



FORT YUKON COMMUNITY PLAN 2022-2027



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RESOLUTION



Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government

(Formerly known as the Native Village of Fort Yukon, IRA)

P.O. Box 126 3rd & Alder Road

Fort Yukon, AK 99740

Phone: (907) 662-2581 or 1-800-478-6839

Fax: (907) 662-2222 Website: www.fortyukon.org

Approving Fort Yukon's 2022 – 2027 Community Plan Resolution No. 2022-14

WHEREAS, the Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government, also known as Native Village of Fort Yukon, IRA, is the duly constituted Native American Tribe recognized by the Federal Government of the United States, and

WHEREAS, the Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Council is the duly elected governing body of the Tribe, authorized to act by and on behalf of its Tribal Members, and

WHEREAS; the Fort Yukon Community Plan is important to the future growth and development of Fort Yukon, AK and,

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

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

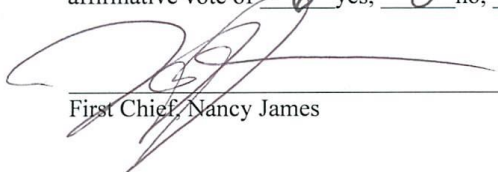
WHEREAS; it is understood that this document was created for public use and will be made publicly available and,

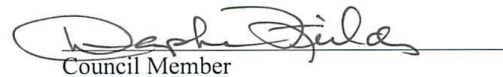
WHEREAS; we ask all public, private, and non-profit entities serving our community to recognize and use this plan; and,

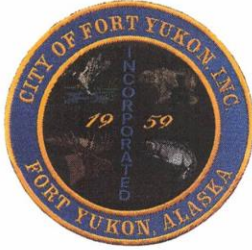
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the parties of this resolution agree to work together to pursue the values, goals, and vision express in this plan.

CERTIFICATION OF RESOLUTION

We hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly considered by the Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government in a regular meeting convened this 10 day of December, 2022 at which a quorum was present and approved this resolution by an affirmative vote of 6 yes, 0 no, 0 abstaining and 1 absent.


First Chief Nancy James


Council Member



City of Fort Yukon

P.O. Box 269 ~ Fort Yukon, Alaska 99740

907-662-2379 or 662-2479

Fax 907-662-2717

citymanager@fortyukon.us

Resolution of the City of Fort Yukon, Alaska

No. 2022-05

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE FORT YUKON COMMUNITY PLAN 2022-2027

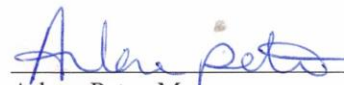
WHEREAS: the City of Fort Yukon has reviewed and fully supports the Fort Yukon Community plan that was drafted by the Tanana chiefs Conference; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Fort Yukon recognizes the importance of this document, not only for the goals and objectives that it states, but also the importance of having this document to present to granting and funding agencies to obtain funding for the goals and objectives in the document; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Fort Yukon fully supports this document and will work with the Tribe, other Tribal Governments and Tribal Organizations, State and Federal Agencies, and other Agencies and other Organizations to accomplish the goals and objectives in the document;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the City of Fort Yukon Council fully supports this document and looks forward to working to accomplish the goals and objectives, for the benefit of all Fort Yukon Residents.

PASSED and **APPROVED** by duly constituted quorum of the City Council of Fort Yukon, Alaska on this 9th day of August, 2022.


Arlene Peter, Mayor

ATTEST:


Fort Yukon City Clerk



COMMUNITY VISION



Figure 1 Photo Courtesy of Wade Fields

“OUR VISION IS TO INCREASE THE QUALITY OF
LIFE FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS THROUGH
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE
PRESERVATION OF OUR CULTURE, HERITAGE,
AND RICH NATURAL RESOURCES.”

COMMUNITY VALUES



Figure 2 Photo Courtesy of Kelly Fields

HUNTING	OUTDOORS
FISHING	SEWING
FEEDING MY KIDS	WORKING
CULTURE AND TRADITION	CHURCH
HOME	FAMILY
GATHERING	FRIENDS
SAFETY	SHARING & CARING
SMALL COMMUNITY	YUKON RIVER
NATURAL	SUBSISTENCE
TRAPPING	TOGETHERNESS
FREEDOM	QUIET

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Fort Yukon Community Plan was completed with the help of Tanana Chiefs Conference Planning and Development Program, Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government (GZTGT), City of Fort Yukon, Gwichyaa Zhee Corporation, and other entities in Fort Yukon. The community has been instrumental in developing a community plan through community planning meetings and surveys. The plan was reviewed and adopted as an official document by the GZTGT on December 6th, 2022.

The Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government will implement this community plan by utilizing it as a living document. The community plan should be updated yearly and utilized to move the goals and objectives forward in order to develop projects and proposals. Implementation of the Fort Yukon Plan also opens up capacity building and funding opportunities, including the Tanana Chiefs Conference Planning & Development Grant Development Specialist position, which provides funding for the Tribe to employ a community based Grant Writing Specialist (GDS) that works closely together to write a grant for the Tribe to carry out one of the top goals and priorities in the community plan.

A special thank you goes to the late Gary Lawrence for helping getting this plan approved by the City of Fort Yukon.

COMMUNITY GOALS SUMMARY

Goal 1 - Housing

- Fort Yukon has five star energy efficient homes with power, water, and sewer in the Rabbit Line Subdivision

Goal 2 - Public Safety

- Fort Yukon has adequate public safety facilities

Goal 3 - Public Facilities

- Fort Yukon residents have an abundance of activities to stay busy year round

Goal 4 - Subsistence

- Fort Yukon residents actively work to protect and preserve their hunting and fishing activities

Goal 5 - Culture

- Fort Yukon residents are active in preserving and learning cultural activities

COMMUNITY PROFILE

HISTORY AND CULTURE¹

The Gwich'in Tribe inhabited the Yukon Flats area for thousands of years. Alexander Murray of the Hudson's Bay Company built the original Fort on Russian territory in 1847. Fort Yukon quickly became an important trade center for Gwich'in Indians who inhabited the vast lowlands of the Yukon Flats and the rolling hills of the Chandalar, Sheenjek, Porcupine and Black River Valleys. A mission school was established by 1862.

When the United States purchased Alaska in 1867, the Hudson's Bay Company continued operating, believing that the location was within the Dominion of Canada. In 1869, an American navigator traveled up the Yukon River and conducted sun sightings to prove that Fort Yukon was part of Alaskan territory. The Canadians then withdrew across the border.



Figure 3 Hudson Stuck Memorial Hospital

The fur trade of the 1800's, the whaling boom on the Arctic coast (1889-1904), and the Klondike Gold Rush spurred economic activity and provided some economic opportunities for the Native inhabitants. Major epidemics of introduced diseases struck the Fort Yukon population from the 1860's until the 1920's.

Over the years, Fort Yukon continued to serve as a mission and trading center. Archdeacon Hudson Stuck, who made the first ascent of Denali in 1913, made Fort Yukon his headquarters and is buried in the Native cemetery. In 1914, the Episcopal Church established a hospital, which

Moses Mercer, a trapper with the newly formed Alaska Commercial Company, took over operation of the Fort Yukon trading post. American missionaries and trappers began arriving. Prospectors followed these in turn when small quantities of gold were discovered between Fort Selkirk and Fort Yukon in 1873. The United States government opens a post office in 1898.



Figure 4 St Stephens Episcopal Church

¹ 1996 Fort Yukon City Plan

served the community until the mid-1950. In addition to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, the Assembly of God and the Baptist church serve the community.

The first plane landed in Fort Yukon in 1921. In 1945, filling and grading began for the system of city streets that is in use today. A major flood in 1949 destroyed much of the settlement, and many of the residents moved their homes to the higher ground east of the original town site. The stores, school, post office, public offices, and the community center are now located there.

Most Fort Yukon residents are part of the larger Gwich'in Athabascan Indian population of Alaska, who occupy about 55,000 square miles of territory on the Yukon River drainage. Half the villages scattered across the Yukon Flats lie above the Arctic Circle. At the western end of the valley, the culture transitions to the Koyukon Athabascans.

LOCATION



Figure 5 Fort Yukon Location

Fort Yukon is located at the confluence of the Yukon River and the Porcupine River, which is about 145 air miles northeast of Fairbanks. More specifically, Fort Yukon lies at approximately 66.564720° North Latitude and -145.273890° (West) Longitude. (Sec. 18, T020N, R012E, Fairbanks Meridian.) Fort Yukon is located in the Fairbanks Recording District. The area encompasses 7.0 sq. miles of land and 0.4 sq. miles of water.

CLIMATE

Fort Yukon falls within the continental climate zone, characterized by extreme temperature differences.

The continental climate zone encompasses most of the central part of the state and experiences extremely cold winters and warm summers.

