

---

### History

Historically the ancestors of the people of Nikolai were nomadic, travelling with the seasons and the availability of fish and game throughout the Upper Kuskokwim region. Summer and winter camps were established based on the accessibility of different wildlife. Many of the camps were established in the foothills of the Alaska Range where wildlife was plentiful and the topography made it easier to spot game. They referred to themselves as Dina'ena, translated as “the people”, and were referred to by Athabascan neighbors as Dichinanek' Hwt'ana (Timber River People) and Dikinane Hut'ana (Upper Kuskokwim People). For many generations there was a settlement located on the Tozana River that provided a strategic location for harvesting fish and game. This location later became the first site of the village of Nikolai, named after Chief

Nikolai who settled there after fleeing his home on the Innoko River. Old Nikolai was not established until after 1910 and was the location of a trading post built by Captain Holten who traded with the people of Upper Kuskokwim. In 1910 the first Council was organized in Nikolai by the Russian Orthodox Church. Although the village of Nikolai has moved several times, establishing a permanent winter camp on the Upper



**The Russian Orthodox Church Bells.**

Kuskokwim made it easier to gain access to trade goods that were brought in by river boat. The current site of the village of Nikolai was established after 1918. The first school in Nikolai was built by residents and was established in 1948. In 1976 Nikolai became a part of the Iditarod Area School District. Nikolai was incorporated as a second class city in 1970.<sup>1</sup>

### Culture

Nikolai has continued to keep some of its cultural activities alive. Among these, subsistence living is one of the most important. Subsistence activities are practiced throughout the year and

---

<sup>1</sup> History summarized from (Collins, 2004)

are passed down to younger generations through the knowledge of local areas and taboos. Nikolai is home to two tribes the Edzeno' (Nikolai) Tribe and the Telida Tribe. Many Telida tribal members moved to Nikolai after the Telida school closed. Telida and Nikolai tribal members share in common the Upper Kuskokwim Athabascan language which is still spoken by many of the Elders in the community. Preserving the Upper Kuskokwim language is very important to Nikolai elders and the younger generation alike.

The Russian Orthodox church is also an important part of the local culture in Nikolai. There is currently not a Russian Orthodox priest living in the community however services are occasionally read by a local community member. A favorite holiday is Russian Orthodox Christmas which is celebrated on January 7<sup>th</sup>.



**Inside the Nikolai Russian Orthodox Church.**

### **Population & Demographics**

According to U.S. 2010 Census the total population of Nikolai is 94 people. The median age in Nikolai is 38.5, 70 people out of 94 are over the age of 18. Out of the total population there are 63 males and 31 females, 80.9% of the population is Alaska Native, 11.7% of the population is two or more races, and 7.5% of the population is white.

### **Governance**

#### **Edzeno' Tribal Council**

There are two governing bodies in the village of Nikolai including the Edzeno' Tribal Council and the City of Nikolai. The Edzeno' Tribal Council has a seven member council. Council members serve staggered terms over a two year period. Elections are held every October. The tribal council, is responsible for managing programs that provide direct services to tribal members. There are currently three full time tribal council staff; the Tribal Administrator, the Tribal Workforce Development Specialist, and the full time Tribal Family Youth Specialist (TFYS) and half time administrative assistant. The tribal council updated tribal codes and ordinances in 2010. At this time there is no existing tribal court and no Village Public Safety Officer.



### City of Nikolai

The City of Nikolai is a 2<sup>nd</sup> class city and was incorporated in 1970. The City of Nikolai also has a seven member council. Council members serve up to three years with rotating terms. The City owns and operates the Nikolai Light and Power Utility, water & wastewater utilities, landfill utilities, fuel sales and bulk fuel storage, and building and equipment rentals which includes visitor accommodations, and the public library. A significant portion of the City's annual budget goes to operating the Nikolai Light and Power Utility.

### MTNT Ltd. Village Corporation

MTNT Ltd. is a consortium between the villages of McGrath, Takotna, Nikolai, and Telida. MTNT Ltd. owns and manages 299,520 acres of land some of which is located within or in and around Nikolai. MTNT Ltd. headquarters are located in McGrath.



**Arial view of downtown Nikolai**

### **Location**

Nikolai is located in Interior Alaska on the banks of the South Fork of the Upper Kuskokwim River. It is situated 46 air miles from McGrath. Nikolai is located in the Mt. McKinley Recording District. The area encompasses 4.5 sq. miles of land and 0.3 sq. miles of water. Nikolai has a cold, continental climate with relatively warm summers. Average summer temperature range from 42 to over 80

°F, and winter temperatures range from -62 to 0 °F. Annual precipitation is light, averaging 16 inches per year, with 56 inches of snow. The river is generally ice-free from June through October.<sup>2</sup>

### Flooding and Erosion Concerns

Major flooding events on the Upper Kuskokwim River occurred in 1970 and 1990. The river swells at different times during the summer after heavy rains. In recent years gradual erosion along the Iditarod Road is beginning to give concern to residents.

---

<sup>2</sup> (Alaska Department of Commerce)

## *Infrastructure*

---

### **Housing**

According to the 2010 U.S. Census there are a total of 48 housing units in Nikolai, 37 of which are occupied, 11 that are vacant, and three that are only used seasonally. Out of the occupied homes 19 are occupied by their owners and 18 are renter occupied houses. Twenty homes are occupied by families and 17 by non-family households out of the occupied housing. The average household size in Nikolai is 2.54. According to the Nikolai tribal council there is not adequate housing to meet the current demand. With the addition of four or five new homes the demand for housing would likely be met. Housing renovation and weatherization is slated for either the summer of 2012 or 2013 by the Interior Regional Housing Authority (IRHA), the regional housing authority.

### **Public Utilities**

#### Water & Sewer

The City of Nikolai maintains sewer facilities in Nikolai. There are a total of 47 houses and facilities that use individual wells. Thirty-three homes are connected to the City's piped sewer system while a remaining 15 homes use individual septic tanks. Only two homes in Nikolai do not have any running water.<sup>3</sup> The Nikolai sewer utility consists of 1.5 miles of gravity sewer and 1/3 mile of pressure sewer lines. There are two sanitary lift stations and a sewage lagoon. Upgrades to the sewer lift station were completed in 2010. The City of *Nikolai Sanitation Facilities Master Plan* was completed by Alaska Native Tribal Health (ANTHC) in 2005 which includes detailed descriptions of water quality and the sewer facilities master plan.<sup>4</sup>

#### Landfill

The City of Nikolai operates the landfill. The Nikolai landfill is categorized as a Class 3 landfill. There are no collection sites in the village of Nikolai. Residents are responsible for self-hauling garbage and refuse to the landfill site. A locally fabricated burn barrel was installed at the landfill in the summer of 2011 which will assist in lengthening the life of the landfill. The existing landfill site has been in use since 1970. Survey results completed in 2005 and included in the *Nikolai Sanitation Facilities Master Plan* indicate that 18 households (58%) believed the dump to be in bad condition, 16 households or (52%) believed that it would not be a problem if it were properly managed, 21 households or (68%) indicated that the dump attracted a lot of animals, and 21 households or (68%) believed that the dump should be moved. The current landfill is unfenced although the City owns fencing which has not yet been installed. Without fencing in place trash often blows out of the landfill and is open to scavenging animals. Some

---

<sup>3</sup> (Ruba Status Report Alaska Division of Community and Regional Affairs, 2011)

<sup>4</sup> (Michael L. Foster & Associates, Inc., 2005)



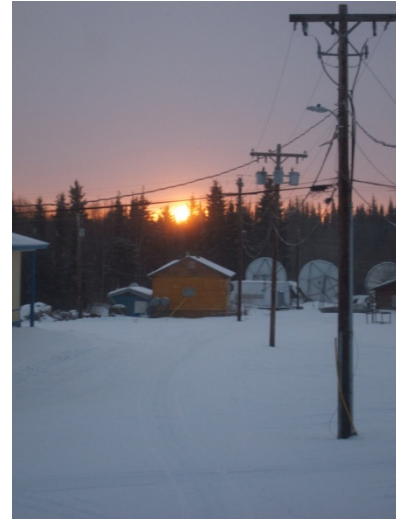
community members have also voiced concerns regarding the location of the existing landfill being in the Kuskokwim floodplain.

### Nikolai Light and Power Utility

The City of Nikolai owns and operations the Nikolai Light and Power Utility. The city owns three diesel 100 kw generators and related switch gear which supply Nikolai with electricity. The electric generators are housed in a 40'x60' metal building constructed between 1996 and 2000.

Improvements were completed to the building in 2010 which allowed all the generators and associated switchgear to be moved into the building. When the city began managing the electricity utilities the Power Cost Equalization (PCE) rate covered roughly 34% of the cost of electricity. The PCE rate during FY2010 was closer to 55% or 0.5279 cents per kWh and in FY2011 the PCE rate was \$0.6351 cents per kWh.

Without PCE the rate has stayed constant at \$0.8038 cents per kWh. The residential rate for electricity in FY 2010 was \$0.2759 cents per kWh. The City of Nikolai has made continued efforts towards becoming more energy efficient. Efforts in recent years include a new electricity pre-paid metering system that was installed in 2011 where residents prepay for their electricity consumption which contributed considerably to the reduction of outstanding residential accounts. The City of Nikolai has also received funding to install an energy blanket around the city multi-use building which will add about a R-12 rating to the building once completed.<sup>5</sup>



### Communication

Telephone services are provided through United Utilities Inc. The school has access to internet through GCI. Several homes access to internet via satellite dishes. Nikolai residents can tune into KSKO-AM radio station and ARCS TV station. Cell coverage may be available through GCI as early as 2013. The City and Tribe both have wireless internet.

### Bulk Fuel

The City of Nikolai and the Iditarod School District both own bulk fuel storage. The total storage capacity of the Iditarod Schools tanks are 15,300 gallons and the total storage capacity of the city storage tanks are 72,200 gallons. However, because fuel is delivered on a month to month bases fuel tanks are never fully filled.

## **Public Facilities & Services**

### Clinic

---

<sup>5</sup> (Jenkins, 2011)

There is one full time health aid and one behavioral health staff. There is currently a position open for an additional full time health aide. Funding for the Nikolai clinic is provided through the Southcentral Foundation based in Anchorage. If ailments or injuries cannot be treated at the Nikolai clinic patients are referred to Anchorage. The Nikolai clinic currently leases two small rooms in the city building to serve as the Nikolai health clinic. The limited space is not sufficient for current usages of the health clinic. Nikolai residents would like to see a new health clinic constructed that would better serve the health needs of the community.

### Post Office

The Nikolai Post Office is also located in the Nikolai City Building. Mail currently only comes once a week on Thursdays and is routed through McGrath. Nikolai residents hope to see mail return to being delivered three times per week.

### Public Library

The school library has a part time librarian five days a week for two hours a day that is also open to the public. The school library also has computers that are used by students and community members. There is also a collection of books and games at the Nikolai city building, however the city has not had a librarian for many years.



**Nikolai Code-Red firefighting equipment**

### Fire Safety

Fire safety and preparedness has been identified as a community priority. The village of Nikolai has a fire cart with a small tank. During the summer of 2011 a house was lost in a house fire and at the time there was no designated fire chief or a volunteer fire department. Fire extinguishers were used to put out the flame but the home sustained significant damage. Since that time the City of Nikolai nominated a volunteer fire chief and organized a volunteer fire department which was determined as a high priority during the August community planning meetings. Ensuring that the newly organized fire department receives .



**Nikolai students learning to ski during gym class.**

### **Education**

Nikolai is home to the Top of the Kuskokwim School which is a part of the Iditarod Areas School District. In recent years the number of students attending the Top of the Kuskokwim School has dropped. For the 2011-2012 school year there are

only 11 students barely above the 10 student requirement to keep the school open. This reality

poses significant concern to the community of Nikolai as the school is a crucial element for the community's survival. While the numbers of enrolled students are currently very low, an increase in younger children has created a demand for an Early Head Start program that was created in the spring of 2011. Nikolai residents are hopeful that this influx of young children in the community will soon alleviate concerns of a school closure. However, until these young children reach school age, the threat of school closure is very real.

## **Transportation**

Inside of Nikolai the most common form of transportation is by four-wheeler during summer months and snow-machine during winter months. Many residents also have boats on the Upper Kuskokwim River which is very important for accessing areas for subsistence activities. In order to travel in and out of Nikolai residents and visitors typically travel through McGrath and either charter a bush flight through air carriers based in McGrath or travel in on the mail plane. In 2010 a charter service Alaska Air Transit, started flying direct to Nikolai from Anchorage three days a week which has significantly reduced the cost of travel for residents to Anchorage. The Department of Transportation maintains the state-owned 4,003 foot long and 75 feet wide airstrip. FAA has also installed an automated weather station and landing lights. There is a 50-mile winter trail that is marked between Nikolai and McGrath. Nikolai is also the first checkpoint along the Annual Iditarod Sled Dog Race.

Currently the cost of fuel and oil is \$8.00 per gallon. Several years ago the cost of fuel peaked at \$9.50 per gallon. The high cost of fuel is an inhibiting factor for many residents in conducting their normal subsistence activities. Many families rely on travelling up and down on the Kuskokwim River to access productive fish and game areas. The high cost of fuel makes it difficult for individuals and families to access fishing and hunting grounds. Low water levels in the Upper Kuskokwim compounded with the high cost of fuel has resulted in it being several years since a barge has landed in Nikolai delivering fuel oil. One barge load of fuel oil costs upwards of \$300,000., and as a result of this prohibitively high cost, fuel is flown in every month or so which allows payments for fuel oil to be dispersed throughout the year.