Fort Yukon winters are long and harsh, while the short summers are surprisingly warm. There is very little precipitation, and the surrounding region is considered an Arctic desert. The Yukon-Tanana Plateau, south of the Yukon Basin, forms an effective barrier to the maritime air flows from the North Pacific Ocean. After rivers and marshes freeze, the plateau is a source for cold, continental Arctic air. Extended periods of -50 to -60 degrees Fahrenheit are common, and -75 degrees Fahrenheit has been recorded. Daily minimum temperatures from November to March are usually below 0 degrees Fahrenheit.

Summer temperatures reach 80 degrees Fahrenheit each year, and a high of 100 degrees Fahrenheit were recorded. The daily maximum average during July and August each year is more than 70 degrees Fahrenheit despite these high summer temperatures, daily variations can be extreme. Freezing temperatures have been recorded in every month of the year.

DEMOGRAPHICS

POPULATION

Fort Yukon first appeared in the United States Census in 1880, with 109 people. The highest amount of people was in 1960, with 710 people. Most recently, Fort Yukon had 514 people in 2020 (Fort Yukon, n.d.). Fort Yukon is the largest community on the Yukon Flats and serves as a regional center for the surrounding communities of Beaver, Venetie, and Birch Creek.

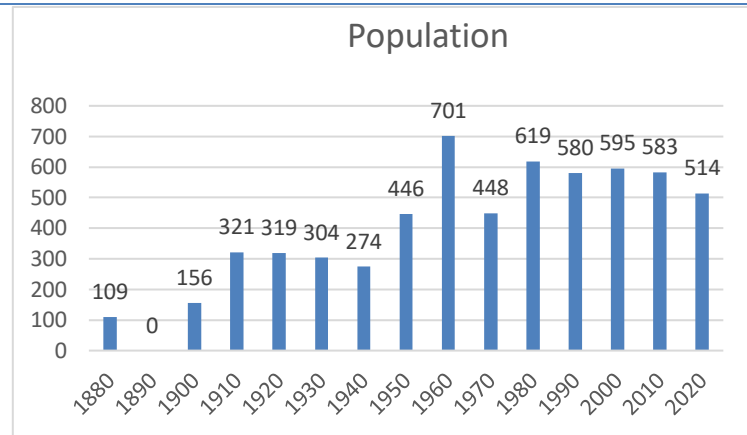


Figure 6 Fort Yukon Population Trend

POPULATION BY GENDER

According to State of Alaska DCRA (n.d.), females make up 51% of Fort Yukon's population, whereas males make up the other 49%.

POPULATION BY AGE

According to State of Alaska DCRA (n.d.), the largest age group in Fort Yukon are ages 25-34.

POPULATION BY RACE

According to State of Alaska DCRA (n.d.), most of the population 89% are Alaska Native, 7% are white, the remaining are Asian or two or more races.

WILDLIFE

A wide variety of fish and wildlife are present around Fort Yukon. Mammals include moose, caribou, dall sheep, black and brown bears, wolves, marten, lynx, beaver, muskrat, otter, weasel, and other furbearing animals. Over 150 species of birds and waterfowl migrate to this refuge to feed and nest (Northern Alaska Environmental Center, 2009). The Yukon River provides habitat for 18 species of fish including king (chinook), dog (chum), silver (coho) salmon, sheefish (inconnu), pike, Bering Cisco and other species of white fish, lamprey eels, burbot, and grayling inhabit the lakes and streams nearby.

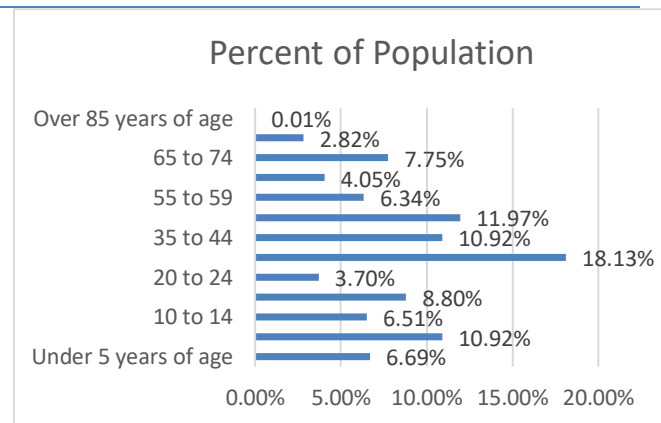


Figure 7 Age Range

Critical habitat areas or sanctuaries in and around Fort Yukon include the Draanjik area, an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) managed by the Bureau of Land Management

(BLM), in the areas surrounding Fort Yukon and located within the Yukon Flats Wildlife Refuge (Lynch, 2004). The American peregrine falcon is the only known endangered species within refuge. The Yukon Flats Wildlife Refuge is also home to bald eagles, which were once on the endangered species list until 2007 when it was removed from the list of threatened and endangered species (Alaska Department of Fish and Game, 2016).

VEGETATION

The primary vegetation in the area includes mosses, stunted black spruce, dwarf birch, sedge tussocks, and lichens. Vegetation is important to the permafrost tables, if removed it will lower the settling of the ground surface and erosion will result along the steams.

WILD AND SCENIC RIVER STATUS

There are two scenic rivers located within the Yukon Flats Refuge, which tribal members of the GZGTG utilize for subsistence activities and they are:

Upper/Lower Beaver Creek, located approximately 35 miles down the Yukon River

Fort Yukon Sheenjik River, located approximately 17 miles up the Porcupine River from Fort Yukon.

WILDERNESS

The northern boreal forest covers much of the Upper Yukon Porcupine region, carpeting most of the vast Yukon Flats, extending tendrils of forest into the foothills and valleys of the Brooks Range, and surrounding uplands. Encompassed within this forest are diverse plant communities, including bottomland spruce forests, lowland and upland spruce-hardwood forests, low-brush-bog and muskeg, and moist and alpine tundra.

The principal woody species found are white spruce (*Picea glauca*), black spruce (*Picea mariana*), white birch (*Betula papyrifera*), aspen (*Populus tremuloides*), alder (*Alnus* sp.), and willow (*Salix* sp.). A variety of shrubs, grasses, sedges, mosses, and lichens create a complete ground cover. Aquatic vegetation thrives during summer in the warm waters of lakes.

White spruce, birch, and balsam poplar are found along well-drained hillsides or riverbanks. Away from the rivers and in poorly drained areas black spruce is often found interspersed with bog and muskeg vegetative communities. Along river bars, shrub thickets of willow and alder predominate creating excellent habitat for moose, snowshoe hare and other species.

Moist tundra communities contain sedge tussocks, herbs such as fireweeds and a variety of low growing shrubs and grasses, Alpine tundra provides habitat for caribou, Dall sheep, ground squirrels, and grizzly bears. Lichens, forbs, grasses, and shrubs are found here clinging to barren, rocky, windswept slopes. Residents utilize certain species of this local flora, including berries, roots and other materials.

SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY

The Native Village of Fort Yukon is located on the Yukon Flats, characterized as being a flat marshy flood plain dotted with numerous thaw lakes, sloughs, and meandering streams. The primary vegetation includes organic mat of mosses, grasses, tussocks, and lichens with stands of willow, spruce, aspen, and birch trees.

There are two dominant soil types in this region. The primary soil type is the water-deposited silts and fine sands. The subsequent soil type is the poorly drained soils found in many of the shallow sloughs and old streambeds. These soils are usually permanently frozen even at shallow depths and can pose severe problems when constructed upon. The Yukon Flats region is in a discontinuous permafrost zone, and the maximum thickness of the permafrost near the town site is 390 feet.

GOVERNANCE

GWICHYAA ZHEE GWICH'IN TRIBAL GOVERNMENT

The mission of the Tribal Government is to exercise governmental authority to promote economic and social development, advocate and secure tribal rights, to secure tribal lands, to enhance educational opportunities and to protect traditional cultural values with a unified voice on behalf of its tribal members.

The Tribal Council members are the governmental leadership of the Gwichyaa Gwich'in Tribe consisting of seven (7) members elected by a majority of the tribal voters and a traditional chief.

Tribal enrollment for Fort Yukon, which includes some non-residents, was 1,731 in December 2022. Fort Yukon has 497 enrolled tribal members living in the community year round. There are 110 enrolled children ranging in age from 0-17 in 2022.



Figure 8 Barry Wallis Tribal Building

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

The Executive Director serves as the chief administrative officer of all tribal programs and is directly responsible to the Tribal Council for the management and administration of all programs and policies of the Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government (GZGTG). The Executive Director is responsible for developing and implementing an effective tribal management system that encompasses the mission statement, goals and objectives of the Tribe.

FINANCE

The Finance Office for the Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government is responsible for the financial management of all grants and contracts including our Annual Funding Agreement compact, in accordance with the rules that govern the granting agencies that award them.

HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government receives NAHASDA funds from HUD for its Housing Program. The Tribal Government constructs between 1-3 new houses each year for low-income tribal members, in addition to providing rehabilitation services to existing homes. The Tribal Council serves concurrently as the Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Housing Authority.

REALTY DEPARTMENT

The Realty Department is responsible for the administration of Restricted Native Allotments, wills, and probates. This program also handles restricted townsites.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM

The Environmental Program oversees Brownfield cleanup, backhaul of vehicles and white goods, and community cleanup and recycling efforts. Programs include recycling, solid waste management, and hazardous waste management.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The Department of Natural Resources is responsible for overseeing the wildlife surveys and land issues.

TRANSPORTATION

The Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government assists the community by providing transportation services. The Transportation oversees the sale and delivery of gravel for residential purposes, repair of roads in its inventory, and operates a new transit system for community residents.

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

The Education & Employment office administers higher education scholarships, AVT scholarships, Direct Employment, and GED testing services. This program operates an employment database.

TRIBAL OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

The Tribal Operations Department is responsible for assisting tribal members in establishing enrollment and tribal ID cards, maintaining the archives of organization materials, overseeing the ANA Grant Administration, and for the drafting of ordinances.

TRIBAL COURT

In accordance with the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), the Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government Tribal Court oversees child custody issues (including State intervention), appeals & petitions. The Court is comprised of five (5) elected judges and a clerk.

ICWA personnel also provide case management for children in Tribal custody as well as overseeing Tribal foster homes and Tribal adoptions.

GENERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The General Assistance Work Experience Program is responsible for providing funds to qualified tribal members for specified basic needs (which may include food, clothing, shelter, and utilities, burial assistance may also be included as an essential need). The program requires the recipients to work for their assistance.

ELDER PROGRAM

The Elder Program administers the Nutrition Program for the elderly. Each weekday, a hot lunch is served to those of retirement age or older. For those elders unable to get to the dining room, the Elder Program will provide transportation to and from the Tribal office. There are over 70 elders in Fort Yukon (2022).



Figure 9 Elders Dining Hall

CITY OF FORT YUKON

Fort Yukon is a second-class city and was incorporated in 1959. The City of Fort Yukon conducts its affairs under a manager form of government. Seven city council members are elected at large to staggering three-year terms. Elections are annual, overseen by the City Clerk. The mayor of Fort Yukon is elected by the council to serve a one-year term. An appointed City Manager reports to the city council, which works to balance budgets with the city treasurer. The City Manager is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the city, as well as recommending long-term initiatives to the City Council. The manager supervises and oversees duties and responsibilities of all city personnel. The City Council holds public meetings every 2nd Tuesday of each month. The City of Fort Yukon imposes a 3% sales tax. There are 14 fulltime employees.

The City also owns City Games, which provides Bingo and Pull Tabs, of which these profits also fund community projects. The City of Fort Yukon oversees the cable television, water and sewer services, maintenance shop, garbage pickup, solid waste management, vehicle maintenance, road maintenance, town site management and dog registration.

The City of Fort Yukon has submitted a request for funding to provide public safety services in the old clinic facility. They are proposing to renovate these to include a jail holding facility,

police officers, fire department, washeteria, and a place to hang out for the homeless in the front waiting area. The building and foundation is in place. The City just needs funding and support to make it happen. Further funding for these public services are a community need. The location is a good strategic site with access to services.

The City of Fort Yukon have written and gotten awards for the following

- State Transportation Improvement Plan \$360,000
 - o Services for dust control, right of way improvements, storm drainage, culvert repair and installation
- Building Renovation \$260,000
 - o Build two jail cells in City Hall, move cops office, fix garage, upgrade boiler
- City Lights \$150,000
 - o Fixed broken lights and add light where needed
- COPS Hiring Grant \$290,000
 - o Hire additional officers and purchase equipment

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Fort Yukon Police Department operates under the COPS grant. However, most of the funds come from the City of Fort Yukon. Presently, Fort Yukon does not have a Village Police Safety Officer. However, funding is available for up to 2 to 3 officers. There is a need for more officers and the ability to provide the community with 24-hour police/public safety coverage.

GWICHYAA ZHEE VILLAGE CORPORATION²

The Gwichyaa Zhee Village Corporation, incorporated on July 23, 1973 under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) of December 18, 1971. This corporation promotes the economic, social, cultural, and personal wellbeing of all Natives enrolled into the Native Village of Fort Yukon. The Corporate Vision is to “Grow GZC as an Economical Sustainable Business Serving Shareholders Interests in Line with Gwich’in Values. Let us work towards our vision together.” The corporation paid its first dividend in 1984.

For the first five years after filing the articles, the corporation was subject to the approval of Doyon, Ltd. Doyon was to overseeing the budget, as the regional corporation was to offer guidance.

Fort Yukon is the address of the Gwichyaa Zhee Corporation, where Walter J. Peter was the first registered agent. We had five initial Board of Directors, Jonathon Solomon, Walter J. Peter, Richard C. Carroll, Paul Solomon Sr., & Nancy James. It is noteworthy to state that Donald Peter was the notary and John C. Sackett, was the approving residing president of Doyon, Ltd.

² Information compiled by Frannie Hughes 2016

The Corporation is responsible for opening up lands in our village for growth. In the mid 1970's the Angle Pond Subdivision was formed and the village extended with home sites. Since then it extended this subdivision. Today, the water and sewer system services this area.

The corporation has obligations to complete 14C1, 14C2 & 14C3 transfers. According to the ANSCA rules, the corporation were to identify and convey title to surface rights. The 14C1 was reviewed in the early eighties; these lands were to be given to occupancies in 1971 as a primary place of residence, primary place of business, subsistence campsite, and headquarters for reindeer husbandry. For years, the village corporation worked on these projects, then in 200 got the 14C1 claimants' list to BLM. These sites were surveyed and in 2022, there are only a few left to finalize. Deeds need yet to be signed.



Figure 10 GZ Fuel

In 1994 a Land Transfer Agreement was signed with the Native Village of Fort Yukon, which transferred a warranty deed of 103,680 acres to the Native Village of Fort Yukon. This was believed to protect the lands from debtors and taxation, yet retaining certain rights in the lands.

The Corporation opened the GZ Fuel, a station quick mart in our village in 2003. Today, the business is sound, offers employment, and paid for our dividends in 2012. In the early 2000's, the corporation acquired the BLM Barrack's, which is utilized as summer rentals.

COUNCIL OF ATHABASCAN TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS

The Chiefs, Elders and other members of Tribal governments of the Yukon Flats Region established CATG in 1985. CATG is comprised of the 10 villages in the Yukon Flats including: Arctic Village, Beaver, Birch Creek, Canyon Village, Chalkyitsik, Circle, Fort Yukon, Rampart, Stevens, and Venetie. CATG is recognized as a non-profit Tribal consortium for the purposes of administering federal, state, and private foundation grants and contracts.

According to its constitution, CATG is “to conserve and protect tribal land and other resources; to encourage and support the exercise of tribal powers of self-government; to aid and support economic development; to promote the general welfare of each member tribe and its respective individual members; to preserve and maintain justice for all...” (Exercising Tribal Powers, n.d.)

The organization is the largest Tribal employer in the region, providing 50 jobs with an over 70% local hire rate and managing an annual budget exceeding \$5 million. Based in Fort Yukon, CATG has been very successful in improving health care, advocating for tribal rights and working towards a sustainable economy, which is compatible with the subsistence lifestyle.



Figure 11 Council of Athabascan Governments Administration Building

There are three main departments and various services offered by CATG, they are:

HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

Services include:

- Behavioral Health: assessments, screenings, brief interventions, prevention programs, referrals, village based services, grievances
- Community Health Aid & Practitioner: primary healthcare, including preventive, acute, chronic and emergency care
- Dental: diagnose dental disease, fill teeth, root canals, crowns, and perform surgical procedures, exams, cleanings, fluoride, extractions, and x-rays
- Village Clinics: CATG operates five clinics in the region, they are Arctic Village, Beaver, Birch Creek, Fort Yukon, and Venetie

NATURAL RESOURCES

Services include:

- Self Governance: providing tribes with authority, control, funding, discretion to plan, conduct, design and administer programs, services, functions and activities that meet the needs of individual communities
 - US Fish & Wildlife: Agreement with CATG and a self-governance agreement to manage the Yukon Flats Wildlife Refuge
- Fire: CATG contracts with the Bureau of Land Management – Alaska Fire Service (BLM AFS) to provide a type 2 wildland firefighting crew from the Yukon Flats. Assembly points are in Fort Yukon, Venetie, and Arctic Village.

EDUCATION

Services include:

- Native American Career and Technical Education Program (NACTEP): CATG receives a federally funded program to provide Native people the opportunity to pursue higher education and empower them to obtain better employment opportunities. NACTEP provides scholarships to qualifying students to attend the University of Alaska Fairbanks Interior Alaska Campus (IAC).
- Yeendaa Geenjit Shrideegwirilii (YGS): CATG receives a U.S. Department of Energy grant to increase post-secondary education and employment opportunities for youth within the Yukon Flats by providing activities to integrate traditional values and language into the K-12 educational experience.
- Early Headstart: CATG receives federal funds the early head start program for ages prenatal to three years old. Family advocate services include developmental stages, educational and health issues as the grow. Program is held in Fort Yukon and Venetie. Early Head Start is a comprehensive program designed to promote healthy pre-natal outcomes for pregnant women, enhance the development of very young children and promote healthy family functioning

BOROUGH GOVERNMENT

There is no organized borough government in the Yukon Flats region. The Fairbanks North Star Borough is located south of the Yukon Flats and the North Slope Borough boundary is north of Arctic Village. Fort Yukon is located in Senate District T, House District 39 and Judicial District 4.