**Nikolai International Airport welcome sign**

According to the 2007 Nikolai Long Range Transportation Plan there are approximately 16.1 miles of existing roads and trails in and around Nikolai. All of the roads in Nikolai have a dirt

surface. Due to a lack of maintenance many roads have inadequate drainage causing muddy conditions during heavy rains.<sup>6</sup>

---

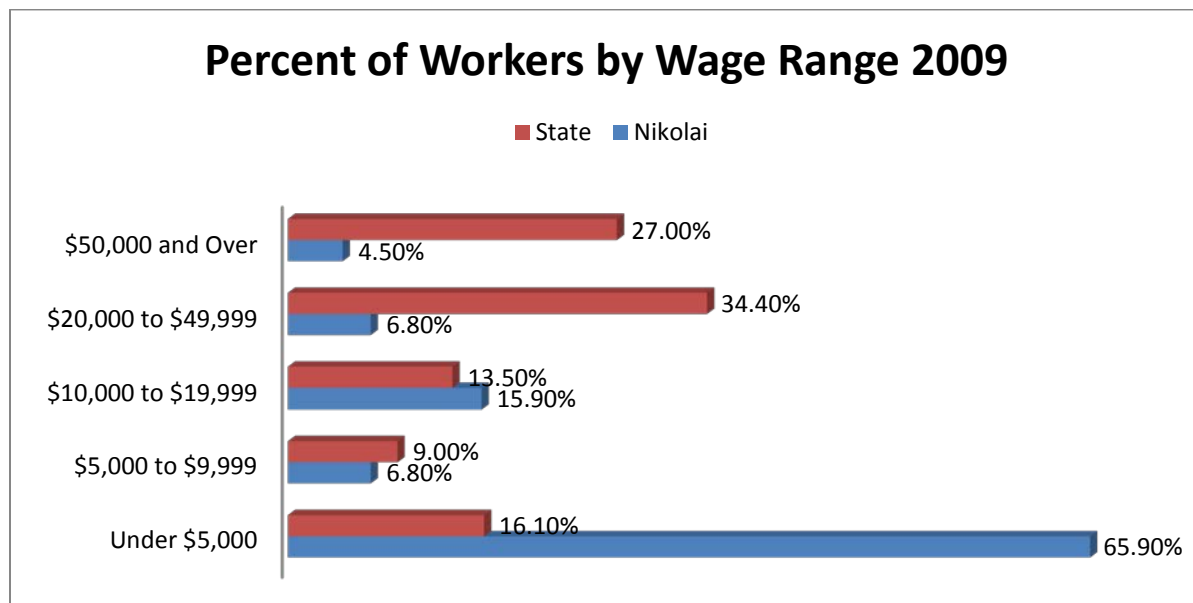
<sup>6</sup> (Tanana Chiefs Conference Transportation Department, 2001)

## Economy

---

### Income Levels & Employment Characteristics

According to statistical information compiled by the Alaska Local and regional Information Department and based on 2009 Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) applications, the total number of working age residents in Nikolai was 73, with population estimates at the time being 87. Out of the working age population 60% were employed during 2009.



(Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section, 2011)

### Available Jobs

By far the largest employer in the village of Nikolai is local government. Top employers in Nikolai include the Iditarod Area School District, Nikolai Village Council, City of Nikolai, and the Southcentral Foundation. There are three locally owned stores which employ several people. Firefighting and construction provide Nikolai residents with seasonal employment opportunities. There are 16 people per fire crew that may be called out in the summer months. While this is an important source of income for some, it is unpredictable. Nixon Fork area mine also employs several people who reside in Nikolai when not working.

### Subsistence Levels

Subsistence activities are still an important part of both the village of Nikolai's culture and economy. Fishing, hunting, and berry picking are all important subsistence activities in Nikolai which provide many families important sources of food. Fur trapping provides a limited source of income for some residents.



## **Industry & Capital Projects**

There is no major industrial activity in Nikolai. However, gold mining claims in the area surrounding Nikolai historically have been productive and an important part of the history of development in the region. With the increased price of gold mining activity at the Nixon Fork Mine located north of the Village of Nikolai resumed this past year.

Current Capital Improvement Projects in Nikolai include installing a new metering system that will allow Nikolai residents to pre-pay for their electricity usage. Currently residents provide a written record of usage. The new system will improve efficiency and accuracy. Other recent capital improvement projects include the completion of a new powerhouse that was completed in 2010.



**Debbie Esai picking cranberries on Tashko' trail**

## **Barriers to Economic Development**

Some of the most significant barriers to economic development include the high cost of energy, lack of industry and employment opportunities, difficulty in accessing capital and funding, high cost of living, and lack of skilled labor. High cost of travel and distance from major markets, small population, and lack of infrastructure also add barriers to economic development.

## **Local Assets**

Some of Nikolai's key assets include leaders from the community that serve on a variety of boards ranging from MTNT Ltd. Board, TCC Executive Board, TCC Education Board, TCC Health Board, Fish & Wildlife, and occasionally a UAF representative. Other assets include the Top of the Kuskokwim School and the City and Tribal governments and Upper Kuskokwim Health Advisory Council (UKHAC). One of Nikolai's most significant assets are its people. In the words of Miranda Petruska, Nikolai's Community Health Aide, "we promote leadership and encourage education as best we can. Our community is small but we know that when we come together we are strong".<sup>7</sup>

## **Potential for Growth**

There are some small business opportunities that exist within Nikolai such as a small café/restaurant, small engine repair, and small-scale tourism. While tourism opportunities may exist year round, Nikolai sees a peak in tourism activity during the Iditarod Sled Dog Race. Residents have the opportunity to further capitalize on this event through providing lodging, food, and selling small crafts. Other areas for area growth are likely to be found in the area surrounding Nikolai include in precious metals mining at sites such as Nixon Fork Mine and Donlin Creek.

---

<sup>7</sup> (Petruska, 2011)



However, mining operations may have limited to no economic impact on the community of Nikolai with the exception of residents affording the opportunity for employment opportunities that are closer to home.

## *Overview of Nikolai Priorities*

---

A total of 14 priorities were identified by Nikolai community members. Priorities ranged in importance ranging from High Importance needing immediate attention, 1-5 year priority, 10 year priority, and priorities that require immediate and ongoing attention. Priorities are based on results from the Nikolai Community survey and urgency of community specific priorities. Action plans were created for all the High Importance Priorities and ongoing community priorities. Action plans were also created for the top 1-5 year priorities. Action plans are meant to be used as an organizational guide and starting point for working towards the priorities identified and are not comprehensive. Apart from the three designations; high importance priorities, 1-5 year priorities, 10 year priorities, and ongoing priorities the goals that are listed below are in not particular order.

### **High Importance Priorities**

1. Goal: Construct a new health clinic in Nikolai.
2. Goal: Determine an appropriate and immediate solution to the bank erosion of the Kuskokwim River along the Landfill Road.
3. Goal: Community members in Nikolai are prepared to respond to fire emergencies.
4. Goal: Nikolai has available housing for current and returning residents that is affordable, safe, and well built.

### **1-5 Year Priorities**

5. Goal: Nikolai develops efficient energy solutions which will assist in lower the high cost of energy.
6. Goal: Construct a Community Tribal hall that can be used for office space for tribal staff and community gatherings.
7. Goal: Improve solid waste management through land fill upgrades and/or possible site relocation.
8. Goal: Implement a recycling and re-use program.
9. Goal: Roads are well maintained.
10. Goal: Nikolai has a VPSO.

### **10 Year**

11. Goal: Construct a new shower/laundry facility.
12. Goal: Actively pursue tourism development.

### **Ongoing**

13. Goal: Preserve the Upper Kuskokwim Language. High
14. Goal: Nikolai has employment opportunities for its residents.
15. Goal: Create more activities for the youth in Nikolai.

## *Action Plans*

---

### **Goal: A new Health Clinic facility is built in Nikolai.**

#### **Existing conditions of the Nikolai Health Clinic**

The current Nikolai Health Clinic is located on the bottom floor of the Nikolai City building. The City building is a multi-use building, which houses the Post Office, laundry facilities, city offices, public meeting room, and a library. The Health Clinic is housed in two small rooms totaling less than 525 sq. feet. There is no privacy or security in the current facility, it is possible for people to hear through the walls of the patient room. The current facility does not have any temperature controls important for storing medication and for patient care. The plumbing is unreliable and there is not access to clean water. Conditions are too cramped to allow a stretcher to be utilized in the case of trauma emergencies.

#### **Projecting Planning History**

A new clinic facility has been high on the priority list in Nikolai for over 10 years. Applications for a new Clinic were first submitted to the Denali Commission and the State of Alaska through the Community Development Block Grant in 2001. The Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium was awarded funding to complete a Nikolai Clinic Design that resulted in the completed of a Code and Condition Survey Report. A 900 sq. ft. Clinic Design was completed in 2005 by Larsen Consulting Group which was also funded through the Denali Commission. The 2005 Clinic Design identified a site between the City Building and City Lodge. Small renovations to the existing Clinic were completed in 2008 that addressed some of the space concerns, however these renovations have not addressed.

#### **Benefits of a new healthcare facility**

Just a few of the possible benefits of a new healthcare facility would be a private exam room, a trauma room, a private room for the Behavioral Health Aide, emergency exit, better security, controlled and secure medication storage, and the ability to maneuver a stretcher. A new health clinic would provide an overall cleaner, safer, and esthetically pleasing environment that would greatly improve patient care and comfort.

#### **Obstacles**

Securing the necessary funding for the health care project continues to be an ongoing effort. Other obstacles to the completion of the project include selecting a site for the new facility that adequately satisfies all the stakeholders who are involved.

**Goal: Determine an appropriate and immediate solution to the bank erosion along the Landfill Road by the Kuskokwim River.**

**Erosion Concern Defined:**

Riverbank erosion at two identified areas along the BIA Route 1001 Iditarod Road, also called by residents the Landfill Road, have been identified that pose concern. The DCRA Community Area Map of Nikolai included as an appendix shows the location of the shore line in 2000 with the solid black line and the shore line in 2009 by the dotted black line. Gradual erosion has continued along the shore line along the Iditarod Road since the 2009 however new photography should be taken to confirm the rate of erosion. The first area of erosion concern is at the beginning of the route. Currently the anchor for a power pole near the beginning of this route is fully exposed. An immediate solution might be either reburying the anchor or relocating the support on the other side of the power pole. If the current rate of erosion continues the shore line will eventually move to the power pole and then to the Iditarod Road. There is another area of erosion concern that is located further along the Iditarod Road roughly 500 ft. before the current landfill site.



**The power pole and anchor along the Iditarod Road.**

**Potential Partners:**

In order to find an appropriate erosion control solution the City of Nikolai and the Edzeno' Village Council will coordinate with the appropriate state and federal agencies including but not limited to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, State Representative Alan Dick, the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Other possible agency involvement may include Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC), Tanana Chiefs Conference Transportation Department, and MTNT Ltd.

**Goal: Community members in Nikolai are prepared to respond to fire emergencies.**

**Resources external & internal:**

Resources that are accessible in the case of fire emergencies include man power, Code Red Equipment, 400 feet of hose, axes, shovels, transportable water tank, and a transportable fire suppression tank.



**Obstacles/ challenges external & internal:**

One of the most significant challenges to fire response is organization and leadership in the case of an emergency. Other challenges include ensuring that enough residents know how to operate the Code Red Equipment so that it will be deployed quickly and correctly in case of fire emergencies. Another challenge for quick and effective fire suppression are accessible watering points that can be accessed with 400 ft. of hose.

Task	Lead Person/ Entity	Notes	Times Start	Time End
Complete and inventory of homes that do not have up to date or functioning fire extinguishers.	City of Nikolai			
Purchase and distribute up-to-date, functioning fire extinguishers to each home.	City of Nikolai, Nikolai Tribal Council	Possible funding sources for fire extinguishers might be Southcentral Foundation through IHS, via the Tribal Council or the Alaska Municipal League via the City Council		
Organize a volunteer fire department	City of Nikolai	A fire department captain was elected by City Council members and 20 volunteers signed up for volunteer fire department.	August, 2011	October 2011
Complete a fire preparedness	Volunteer			Annual

plan and inform volunteer fire department and community members on what to do in case of a fire.	Fire Department			
Hold a volunteer fire department training to train all volunteer on how to operate fire equipment	Volunteer Fire Department	The Volunteer Fire Department will have their meetings immediately following the ETT refresher courses.	Ongoing	



**Goal: Nikolai has available housing for current and returning residents that is affordable, safe, and well built.**

**Resources external & internal:**

Resources available to assist in achieving this goal include HUD Interior Regional Housing Authority (IRHA), TCC weatherization program, Edzeno' Tribal Council, existing city sewer lines, electricity, and privately owned sawmills. The City of Nikolai was granted its 14 (c)3 Land Entitlement by filing Plats McKinley 2006-2 and 2009-3. Surveying for these Plats were completed in 2006 and approved by the State of Alaska in 2009. UAF has agreed to deliver a Construction Trades training the spring of 2012 with a minimum requirement of 10 interested people.

**Obstacles/ challenges external & internal:**

Due to the limited availability of housing there are several extended families reside in the same home with limited space. Without adequate housing it is difficult for families to move back home and to hire positions such as VPSO. Many of the existing homes are falling apart and are very energy inefficient. Considerable barriers exist in accessing funding for new housing projects and completing weatherization projects. The challenge of accessing the necessary capital and/or loans that would be necessary to build a new home in a remote Alaska community is simply too high for most residents. An additional barrier to new housing construction in Nikolai is limited skilled local labor necessary to construct new homes.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Lead Person/ Entity</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Times Start</b>	<b>Time End</b>
Determine which lots are already surveyed and ready for new construction.	City of Nikolai	Develop Land Disposal and Platting Ordinances as determined by City of Nikolai Resolution 2011-04		
Research and apply funding for new housing construction.	Edzeno' Native Village Council	Research HUD and USDA grants. Keep up to date on IRHA housing program opportunities.	Time dependant on funding opportunities	
Utilize natural timber for the construction and renovation of new and existing homes.	Edzeno' Native Village Council / City of Nikolai	Train local workforce in operating wood misers. Identify owners of wood misers and complete adequate rent agreements.	1 year	5 years

**Goal: The Edzeno' Tribal Council Building is safe, energy efficient, and can accommodate community gatherings and the needs of Council Staff.**

**Existing Facility:**

The existing Edzeno' Tribal Council building has a small kitchen, bathroom, small meeting area, two small offices, and one open space that accommodates Council staff. The existing building is in poor condition and in need of numerous improvements. The Tribal Council is currently replacing the furnace relying solely on wood heat for now. Plumbing in the bathroom is also in need of repair. Other structural improvements include replacing doors, windows and insulation to make the building more energy efficient, leveling the building, and installing new floors. With a growing number of staff working out of the Tribal Council building, conditions are becoming increasingly cramped.



**Current Tribal Hall building**

**Usages of new or improved Tribal Building:**

Ideally the Edzeno' would like to have a new tribal hall that would have adequate space for all the Edzeno' Tribal Council staff positions and activities. In addition to additional office space the Edzeno' Tribal Council would like to have a large meeting area that could be used to hold community gatherings such as potlatches, guest events, fundraisers, tribal court, youth activities, and classes. Renovations or the existing facility or the construction of a new facility should accommodate the needs of the Edzeno' Tribal Council and community.