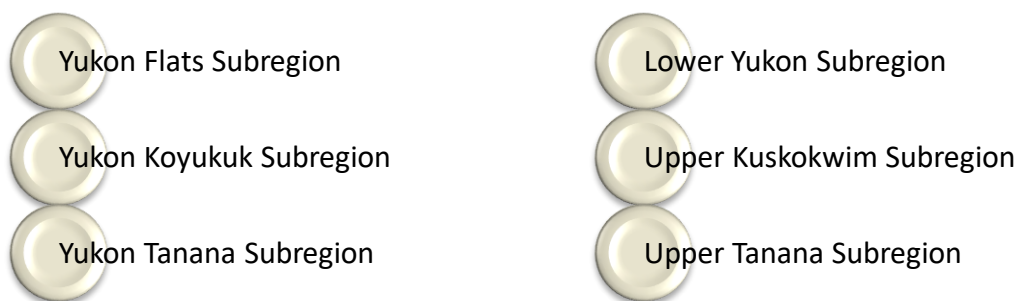
CORPORATIONS

TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE

Tanana Chiefs Conference formed in 1962 and incorporated under Alaska State Law in 1971. TCC, organized as Dena' Nena' Henash or "Our Land Speaks;" is an Alaska Native nonprofit corporation, charged with advancing Tribal self-determination and enhancing regional Native unity. TCC provides a unified voice in advancing sovereign tribal governments through the promotion of physical and mental wellness, education, socioeconomic development, and culture of the Interior.

TCC provides services while balancing traditional Athabascan and Alaska Native values with modern demands. TCC's objectives are to provide health, social, and economic services to the native people and villages of interior Alaska, known as the TCC region, using federal, state, and local resources. TCC is comprised of three core departments: Administration, Health Services, and Tribal Client Services.

Within those core departments, TCC offer services in the following categories: Tribal Development; Self Governance; Housing; Public Safety Officer; Natural Resources; Client Development; Elder Nutrition; Employment and Training; Child Development; Child Protection; Head Start; Staff Development; Vocational Rehabilitation; Work Assistance Program and ASAP; Dental; Quality Management; Laboratory; Contract Health; Registration; Environmental Health; Pharmacy; Medical; Family Medicine; Family Medicine RN; Specialty Clinics; Radiology; Community Health Outreach Program; Home Care Provider; Behavioral Health; Old Minto Family Recovery Camp; Psychiatry; SBIRT; Paul Williams House; Community Health Aide Program; Patient Hostel; Eye Clinic; Housing First; Wellness and Prevention; and Willow House.



The Tanana Chiefs Conference region covers an area of 235,000 square miles in Interior Alaska, which is equal to about 37 percent of the entire state, and just slightly smaller than the state of Texas. Within our region are six sub regions:

Within our six sub regions are 39 villages, for an approximate population of 6,700. TCC also serve clients in the Fairbanks area.

Tanana Chiefs Conference Executive Board Member: Nancy James, Fort Yukon (Term 2022-2025)

DOYON, LIMITED

Fort Yukon is part of Doyon Limited, the Alaska Native Regional Corporation for Interior Alaska, established in 1972 under the Alaska Native Claim Settlement Act (ANCSA). From provisions under ANCSA, Doyon is entitled to receive approximately 12.5 million acres of land across Interior Alaska, making Doyon the largest private landowner in Alaska. Doyon has, to date, received title to nearly 10 million acres. The land is mainly around the 34 villages within the TCC region. Doyon has over 20,000 shareholders.

DOYON VISION:

Leader In All We Do

DOYON MISSION:

To continually enhance our position as a financially strong Native corporation in order to promote the economic and social well-being of our shareholders and future shareholders, to strengthen our Native way of life, and to protect and enhance our land and resources.

DOYON VALUES:

Financially responsible

Socially and culturally responsibility Alaska Native people

Pride and respect in Native ownership

Commitment to the long-term sustainability

Honesty and integrity

Commitment to excellence

Respect for employees

Commitment to employee safety and sound environmental practices

Doyon, Limited Board of Directors: Cheryl Cadzow, Fort Yukon

PUBLIC UTILITIES

WATER AND SEWER

The City of Fort Yukon manages the water and sewer for the community. Water derives from two wells and is treated and stored in an 110,000-gallon tank. A combination of piped water, water delivery, and individual wells serve households. A flush/haul system, septic tanks, honey buckets, and outhouses are used for sewage disposal. Approximately half of all homes have plumbing. The piped water system and household septic tanks were installed in 1984. The City received funds to begin repairs to the piped water system and to construct a piped gravity sewer system to serve 250 residents and the local businesses. This project was to eliminate residential septic systems and outhouses. This project was completed in phases to work near strategically located lift stations. In 2011, the community extended the piped water system gravity and gravity fed septic system to the new subdivisions with a 325,000-gallon water tank.

WATER AND SEWER NEEDS

As stated above, only approximately half of Fort Yukon residents have access to running water in their homes. All households need improved or new water and sewer services available, whether it is through in-home systems or piped delivery, it is an essential improvement for health, safety and quality of life. The Rabbit Line subdivision needs access to water and sewer services.

SOLID WASTE

The City of Fort Yukon manages all solid waste facilities in the community. The Gwichyaa Gwich'in Tribe assists with recycling and backhaul within the community's landfill.

COMMUNICATIONS

RADIO

KZPA Public Broadcasting provides public service announcements. With the State of Alaska cutting the budgets in half, KZPA will be seeking funding and needs the support of the community and other villages surrounding Fort Yukon to keep the radio program up and running.

INTERNET AND PHONE

TelAlaska provides telephone and internet services to the community. GCI also provides Internet and cell phone services. The internet service provided lacks high-speed internet and is sometimes unreliable. Fiber optics was recently introduced to the region, which is still a work in progress. Companies of interest for fiber optics are Star Band, Hughes Net, and AT&T. Fiber optics were installed via a buried cable to the Yukon Flats Health Center and CATG's administration. There is a large need for internet infrastructure in Fort Yukon.

BROADBAND

The community lacks reliable internet connectivity. High-speed internet is only available in specific buildings, health clinics, schools and some residential homes. Broadband is not currently available community wide. Community residents who do have internet connectivity in their homes face high Prices. According to Telalaska, the price for internet in Fort Yukon are as follows:

Download/Upload Speed	Usage Cap (GB)	Monthly Price
1 Mbps/256K	12	79.90
1 Mbps/256K	25	154.90
1 Mbps/256K	50	259.90
1 Mbps/256K	100	444.90

This has become an amplified challenge during the pandemic. As a result, residents are not adequately equipped to work from home, participate in distance education and training, conduct basic business functions, or access telehealth. Fort Yukon would like to participate in broadband connectivity projects and service delivery in order to create better opportunities for its residents.

ENERGY

In 1949, the Fort Yukon Utility Company, a private system, was established to provide electricity. In 1955, the U.S. Air Force built an aircraft control and warning site and has since extended the White Alice Communications Network to the village. In 1985, the Gwichyaa Zhee Corporation purchased the utility company, for which Gwichyaa Zhee Utilities provides electric power to the community. Community consumption can easily overload the generators, a developing need to upgrade the voltage for future expansion. With a new power plant being constructed, other outdated infrastructure within the community must be upgraded to meet the new electronic operated power control panels.

Tribal Energy Grant Program funding and support have helped pave the way for Alaska Native Villages and other tribal communities to pursue energy visions and goals that are keeping with their cultural values, their goals for self-determination, and their aspirations for future generations. The community secured solar panels for the Tribal Administration building and would like to extend this new source of energy to the school and healthcare buildings. Fort Yukon currently utilizes a greenhouse project with solar panels as a learning venture.

The new power plant has a “biomass chipped system” which requires further funding as the environment changes, thus needing a sustaining method of energy.



Figure 12 Combined Heat & Power Plant

In 2015, a Combined Heat & Power Plant (CHPP) was completed. The plan is to have a biomass boiler with waste heat from diesel generators going through a heat loop at a strategically located site. Here, it will heat the school properties and go up to the water treatment plant utilizing a cost-effective way of heating in place of fossil fuels. We opened our new plant in 2017 (Gwichyaa Zhee, n.d.).

Fort Yukon’s source of electricity and power is diesel. In FY20, Fort Yukon residents saved an average annual \$1380, or \$115 per month.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

There is a city owned Laundromat the community uses. Most private homeowners do have their own washers and dryers in their homes. The community needs a place for visitors and travelers to have water/shower facilities. A vehicle wash area is needed. There is a need to upgrade these facilities for town guests and residents without service to shower and wash clothes.