**Obstacles/ challenges external & internal:**

Significant structural improvements and renovations are needed in order for the existing structure to fully meet the needs of the Edzeno' Tribal Council. Cost estimations should be conducted for both a new Edzeno' Tribal building, and renovations and remodeling to the existing building to determine the best course of action.

**Possible site locations:**

The Edzeno' Tribal Council would like to utilize the same area as the existing tribal building whether there are renovations to the existing structure or a completely new building is constructed.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Lead Person/ Entity</b>	<b>Resources needed &amp; Notes</b>	<b>Times Start</b>	<b>Time End</b>
Research for possible funding sources. Determine what funds could be raised within the community.	Edzeno' Tribal Council	Designated Council staff that will be able to research and apply for funding opportunities.	Immediate	
Complete a full detail and cost estimation of the renovations and improvements that are needed for the existing tribal building.	Edzeno' Tribal Council	Evaluate weather renovations to existing building or construction of a new facility would be the best course of action.	Immediate	
Complete a building design for new Tribal Hall including size, layout, and incorporating alternative energy sources such as solar panels or a wood boiler to reduce future operating costs.	Edzeno' Tribal Council	Involved community participation in building design. Evaluate whether a new facility would be the best course of action.	Funding/ Dependant	
Determine what resources exist locally to carry out project including labor, building materials, and lumber.	Edzeno' Tribal Council			
Construction	Edzeno' Tribal Council	Utilize local labor and local resources to the fullest extent.		

**Goal: Nikolai integrates more efficient energy solutions which will assist in lower the high cost of energy.**

**Resources external & internal and current progress:**

The City Nikolai has been proactive in taking measures that reduce the amount of energy consumed by City facilities through weatherization and energy efficiency projects. For example, the City applied and received funding to install 18 energy efficient street lights and indoor lights for the city building through the Alaska Energy Authority in addition to Smart-I motion triggered lights and timed heating sensors. The Nikolai Light and Power Utility is also interested in implementing a hydrogen induction project which would reduce the volume of fuel oil necessary to run the utility's generators.

**Obstacles/ challenges external & internal:**

Rising energy costs continue to place considerable financial burden on individuals and entities in Nikolai as elsewhere in rural Alaska. Some of the challenges that exist in implementing alternative and efficient energy strategies are the cost of infrastructure upgrades and development and limited access to technology.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Lead Person/ Entity</b>	<b>Resources needed &amp; Notes</b>	<b>Times Start</b>	<b>Time End</b>
Research the feasibility and cost of integrating solar panels on existing Tribal facilities.	Edzeno' Tribal Council	Look at other villages using same technology; Lime Village using solar energy for example.		
Research the feasibility and cost of integrating biomass and/ or Garn Boilers for existing public buildings to reduce the cost of operation of existing public buildings.	Edzeno' Tribal Council	Ross Coen from TCC has begin looking at the Garn Boiler process.		
Support sub-regional efforts to develop coal mining. Research the feasibility of maintaining an ice road for trucking coal from nearby coal mine.		MTNT Land Council & IRR		
Weatherize existing public buildings	City of Nikolai/	City building is currently being weatherizing the main City building.		

## **Goal: Improve solid waste management through land fill upgrades and/or possible site relocation.**

### **Current Status of Landfill**

The Nikolai landfill is categorized as a Class 3 landfill. It was built in 1970 and is nearing the end of its life cycle. The current landfill is located directly off the Iditarod Road and is one of the first sites that greets Iditarod Mushers when they ride into Nikolai. The landfill currently has no fencing around it leaving it open to roaming animals and without a barrier to stop blowing trash. A burn barrel was fabricated locally in 2011 and is now in use assisting in the reduction of the amount of waste put into the landfill. Detailed descriptions of the Nikolai landfill and site control issues are included in the 2005 *Nikolai Sanitation Facilities Master Plan*.

### **Landfill Improvements**

Immediate improvements to the landfill include installation of fencing, trench excavation, and dike fill. A long term priority is to relocate the landfill and close out the current landfill. The City of Nikolai is currently applying for funding to conduct a feasibility study on landfill relocation. The Edzeno' Tribal Council is currently applying for the Indian Environmental General Assistance Program which would provide funding for a Tribal Council position which would focus on implementing environmental protection programs. Cost estimates in the *Nikolai Sanitation Facilities Master Plan* for reclaiming the existing landfill is 150,000. Cost estimates for constructing a new landfill and closure of the existing one are also included in Volume one of Four page 175 of the *Sanitation Facilities Master Plan*.

### **Potential Partners**

Possible funding sources for completing either improvements to the existing landfill or constructing a new one and closing out the current landfill one might be the Alaska Native Health Board, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Denali Commission, Indian Environmental General Assistance Program, or the Rasmuson Foundation for funding.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> (Michael L. Foster & Associates, Inc., 2005)

## Ongoing Goal: Create more activities for the youth in Nikolai.

### Resources external & internal:

Current resources for kids include the school, school library & computer lab, Tribal Family & Youth Specialist (TFYS), TCC Youth Employment Services, TCC Summer Youth Program, Camp Fire Kids Program. Activities for Nikolai youth include open gym nights, game nights, family fishing and hunting camps in the summer and fall.

### Obstacles/ challenges external & internal:

Some of the challenges include a lack of volunteers and participation among parents and community members and disinterest among youth to learn cultural activities. Other significant challenges include students dropping out of school and being influenced by subsistence abuse.



Nikolai students learn how to bead from community members.

### The Activity Organizer:

Activity	Lead Organizer	Volunteers	Supplies	Time of year/ dates
<b>Sports</b> Basketball, Canoeing, boating, baseball field, Open Gym Nights				
<b>Activity Center</b> Activity center where kids can do homework, work on computers, and play games like pool & ping pong.			City has pool table that just needs a few improvements.	
<b>Culture Activities</b> Beading, sewing, Native dancing, language activities, teaching skills in subsistence hunting & gathering.	TFYS			

### As a community, what could we do to support Nikolai youth in completing school?

Increased involvement of community and parents. Be good role-models for youth. Provide mentorship and encouragement to youth . As a community enforce school attendance. Address subsistence abuse and alcohol usage. Parents quit drinking, especially the first week of April during school testing. Teach youth to respect their elders. Provide local resources for GED preparation and support.



## **Ongoing Goal: Preserve the Upper Kuskokwim Language.**

### **Resources external & internal:**

Some of the resources that are available to assist in Upper Kuskokwim language preservation include the language library located in school, Elders that still speak the Upper Kuskokwim language, language sings that could be posted around the village, and the Upper Kuskokwim language class through UAF taught by local resident Betty Petruska for several years.

### **Obstacles/ challenges external & internal:**

One significant challenge is making it a community wide effort to speak the language day to day, particularly at community gatherings. There is also a lack of interest among youth and young adults to learn the Upper Kuskokwim language.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Lead Organizer</b>	<b>Volunteers</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Community language nights, gather once a week where elders will tell stories and use Native language	Miranda/ Debbie	Elders Better to teach at woman's night and Debbie to teach kids	Telida Village Council, School able to pay Elders for teaching Native Language	Start activities in October after moose hunting season
Language Emersion at Fall and Spring Camp.			Council- IASD	
Build Language signs			School Shop Class might be able to construct signs.	
Research language emersion programs that other communities have used to bring back and preserve their language.				
Require Early Head start teacher to use Upper Kuskokwim Language in youth programs			TCC provides funding for Early Head start teacher to complete classes in Upper	

			Kuskokwim language.	
Encourage the use of the Upper Kuskokwim language at community gatherings and at home.				



**Oline Petruska holding a display for the new Chief Andrew Isaac Health Clinic in Fairbanks.**

**As a community, how could we better educate our kids in our culture and language?**

Integrate more cultural and Native language classes into daily life. Work with school volunteering to teach more cultural activities. Encourage community members that have cultural and language knowledge to teach the younger kids. Make sure the people that speak our language are involved in all activities to teach youth and encourage their speaking of our language.

## **Ongoing Goal: Nikolai has employment opportunities for its residents.**

### **Resources external & internal:**

Employment and training/ certification resources include Edzeno' Village Council, City of Nikolai, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inter-Aleutians Center in McGrath.

### **Obstacles/ challenges external & internal:**

There are very limited employment opportunities available in Nikolai. There is also a lack of skilled labor for some of the positions that do come available such as the Community Health Aide position that is currently open.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Lead Person/ Entity</b>	<b>Resources needed &amp; Notes</b>	<b>Times Start</b>	<b>Time End</b>
Post job & training/ certification opportunities weekly on a community bulletin board for community members.	Tribal Workforce Development Specialist	Time, access to internet and jobs sites	Immediately	Ongoing
Establish a local sawmill that could provide lumber for construction projects within the community and provide a few local jobs.	Individuals/ City of Nikolai/ Edzeno' Native Village Council			
Hold construction/ trades classes, providing certification opportunities for residents allowing more employment opportunities for upcoming construction projects in the community and surrounding areas.	Edzeno' Native Village Council	UAF-IAC has agreed to deliver a 38 credit Construction and Trade Program in the spring of 2012 with a minimum of 10 interested students.		
Computer Training Courses	Edzeno' Native Village Council	Permission from school to host trainings. Cost of training.		
Establish a local daycare	Individual		Immediate	Ongoing

## ***Community Contact Information***

---

### **Edzeno' Native Village Council**

P.O. Box 9105  
Nikolai, AK 99691  
(Office) 907-293-2311  
(Fax) 907-293-2481  
[edzenocouncil@yahoo.com](mailto:edzenocouncil@yahoo.com)

### **City of Nikolai**

P.O. Box 90  
Nikolai, AK 99691  
(Office) 907-293-2113  
[cityofnikolai@yahoo.com](mailto:cityofnikolai@yahoo.com)

### **Top of the Kuskokwim School**

P.O. Box 9190  
Nikolai, AK 99691  
Ph. (907) 293-2427  
Fax (907) 293-2214

### **Nikolai Health Clinic, Southcentral Foundation**

P.O. Box 9164  
Nikolai AK 99691  
Ph. (907) 293-2328  
Fax 293-2330  
Southcentral Foundation Web: [www.southcentralfoundation.com](http://www.southcentralfoundation.com)  
Health Aide E-Mail: [mpetruska@southcentralfoundation.com](mailto:mpetruska@southcentralfoundation.com)

### **MTNT Limited Shareholder Services**

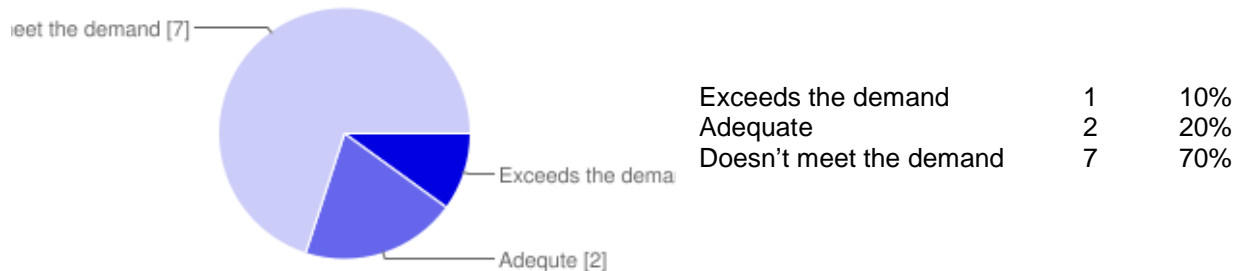
PO Box 309  
McGrath, Alaska 99627  
Ph. (907) 524-3391  
Fax (907) 524-3062  
[www.mtnt.net](http://www.mtnt.net)

### **MTNT Management Services**

1000 O'Malley Road Suite 107  
Anchorage, Alaska 99515  
Ph. 907.569.MTNT (6868)  
Email: [info@mtnt.net](mailto:info@mtnt.net)

## Appendix B: Nikolai Community Survey Summary

### How would you rate the availability of housing in Nikolai?



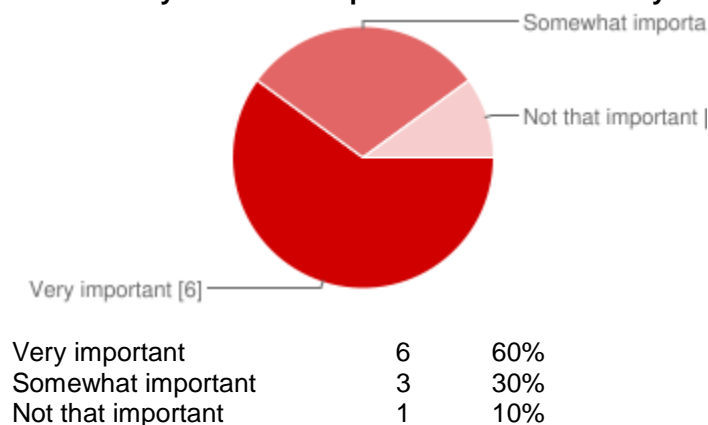
### How would you rate the condition of available housing?

Excellent	0	0%
It is adequate (there are not too many problems with existing housing).	2	20%
Very poor (there are many problems with available housing).	8	80%

### In the next five years what would you like to see happen to improve the condition/ availability of housing in Nikolai?

Cleaner running water hope to see people that have IRHA housing to have an option instead of being told you don't have to buy it. Either rehab some houses and on get some funding for low-income housing and build new homes. We need more houses to be available to keep people here so the village can grow. I would like to see five new homes built + 75% of existing homes renovated. We cannot hire a VPSO or have people move back to village because they will have no place to live. Water is full of iron and is orange in color + bad tasting. Not everyone has running water. Structures are old, falling apart.