RECYCLING CENTER

The Recycling Center building is used to provide clothes and necessities for other members of the community. The need to recycle is great, as the village is a compact place where the community must decide what to do with goods while remaining respectful to the environment and air. Recycling bins need to be advertised. Community members need to be educated and reminded to be responsible.

YUKON FLATS HEALTH CENTER



Figure 13 Yukon Flats Health Center

The Yukon Flats Health Center is the new health clinic built in 2007 and provides health services to the community and surrounding villages for dental, health, and behavioral health services. Wellness programs are ongoing and continue to be available. The Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments owns and operates the health center.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Yukon Flats Health Center provides emergency services, utilizing an ambulance to pick up sick patients, where the EMT Squad rotates on call schedules. The City of Fort Yukon is interested in starting a search and rescue squad, where the office will be housed in the old clinic facility if funding is approved. The community is in dire need of a public safety facility to house emergency vehicles and expand the police department.

FORT YUKON SCHOOL

The school was built in 1958 after the state closed the old Territorial School and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) School. A new school was built in 1999 after a fire destroyed the old school. The Alaska State Legislature established the Yukon Flats School District on July 1, 1976. At that time, assets to be used by the District were turned over by direct transfer or by use permits from the State of Alaska. The District is operated under the exclusive oversight management and control of the



Figure 14 Fort Yukon School

locally elected seven-member School Board. The School Board has governance responsibilities over all activities related to public elementary and secondary education within the jurisdiction of the Yukon Flats School District.

The State of Alaska established a system of public schools to be administered by the Department of Education and Early Development, who then established the Yukon Flats School District in 1976 with Alaska Regulations 14.08.031. These regulations divided the unrecognized boroughs into 19 Regional Education Attendance Area (REAA) school districts that exist today. The Yukon Flats School District public education for children in grades K-12.

The Yukon Flats School District (YFSD) main office is located in Fort Yukon and serves seven villages in the Yukon Flats with a total of 264 students and 31 teachers. Fort Yukon School has an enrollment of 117 students and 14 teachers.

The community has a vocational center with adjacent dorm rooms. It is important to utilize these facilities, as the school system is limited to vocational training. Fort Yukon is the hub of surrounding villages.

POST OFFICE

The U.S. Postal Service hours of operation are 9:00 am – 4:00 pm. Monday – Friday. The community has a full time Postmaster and a clerk to keep up with the mail and continue providing services to the community. Housing is needed for the postmaster.



Figure 15 Fort Yukon Post Office

HOUSING

The Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government receives NAHASDA funds from HUD for its Housing Program. The Tribal Government constructs between 1-3 new houses each year for low-income Tribal members, in addition to providing rehabilitation services to existing homes. The Tribal Council serves concurrently as the Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Housing Authority. The 2015 Projects included NAHASDA Self-Help and Rehabilitation and an Ice Rink and Warm-up shack.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the total housing units numbered 317, and vacant housing units numbered 92. Vacant housing units used only seasonally numbered 37.

According to the 2022 Fort Yukon Community Feedback Survey, local residents stated that housing is in high demand, rating a 4.5 on a scale of 1-5 importance. Community residents are interested in development of rental units, elder housing, single family, temporary/seasonal housing options. Problems current homeowners have include lack of storage space, high cost of

energy, lack of weatherization and/or heat loss, home rehabilitation, overcrowding, lack of sewer and water services.

ECONOMY

LOCAL STORES AND BUSINESSES

AC STORE

The Alaska Commercial Company has been based in Fort Yukon since the early 1950's. The original store was called the Northern Commercial Company and later changed to the Alaska Commercial Company and is known as the AC Store. They provide food, clothing, and hardware for the community. Fort Yukon, as with other rural



Figure 16 Alaska Commercial Company

communities in Alaska, works hard to make ends meet in the face of the high cost of living. Thus, the community of Fort Yukon relies heavily on hunting, fishing, and gathering to offset these costs.

OTHER BUSINESSES

There are many entrepreneurs in Fort Yukon. Current business licenses (as of May 2022) in Fort Yukon include (Search Business Licenses, n.d.):

- Gwichyaa Zhee Corporation
- Arctic Roasters – Owned by Jeremiah Niemuth
- Fort Yukon City Games – Owned by City of Fort Yukon
- Community Liquor Store – Owned by City of Fort Yukon
- Yukon Cargo – Owned by Gerald James
- Breaking Barriers, LLC
- The Snack Shack – Owned by Michael & Shannon Hardy
- Gwitchyaa Zhee Fuel Company
- Gwitchyaa Zhee Utility Company
- Gwitchyaa Zhee Utility Shop
- Council of Athabaskan Governments
- Gwandak Public Broadcasting, Inc.
- CL Consulting LLC
- Snowdrift Bed and Breakfast – Owned by Virginia Alexander



Figure 17 Photo Courtesy of Shannon Hardy

EMPLOYMENT

The City of Fort Yukon, GZGTG, CATG, Alaska Commercial Company (ACC), and the Yukon Flats School District (YFSD) are the primary employers in Fort Yukon. Tourism is becoming increasingly popular; Fort Yukon experiences spectacular Northern Lights during winter and has 24-hour daylight during the summer months. One resident holds a commercial fishing permit.

The AFS/BLM operates the Upper Yukon Zone under a facility that is active only during a high summer fire season and is used as an emergency firefighting base and deployment site. The U.S. Air Force operates a Long Range Radar Site that operates under a contract through Arctec Inc.

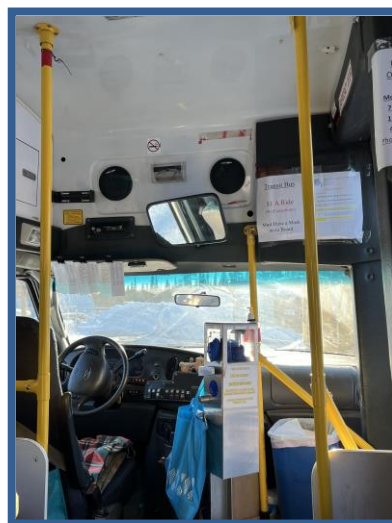
In 2016-2020, the American Community Survey found the average median household income was \$40,833. The median family income was \$72,083. Eighty-eight people were in poverty and 110 people lived below the 125% of the poverty level.

TRANSPORTATION

Fort Yukon is accessible by air and waterways during the summer months. Riverboats and skiffs are used for recreation, hunting, fishing and other subsistence activities. The Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government assists the community by providing transportation services. The transportation department oversees the sale and delivery of gravel for residential purposes, repair of roads in its inventory, and has implemented a transit system. Funds are needed to improve and maintain the transit system.

According to the 2022 Fort Yukon Community Feedback Survey, local residents stated that their biggest concerns regarding transportation are high fuel prices, freight costs, poor road maintenance, airfare and flight schedules, road safety, drunk drivers and dust control. Residents would like to see lower airfare, freight, and fuel costs, better-maintained roads, a shop for vehicle repairs and maintenance, wider roads, and an ice road connecting surrounding communities throughout the winter.

Snow machines and dog sleds are used on area trails or the frozen river, which becomes an ice road to area villages during winter. Extensive erosion to the north bank of the Yukon River has caused damage to city roads.



BARGE

Heavy cargo is barged from the end of May through mid-September; there is a barge off-loading area but no dock. Fort Yukon is in need of a docking area for barges to offload cargo and goods shipped on the river.

Figure 18 Fort Yukon Transit System

Gerald James, who provides barge service up and down the Yukon River, locally owns Yukon Barge. Ruby Marine serves Fort Yukon's barging needs as well.

AIRPORT

State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities owns and operates the airport, which consists of a floatplane facility and a 6,010-foot long gravel runway. The airport is also equipped with runway lights and navigational aids. Multiple air carriers service Fort Yukon seven days a week year-round.

A state-owned lighted, gravel airstrip is available; Hospital Lake, adjacent to the airport, is available for use by floatplanes.

RIGHT OF WAY AND ROADWAY OWNERSHIP

The memorandum of agreement between the Tribe and City is an agreement where the City of Fort Yukon maintains the estimated 37.5 miles of road in Fort Yukon. The Gwichyaa Zhee Corporation owns roadways outside the city limits located on Village Corporation lands. There are no State Roads in the area.

A review of low-altitude aerial photography of the community overlaid with property lines indicates that Fort Yukon's principal street, East 3rd Avenue is contained within a 60-foot right-of-way (ROW) inside the town-site and a 30-foot ROW east of the town-site. No ROW is designated for East 3rd Avenue from the town-site boundary west to the Barge Landing Site. Other streets within the town-site have 20-foot to 75-foot ROW's designated, with a 55 feet predominant standard within the eastern portion of the town-site and 30 feet with the western portion.

GEOMETRIC ELEMENTS

The City of Fort Yukon reported that all of the roads delineated on the community road map are about 20-30 feet wide. Inspection of the roads and reviewing aerial photographs indicates that they are for the most part, accurate. Virtually all of the streets appear to have been constructed within their rights-of-way. Many streets have benefited by engineered horizontal alignments.