### How would you rate the importance of a community tribal hall in Nikolai?



### What would the primary uses of the tribal hall be?

Meetings, safety home, potlatches, Community gathering, guest events Gathering place for potlatches, game night for kids , gathering place for kids, during the day potential place for early head start. Tribal meetings and other events in the village Potlatches, gatherings and youth activities it would be a place for us to gather and interact, which is important to the survival of our culture. Community gatherings, potlatches, meetings, cakewalk (fundraisers), kids'



games, game night, tribal court (whenever it starts), etc. having classes. Gatherings for village activities Meetings, game nights

#### **What sort of alternative energy solutions, if any, should be considered in the community of Nikolai?**

Wind conductors (fan things) solar energy. Some solar panels and wind power generators Wind would work to offset fuel use for generator. Solar Heating oil is 7.50 a gallon! A cord of wood is up to \$400. My electricity bill is hundreds of dollars a month! Solar, wind, garn boilers (talk to Ross Coen @ TCC- he already started an approach for community buildings) Hydro (We already have new generators + prepaid meters) Hydropower. The river goes out slowly, and the ones who have looked at it here seem to think it might be doable. Solar power for cabins, not sure about the village. Not sure

#### **What sort of summer/ after school activities are currently available for Nikolai youth?**

Y.E.S, volleyball, camping, there should be more kids have campfire for the first time in many years. None. Not that much at all Library & computer lab, TCC summer youth program, youth employment. TFYS-game nights. This summer we're having Camp Fire came to Nikolai. People go to fish camp during summer and fall as well. I just moved on last October because I got a job as TFYS. I have been doing activities with kids of all ages since I was hired. Game nights, open gym

#### **What sort of activities would you like to see available to the youth in Nikolai?**

Beading, sewing, Native dancing, bilingual, open library, basketball. Afterschool place to get on the computers, do homework, play pool, ping pong. Also projects sewing, other projects that are funded through JOM .Some work for older youths and more just teaching traditional skills and gathering subsistence foods. Outside basketball and baseball field, Native dancing, Native language class, hikes, canoeing, boating, fish camp. More cultural activities. More community involvement, the kids need good sober role models. Skill building activities. Maybe a new Baseball Court and teen center. Not sure

#### **How could you personally assist in making these activities available?**

Help supervise Permission from the school board can volunteer my services. I can volunteer. Volunteer my time/ energy. Create, implement ideas for projects, chaperone Volunteer to do activities with youth. Participate

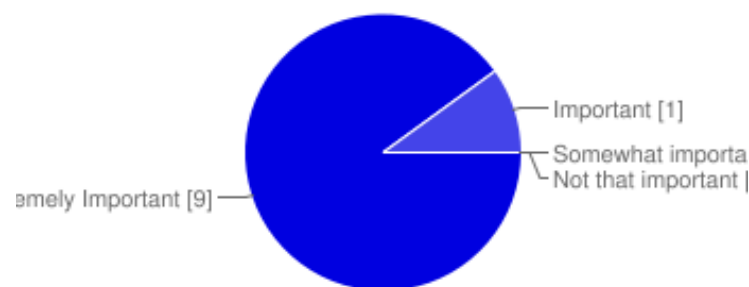
#### **As a community, how could we better educate our kids in our culture and language?**

Cultural classes More Native language classes and culture events and enforce them to come. Apply for grants to make useful items baskets, paddles and usually those are done by a native speaker. Having people with some culture and language experience heading in these activities Provide classes in our language instead of other languages think summer school is important have personally started via UAF a language class (for credit) but sadly there were only 1-2 youth involved. Make sure the people that speak our language are involved in all activities to teach youth. Speak it.

#### **As a community, what could we do to support Nikolai youth in completing school?**

Get them more involved in School classes more strict and better teachers. Be there and believe in them so often youth are taught, "respect you elders!" but do we respect our youth? Try to get parents more involved with helping kids think more parent involvement is a plus Encourage. Support. Offer to time to help. Tutor. Mentor. Be Sober. Role Model. Enforce attendance. Get rid of the marijuana. Parents quit drinking, especially the first week of April during testing. Provide local resources for GED preparation and support. Pay more attention to their needs. Give them activities to do and keep them...

#### **How would you rate the importance of preserving the Upper Kuskokwim Language?**



Extremely Important	9	90%
Important	1	10%
Somewhat important	0	0%

Not that important 0 0%

#### What needs to happen in order to preserve the Upper Kuskokwim language?

The whole community needs to get together and practice it. For the youth to ask the Elders to teach them. More interaction and a program similar to the Rosetta stone. Teaching language at school and have some time talking at home. Classes. We need to educate our educators and look for more teachers. Community involvement/ participation. It's easy to find a teacher, we just need students!!!! It needs to be used in everyday life. If the elders use it around the youngest ones, they'll learn it, if they don't, they'll never really learn it as well later. Record our Elderly and pursue their stories. Speak...

#### What community resources are available to assist in the preservation of the Upper Kuskokwim language?

Books and elders enough if the people took charge and helped School, elder lunch program. None I know of. Elders. Betty Petruska & Steve. UAF, school, Betty Petruska (bilingual teacher), Elders. Elders, I think there was a class? UAA, Elders People that speak it.

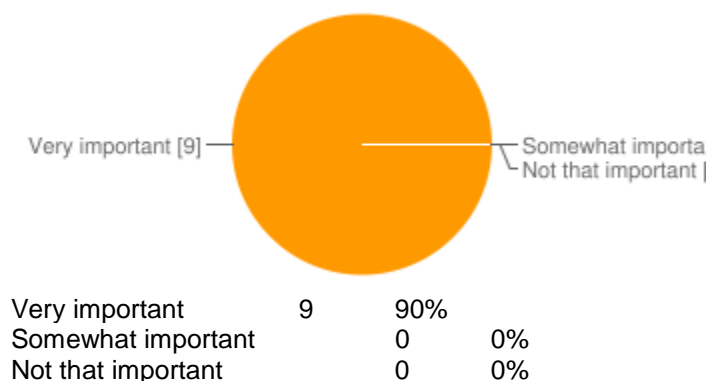
#### As a community, what could we do to help support cultural activities?

Encourage everybody to get involved. Just to get a good teacher to enforce it Involve yourself. Bring the family along to activities. Volunteer. Attend, participate (actively), be innovative in finding ways to integrate it. Participate Plan it.

#### As a community how could we help encourage sobriety?

Show them the consequences of drinking and advantages of sobriety. Hire a VPSO to arrest all the drunks Support our sober people show that this behavior is not acceptable and the norm. Be a part of it and show encouragement Get a VPSO. Gatherings. Being sober says ALOT! Sober people can encourage/ support sobriety. Offer help often even if not wanted. Learn and teach each other problem-solving skills. Encouragement and talking to them.

#### Rate the importance of having a new clinic in Nikolai?



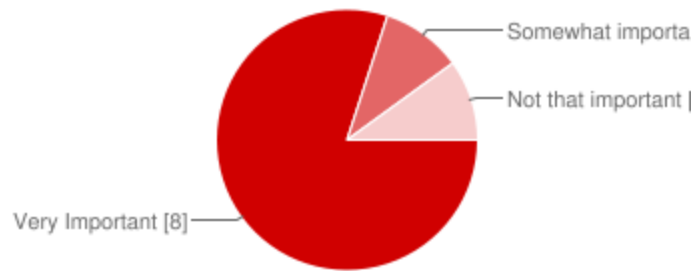
#### Please describe the condition of the current clinic in Nikolai?

Fair condition. Too small and not private very old very hot drafty and not enough of the life saving products that are available in most clinics. Small and excess in and out for emergencies not very good. Small and not very private Very poor clinic, no outside light, too hot, cramped There is not clean or hot water. No janitor, Service not set up for trauma. No temperature control (for medications). No shower. Too small, less than 500 sq. ft. No privacy people can hear through the walls, no emergency exit, aesthetically unpleasant. Unreliable plumbing:

#### How would a new clinic improve health care in Nikolai?

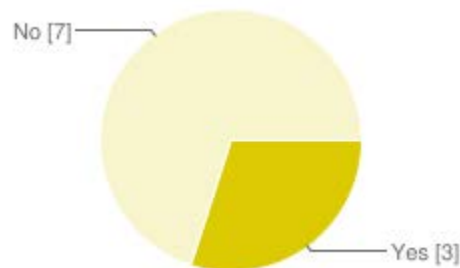
Better education for nurses and better medication Very greatly people don't like ours. Hopefully we get a difibulator and access to medicines that are needed. It would make it so much better Not an adequate to see emergency patients Hire another health aide if larger space, this is a big deal. Have a private room for behavioral health. Have a private exam room where people outside can't hear what is going on. Be able to get a stretcher out of there is we had adequate space.. There are too many things to list. Cleaner, safer, medicines that have been kept at proper temperature. If we have dental.

#### How important is having a VPSO position in Nikolai for community safety?



Very Important	8	80%
Somewhat important	1	10%
Not that important	1	10%

**The firefighting equipment available in Nikolai would be sufficient in putting the case of fire emergencies?**

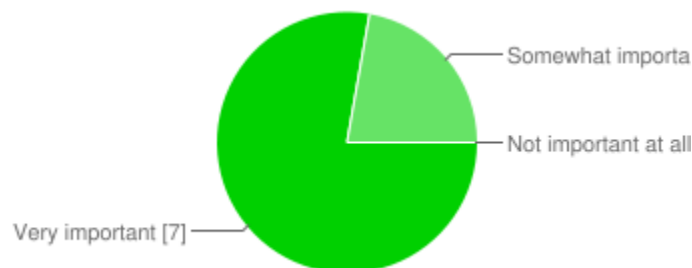


Yes	3	30%
No	7	70%

**What additional firefighting equipment or infrastructure is needed to be better prepared in the event of a fire?**

More fire alarms. A fire station. We need a fire truck access to one and to know where it is ..We also need a leader or an EMT trainee to be the go to contact. An adequate 911 system. Volunteer training and more up to date equipment We need to get what we have inspected and people trained on it. Fire truck we have no equipment currently. Any little bit helps. I'm not confident that enough community members are familiar with the equipment and how to access it and use it. They may be--I happen to be clueless about it all and don't know when the last training was, so I can't feel confident. Also, no ambulance...

**How important is having access to employment opportunity in your decision to live Nikolai?**



Very important	7	70%
Somewhat important	2	20%
Not important at all	0	0%

**Choose the description that best describes your employment status.**

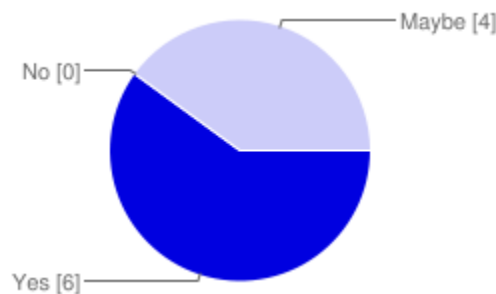
Not employed, and not looking for work.	0	0%
---	---	----

Unemployed, not employed but looking for work.	1	10%
Seasonally employed	2	20%
Part-time employed year round	2	20%
Full-time employed year round	4	40%
Self employed	1	10%

**What sort of business opportunities would you be willing to support in Nikolai? (ex. café, small engine repair, timber extraction etc?)**

Cafe. cafe and data entry. Any work would be nice. Barista Cafe, lodge, restaurant, any if it were considered self-employment by a local, I am open to ideas. Small engine repair, welding services, firewood, pizza delivery (has to be good pizza, though), maybe a café. Café. Cafe

**Do you agree with this statement?**



**How do you feel about visitors coming to Nikolai?**

I think it is fun to see new people and I love sharing what is special about Nikolai with visitors.	7	70%
I don't really care.	0	0%
I don't care as long as Nikolai benefits in some way.	2	20%
I wouldn't mind visitors as long as they didn't stay long and someone from the villages was hanging with them.	0	0%
I don't like uninvited strangers wandering around and want them to stay out of Nikolai.	0	0%
Other	1	10%

**If you answered yes to the first question please circle all of the answers that apply.**

I think it would be something that our community could be proud of and help us preserve our culture.	3	38%
I think it would be a good way to get our youth involved with their culture by showing visitors around.	3	38%
We need more jobs in our village that still allow us to do subsistence.	1	13%
We need job opportunities that don't affect the environment like mining.	2	25%
I would like to have people to sell my artwork/crafts/_____ to.	2	25%
We need jobs that don't impact our hunting and fishing resources.	3	38%
I know I live in a really special place and want to share it with others.	2	25%
People are leaving the village to find work other places and tourism might help slow that down.	2	25%
Other	1	13%

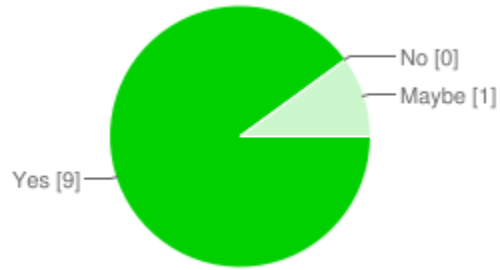
**Please indicate the current condition of waste management in Nikolai?**

The Nikolai landfill and current waste management procedures adequately deal with the waste that is produced.	5	50%
The Nikolai landfill and current waste management procedures do not adequately deal with the amount of waste that is produced.	5	50%

**What sort of improvements, if any, could be made to improve solid waste management in Nikolai?**

Incinerator. Recycling program in place a spot to throw away batteries and light fixtures. Need to be relocated soon. Need to be able to remove bulk metal items. The barrel that's down there now will probably fill up with snow, City should think about a lift able lid of some kind to keep snow and animals out. Area clean up of dump site, this has sort of happened since we got an incinerator, that burns our trash. A fence put up around dump site so trash doesn't spread. Recycle bin. Area for give and take bin. Maybe offer a class to village to discuss environmental impacts of waste, batteries, soil, g...

**Would you support any recycling or reuse initiatives to help reduce the amount of waste that goes to the Nikolai Landfill?**



Yes	9	90%
No	0	0%
Maybe	1	10%

**Please list any priorities that you would like considered by community members that were not listed above.**

More activities and a VPSO. Having more youth's and young adults taking leadership roles in the community.



## References

---

Alaska Department of Commerce, C. a. (n.d.). *Alaska Community Database Community Information Summaries*. Retrieved June 1, 2010, from Division of Community & Regional Affairs:  
<http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/dca/commdb/CIS.cfm>

Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section. (2011, May 18). *Nikolai*. Retrieved July 15, 2011, from Alaska Local and Regional Information Workforce Info:  
[http://labor.alaska.gov/research/alari/3\\_29\\_221.htm](http://labor.alaska.gov/research/alari/3_29_221.htm)

Collins, R. L. (2004). *Dichinane' Hwt'ana: A History of the people of the Upper Kuskokwim who live in Nikolai and Telida, Alaska*. McGrath: National Park Service.

Jenkins, R. (2011, December 1). Personal Correspondence. Anchorage.

Michael L. Foster & Associates, Inc. (2005). *Nikolai Sanitation Facilities Master Plan*. Eagle River: ANTHC.

Petruska, M. (2011, August 29). Response to Working Group for Rural Alaska Self Reliance.

Ruba Status Report Alaska Division of Community and Regional Affairs. (2011). *Ruba Status Report Nikolai*. Rural Utilities Business Advisor.

Runkle, J. (2011, September 1). Nikolai, AK needs your help! Email correspondence. Nikolai, Alaska.

Tanana Chiefs Conference Transportation Department. (2001). *Nikolai Long Range Transportation Plan*. Fairbanks: Tanana Chiefs Conference.