EXISTING STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS

SURFACING AND SUB BASE MATERIAL

The City of Fort Yukon reports that the streets are constructed upon three to four foot thick gravel embankments. The gravel is mixed with a substantial amount of silt, producing extremely dusty conditions, especially during the summer. The City of Fort Yukon considers the dust problem to be serious enough to qualify as a potential health hazard. In 2015, the State of Alaska installed air filters to count dust particles along Spruce St. This has been a very serious problem for the young and elders, especially when summers have smoke from wildfires; the air quality is very dangerous.

DRAINAGE

A series of ditches and culverts were installed in 1995 during the construction of the dike/levee project to help improve the seasonal drainage and to remove floodwater. Below is list of culverts needed in the community to adequately drain storm and floodwaters:

- Airport Way from East 3rd Avenue to Spruce Street
- East 3rd Avenue Airport Way to Spruce Street
- Spruce Street from E 3rd Avenue Airport Way.
- Clinic Road from Spruce Street Airport Way.
- Sled Road William Loola St to East 1st Avenue

The community does not have an adequate drainage system, the ground sits with water after the snow melts, there is a need for the Corps of Engineer to restructure infrastructure towards proper drainage as many homes still have active outhouses.

BRIDGES

There is one existing bridge (Ivar's Bridge) located on Ivar's Road and is approximately 150 feet in length and 10 feet wide over the Sucker River. Ivar's bridge was constructed in 1990 with 5-foot diameter culverts and concrete. GZGTG has received funding through the Federal Highway Administration and various organizations to construct a new bridge to replace the old one. The new bridge was completed.

TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

There are many transportation needs in Fort Yukon. The following need to be addressed, including finding funding to conduct the following activities:

- Apply dust palliative to roads to reduce airborne dust and its adverse health impacts
 - Prepare roads for additive
 - Find local Alaska palliative for Alaskan roads
- Finding a reliable gravel source for projects throughout town, new Rabbit Line subdivision
 - Contact Doyon, Limited to inquire about gravel
 - Use equipment to extract gravel from ice pushup at the Yukon River
- 6-12" lift on roads to prevent flooding in low lying areas
 - Contract with civil construction company (if local hire is unavailable) to address problem areas
- Erosion control
 - Seek funding to address erosion
 - Install erosion control material that may be affected by changing river

LAND OWNERSHIP

GWICHYAA ZHEE CORPORATION

Gwichyaa Zhee Corporation, the local Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) village corporation, owns the surface lands on and adjacent to the Fort Yukon LRRS: Cache Site. Doyon Limited, an Alaska Native Regional Corporation owns the subsurface lands on and adjacent to the Fort Yukon LRRS: Cache Site. Gwichyaa Zhee Corporation and Doyon Limited acquired rights to the surface and subsurface land, respectively, through the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act signed by Congress on December 18, 1971. Surface lands were transferred to Gwichyaa Zhee Corporation through an interim conveyance dated 1983 or 1985, and a final conveyance from the Bureau of Land Management dated June 27, 2007 (Patent No. 50-2007-0573).

The Native Village of Fort Yukon was officially incorporated in 1959. Surface land ownership in the Fort Yukon area consists primarily of ANCSA-conveyed lands owned by Gwichyaa Zhee Corp. and Native allotments. Gwichyaa Zhee Corp. owns 214,600 surface land acres, of which approximately 617 surface land acres are on and adjacent to the Fort Yukon LRRS: Cache Site, and .50 surface land acres impacted by the Fort Yukon LRRS: Cache Site.

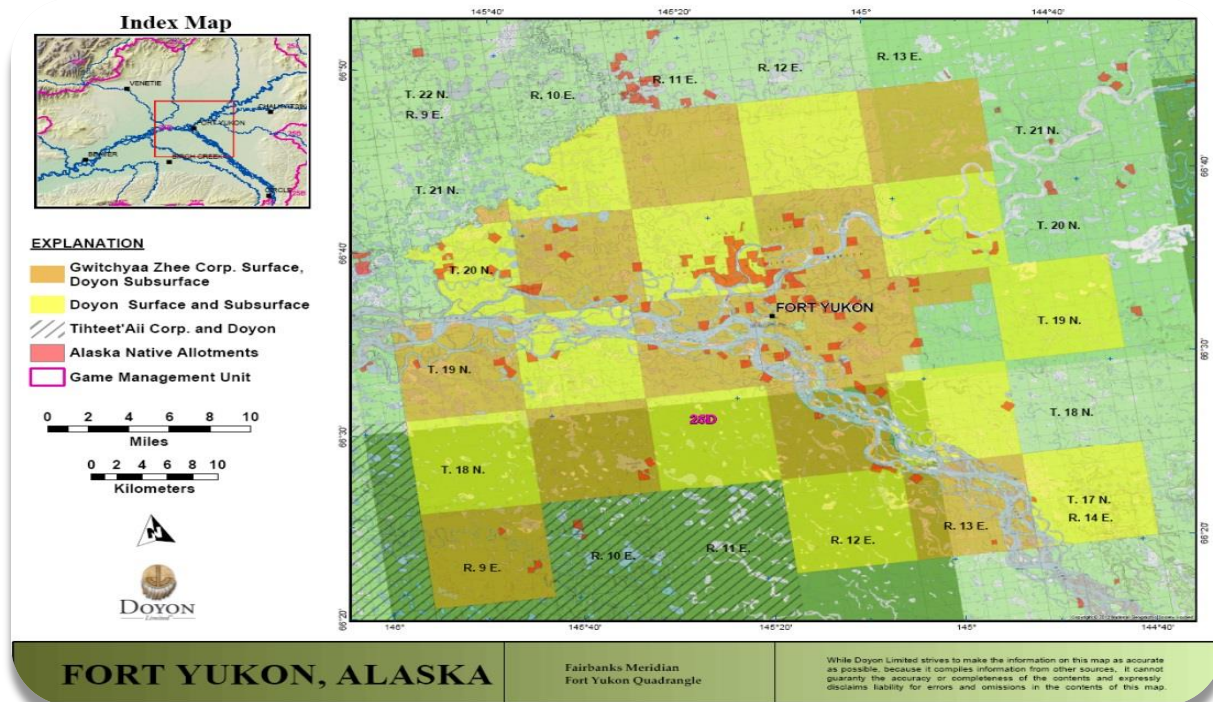


Figure 19 Doyon Limited Land Ownership

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

YUKON FLATS CHANGES

According to the University of Alaska International Arctic Research Center, the largest environmental changes in the Yukon Flats are: warmer temperatures, thawing permafrost, lakes drying, frequent wildland fires, and arrival of more southern wildlife species.

WARMER TEMPERATURES

Annual average temperatures are rising. Temperatures in the mountains surrounding the Yukon Flats have been rising since the 1970's, with typical annual average temperatures are now over 4°F warmer since the 1950's. Recent years were exceptionally warm, four out of five warmest years all occurred since 2015 (Yukon Flats Changing, 2021).

While temperatures have risen, there has been no change in precipitation in winter or summer in Fort Yukon.

THAWING PERMAFROST

Permafrost on Yukon Flats and across Alaska is changing. Warmer temperatures and increasing wildfires can thaw permafrost. This triggers a cascade of changes from shifting plant communities to new wetland dynamics. On Yukon Flats, the Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments is helping measure permafrost thaw to better understand future changes. As permafrost thaws, the speed of decay increases which releases the stored carbon into the atmosphere as a greenhouse gas, contributing to global climate warming (Yukon Flats Changing, 2021).

WATER CONDITIONS

Increased warming can tip the balance of these productive wetlands, causing them to become too enriched or dry out entirely during spring thaw and summer rainfall, breeding waterbirds that fed on the previously abundant plants and insects can be negatively impacted (Yukon Flats Changing, 2021).

Of all the environmental changes projected for Yukon Flats, the most significant impacts are related to water. Beyond permafrost thaw, and wetland drying, scientists also expect increased water flow, flooding and more woody debris. These changes affect wildlife, subsistence activities as well as the timing and severity of break-up and freeze-up (Yukon Flats Changing, 2021).



Figure 20 Photo Courtesy of Kayleen Carroll

Near Beaver, Fort Yukon and Stevens Village, the amount of water (called the flow) coming down the Yukon River in winter and spring has been increasing since 1977. This increased flow is caused by warming temperatures and is responsible for higher erosion rates. As warming continues into the future, the high water season may be longer each spring causing more erosion up (Yukon Flats Changing, 2021).

FLOODING

With the exception of the eastern portion of the village, Fort Yukon is subject to flooding. No floods have ever occurred due to summer rains, but occur during the spring breakups and are usually caused by ice jams on the Yukon River. Damage caused by the floods is a result of the large thick ice slabs that the water carries in as well as the water itself.

TCC villages have experienced periodic flooding with notable events in 2009 and 2013 that damaged property in Eagle, Circle, Fort Yukon and Galena. Annual flood damage varies, with damage caused by a mix of high floodwaters and ongoing riverbank erosion. Climate change will likely continue to increase the overall frequency and severity of floods in Interior Alaska.

EROSION

Erosion occurs by high water flow, ice flows, wind, and surface runoff occur continually. Erosion occurs at the lower end of the town below the dock and barge landing; 50 by 500 feet per year.

FISH

Most of the lakes are too shallow for whitefish to overwinter in, so they return to larger, deeper rivers in late summer or fall. Warmer temperatures in recent decades and the subsequent thawing of permafrost has resulted in numerous lakes drying out in the southern Yukon Flats. When this happens, the streams connecting the shallow lakes to rivers are lost. Fish can no longer access these productive lakes in summer to feed (Yukon Flats Changing, 2021).

Along with smaller fish, Chinook salmon run sizes across Alaska have been below average to poor since 2008. The Yukon River Chinook salmon that pass through Yukon Flats are part of the Canadian-origin stock that makes up about 42% of the overall Chinook run. In summer 2021, fisheries managers expect there to be 57,000 Chinook salmon in the Canadian-origin run. A run of this size may not be large enough to meet escapement goals or provide much harvest opportunity (Yukon Flats Changing, 2021).



Figure 21 Fishing Season

SOUTHERN WILDLIFE SPECIES

Due to more mild winter conditions, moose populations improve. Milder winters also allow southern species to expand their ranges into habitats that were once too cold for them. Mule deer are established in western Canada, close to the Yukon Flats. Mule deer can carry winter ticks, which can cause major moose decline, specifically in calves (Yukon Flats Changing, 2021). Winter ticks have not been documented in Alaska moose, but can cause a large threat.

Lesser scaup numbers have been increasing in the Yukon Flats since the early 2000's. May temperatures have increased. In the warm years, early bird arrivals followed by early nesting gives ducklings more time to grow fat and strong before migrating south.

Ruddy ducks are uncommon in the Interior of Alaska, but have been nesting in the Yukon Flats are observed in 2017. Biologists say they are moving northward as spring comes earlier. Average Yukon River breakup at Fort Yukon starts about a week earlier than it did in the early 1900's. Lakes and ponds on Yukon Flats are now ice-free earlier and likely give species like the ruddy duck more time to nest and raise ducklings (Yukon Flats Changing, 2021).

WILDFIRE

Several trends are emerging in Yukon Flats and Alaska. More acres are burning, fires are more frequent, and more fires reburn the same location or smolder underground, surviving winter and reigniting the next spring. Since 1988, the frequency of years that burned over 250,000 acres on Yukon Flats quadrupled. Yukon Flats experienced a clear shift toward more frequent large fire seasons with hundreds of thousands of acres burned, although years with relatively few burned acres are still common (Yukon Flats Changing, 2021).

MILITARY DEBRIS

The military debris is located at a location referred to as the Fort Yukon Long Range Radar Station (LRRS): Cache Site. Debris consisting of military-style ration containers and military-style rations are protruding from the east bank of the southern end of Yllota Slough. Ration containers and rations were occasionally scoured out of the bank by ice movement during spring break-up, where they end up in the base of Yllota Slough. The metal containers that house the rations were partially rusted and deformed by the scouring action of ice in Yllota Slough during spring break-up, resulting in many small holes and sharp edges.

With assistance from NALEMP, Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government Natural Resource Department relocated the debris to a safe, permitted, and permanent landfill, and rehabilitate the Cache Site.³

³ Please review the Fort Yukon Strategic Project Implementation Plan for more information.

SUBSISTENCE

Trapping, Native handicrafts, and hauling firewood provide supplemental income for residents of Fort Yukon. Residents rely heavily on subsistence foods to offset the high costs of goods sold in the one and only store in Fort Yukon (ACC). Salmon, whitefish, moose, bear, caribou, and waterfowl provide most meat sources. Many residents have small gardens in their yards and take advantage of the long summer growing hours and rich soil for growing excellent fresh vegetables.



Figure 22 Photo Courtesy of Melinda Peter

COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

EVENTS

Many communities celebrate the lengthening of daylight hours across the Interior by hosting spring carnivals. During the first week of April, TCC communities such as Venetie and Fort Yukon welcome friends and relatives from neighboring communities to their annual spring event. The week includes a variety of events including potlaches, fiddle dance, games and contests.



Figure 23 Photo Courtesy of Georgie Engler

CHURCHES

The St. Stephens Episcopal Church is one of the three churches in Fort Yukon. The parish hall project was completed in 2022 as an addition to St. Stephens Episcopal Church.

The Assembly of God Church has been in Fort Yukon since the 1947. They are engaging in the community with the local children and hold events that include our youth. This continues during each season.

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The University of Alaska's Yukon Flats Center offers programs for all villages in the region, including undergraduate college courses leading to an Associate of Arts degree. Most undergraduate college courses are taught with the intention of leading to an Associate of Arts degree. Most courses are taught by audio-conference with local facilitators. Other courses are taught locally.

The Interior Alaska Campus offers Occupational Endorsement, Certificate, Associate and Baccalaureate degrees via distance delivery and local intensive courses. The Yukon Flats School District (YFSD) also funds dual credit for high school Students and sponsors courses to enhance the skills for all high school students in the Yukon Flats area.



Figure 24 UAF Yukon Flats Center

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

Hub for Yukon Flats Advocacy
Running Water/sewer
Safety
Local Radio Station
Cultural values
Local police/VPSO
Subsistence
Job opportunities
Values
School District
River use
University/vocational
Local gardens
Language Center

Opportunities

Search and Rescue/ Expand public safety
Crimes Prevention
Local Trainings/ Educational training
Tourism
To enhance youth encouragement
Culture Camp
New Subdivision
Centralize Networking
Enhance Local businesses
Summer Youth Program
Garden opportunities
Power Plant
Entrepreneurship/small businesses
Facilities available
Language
Local Drivers Licenses available

Weaknesses

No Elders Home
Need Centralized education by tribe
Health Management Postal Service
Lack of dust control/roads
No gravel sites
Lack of safe homes and foster parents
Tribal court system/leadership
Teacher housing
Social programs unorganized
Fire break
No museum
No elder support to youth
Close old landfill/open new one
Flood control
Only one local store
Costs are too high in village
Lack of networking

Threats

Public communications systems
Need Customs/Border Patrol
Heating fuel, gas, propane costs
Preservation of Arts and Crafts
Monopoly on Fuel, Store, Airlines
TCC/CATG telling tribe what to do
State/Federal funding cuts Social Service
Resource Development
Marijuana Law
Climate Change
Lack of Planning
Students leaving to other schools
Flooding
Trespass Issues
Organizational growth
No input from elders
Youth advocacy
Increase fishing & hunting regulations
Outside Land sales

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

GOAL #1: HOUSING

Goal: Fort Yukon has five star energy efficient homes with power, water, and sewer in the Rabbit Line Subdivision

Objectives:

- 1) Hire a grant writer to seek, research and pursue housing funds
 - a) Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grants
 - i) Apply for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program for Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Villages
 - (1) Single Purpose Grant for low and moderate income persons
 - (2) Imminent Threat Grant to address issues for homes that have an immediate negative impact on public health such as house fire
 - ii) Apply for Indian Community Development Block Grants (ICDBG) to build, maintain, and operate affordable Indian housing and other affordable housing activities
 - 2) Contract out to pursue renewable energy grants for new homes
 - a) Apply for Department of Energy Infrastructure Deployment on Tribal Lands Grant
 - 3) Work with Rob Jordan with Renewable Energy Alaska Project for technical assistance to improve the housing policies and procedures
 - 4) Work with Alaska Housing Finance Corporation to implement a new program for elder assisted living
 - 5) Partner with Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) and State of Alaska Village Safe Water (VSW) program to seek funds and affordable ways to provide the new subdivision with water and sewer services
 - 6) Work with Gwichyaa Zhee Utility Company to fund and install power lines and electricity in new subdivision
 - a) Apply for Department of Energy Power Unelectrified Tribal Buildings
 - b) Research funding for solar panels to offset high costs of energy



Figure 25 Fort Yukon House

- 7) Collaborate with Cold Climate Housing Research Center to find how to best utilize their services to deliver energy efficient homes
- 8) Purchase/utilize saw mill equipment to create log homes
- 9) Ask Crowley, Inc to see how fuel costs can be lowered for community residents
 - a) Seek funding to purchase and install Toyotomi Oil Miser Boilers in new construction homes

GOAL #2: PUBLIC SAFETY

Goal: Fort Yukon has adequate public safety facilities

Objectives:

- 1) Update Tribal policies and procedures to include public safety issues
 - a) Request Tanana Chiefs Conference Safety Program for help in employing a Village Public Safety Officer to assist the Fort Yukon Police Program
- 2) Request Tanana Chiefs Conference Tribal Protective Services to research and seek funding for an Office of Victims of Crime Safe House
 - a) Work with City of Fort Yukon to secure land
 - b) Work with local utilities to install water, sewer, power
- 3) Open a Treatment Facility in Fort Yukon that addresses substance and mental problems within the Fort Yukon residents and Yukon Flats
 - a) Partner with Yukon Flats Health Center (YFHC)
 - i) Seek funds for facility
 - ii) Assist YFHC obtain land to build on
- 4) Partner with Alaska Search and Rescue Association to see what their program offers, if any funds available to purchase search and rescue equipment and supplies
- 5) Contact Tanana Chiefs Conference Safety Program
 - a) Request assistance to find any other resources for Search and Rescue operations
 - b) Request water boat safety workshop
- 6) Partner with the State of Alaska Division of Motor Vehicles to offer drivers education course
 - a) Utilize the vocational education driving simulator
 - b) Find requirements to offer place based education in Fort Yukon for residents to obtain drivers permit and license
 - c) Request safe driving workshop
- 7) Improve street lights and road signage
- 8) Address Fort Yukon cold cases
 - a) Contact Alaska State Troopers to move forward
- 9) Find funds to improve street lights and street signage
 - a) Collaborate with Gwichyaa Zhee Utilities

GOAL #3: PUBLIC FACILITIES

Goal: Fort Yukon residents have an abundance of activities to stay busy year round

Objectives:

- 1) Build a bingo hall
 - a) City of Fort Yukon acquire a space and get correct gaming permits
- 2) Work with Tanana Chiefs Conference and Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments to acquire and build a recreational center that includes a multipurpose gym, walking track, swimming pool, healthy snack shop, exercise equipment, ice rink
 - a) Find other sources of funding
 - b) Work with local land owners to determine land for building
 - c) Look at Food Sovereignty grants for healthy food options
 - i) Gardening grants – grow your own vegetables, nutritious food
- 3) Work with City of Fort Yukon to build a new laundromat and shower facility
 - a) Contact State of Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Village Safe Water Program, and Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments to figure out a plan for funding
 - b) Seek funding under the new Infrastructure Bill for Water improvement, sanitation needs

GOAL #4: SUBSISTENCE

Goal: Fort Yukon residents actively work to protect and preserve their hunting and fishing activities

Objectives:

- 1) Establish local law enforcement that works towards protecting the lands resources
 - a) Create a Tribal Resource Officer Position
- 2) Send interested local residents to learn how to advocate and protect natural resources, fish and animals
 - a) Gwichyaa Zhee Tribal Government sponsor residents to take UAF Tribal Management courses relating to advocacy
 - i) Encourage Fort Yukon residents to have a bigger voice and stop limitation and regulations on fish and wildlife
 - ii) Learn to protect water bodies:
 - (1) Porcupine River
 - (2) Sheenjik River
 - (3) Draanjik River
 - (4) Birch Creek
 - (5) Yukon River
 - (6) Salmon River



Figure 26 Photo Courtesy of Andrea Peter

- iii) Native Village of Fort Yukon partner with Yukon Flats School District to create a high school mentor advocacy program
 - (1) Curriculum changes?
 - (2) Find someone to contract, teach, volunteer
 - 3) Address game predators that affect moose population
 - a) Find funds to supply local trappers snares and traps
 - b) Research how to do aerial wolf hunting
 - c) Contract someone to travel to Fort Yukon to teach interested residents on bear and wolf hunting and trapping

GOAL #5: CULTURE

Goal: Fort Yukon residents are active in preserving and learning cultural activities

Objectives:

- 1) Offer rotating elder activities, provide transportation for elders to and from events that are being taught by elders
- 2) Encourage local residents to be more involved with activities
- 3) Provide traditional sewing kits
- 4) Continue to push curriculum revolving around language
 - a) Support existing curriculum within other organizations
 - i) Partner with Doyon Foundation to hire a local youth coordinator to teach Gwich'in language
 - b) Seek language grants
 - i) Doyon Foundation
 - ii) Yeendaa Geenjit Shrideegwirilii Program through Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments
- 5) Hold culture camp for one week to teach beaver and muskrat trapping
 - a) Contact Tanana Chiefs Conference Culture Program for planning an event
- 6) Contact University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Program to plan workshops to take care of wild game: skinning, packing, harvesting meat for:
 - a) Moose
 - b) Salmon
 - c) Caribou
- 7) Continue to preserve oral Gwich'in history
 - a) Contact Doyon Foundation for resources
 - b) Contact University of Alaska Fairbanks Project Jukebox Program to find other resources
 - c) Seek volunteers to spearhead program/effort
- 8) Create a cultural program coordinator position at Gwich'yaa Zhee Tribe
 - a) New position creates a local job
 - b) Work to preserve traditional sewing patterns for
 - i) Moose skin slippers
 - ii) Canvas boots
 - iii) Caribou legging boots

- iv) Mittens with skins (fox, beaver)
- c) Coordinator to find someone to contract to teach residents how to make
 - i) Birch snowshoes
 - ii) Fish wheel

FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDS

The following federal funds created through the Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act shall be pursued to enrich the community of Fort Yukon. The list includes, but is not limited to:

- **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA):** Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities
 - For pre-disaster mitigation for climate change, addresses the river erosion issue
- **Department of Transportation** Tribal Transportation Program Safety Funds
 - Apply every year to plan strategies, activities, and projects on public roads
- **Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)**
 - Indian Community Development Block Grant (ICDBG)
 - Single Purpose Grant: Must benefit low and moderate income persons
 - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
 - Imminent Threat Grants: Addresses issues that have an immediate negative impact on public health: example: tribal residents home burned down
- **Department of Treasury**
 - Capital Projects Funds Grants
 - Affordable broadband infrastructure
 - Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Funds
 - Enhance programs, services, capital expenditures, investing in tribal business
- **United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)**
 - Rural Utility Service: ReConnect Broadband
 - Broadband planning, design and construction
- **Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)**
 - Broadband Feasibility Study and Planning Grant
 - Feasibility studies, assessment of current broadband services, cost estimates, identification of funding or financing
 - Tribal Tourism Feasibility
 - Can be used to retain consultants who will study tribal tourism opportunities, develop a tourism business plan
- **Department of Energy (DOE)**
 - Power Unelectrified Tribal Buildings: electrify tribal and native corporation buildings: new homes
 - Energy Infrastructure Deployment on Tribal Lands: clean energy generation
- **National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)**
 - Planning, feasibility studies, broadband construction, use and adoptions

APPENDICES

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SURVEY RESULTS

Tanana Chiefs Conference Planning & Development program worked with Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government to distribute and collect community feedback survey in early 2022. Thirty-four surveys were collected. Questions included multiple-choice answers (not satisfied, satisfied, very satisfied), open ended to include concerns. The results of these are as follows:

What are the biggest issues facing your community?

- Drug and alcohol addiction, drug dealing and bootlegging, Covid, high utility costs, litter, crime including burglary, not having a place to hang out with friends, lack of child and elder care, fishing and hunting restrictions, loose dogs

What would you like to see in your community in 5 years?

- Elders home, more open gym for basketball, respecting other community members, prevention programs (substance abuse), youth activities, outdoor activities, high speed internet, detox center, long term rehabilitation for substance abuse, elder interviews (recorded), safety classes, more vocational education on driving, place for activities when it is cold outside, improved food security, having access to food for those who cannot provide for themselves, restaurants, coffee shop/cafe, movie theater, better jobs and housing for everyone, laundromat, indoor swimming pool

What are the main infrastructure needs in the community?

- Multipurpose building, recreational building, daycare, elder residential home, laundromat, housing, fuel store, behavioral health center, water/sewer additions and improvements, barge dock, airport parking, renewable energy

What culture activities are most important for the community?

- Culture camp, language learning activities, oral history, learning life skills on the land, trapping, regalia making, food preservation, hunting, fishing, potlatches, gatherings, jig dances

What healthy activities would you like to see occurring in the community?

- More people walking, baseball for youth and adults, activities for the whole family, outdoor trips with Gwich'in language use, growth of the behavioral program, rehabilitation, put an end to substance abuse, more community activities, more dances, races and public involvement, workshops, gun safety, boating safety, a place to exercise

What are the main Public Safety/Enforcement issues in the community?

- Drugs coming into town, public safety officers should check everything that comes in from Fairbanks, loose dogs, speeding, drunk drivers, need drug enforcement, need more policing as the service is inadequate, break-ins and burglary, need police to monitor/patrol more, drinking, domestic violence, fire department is slow

Do you feel safe in your community? Responses

- Sometimes: 12
- No: 2
- Yes: 12
- Most of the time: 4

What would help you to make you feel safer?

- Theft problems addressed, police officers patrolling more often, more gym activities, more street lights added/improved, decrease alcohol& drug use, more healthcare employees, getting a drug detection dog at the airport, bigger jail

Do you feel that the safety support is adequate?

No: 8 Yes: 4 Sometimes: 12

What are the main economy challenges in the community?

- Need more wood vendors, employees should be incentivized to stay in Fort Yukon, not enough people have training or education to fill jobs, groceries are too expensive, covid, tour company got shut down during covid, need skills building, food security, need a grant writer, high gas prices and utility bills, cost of living, only one airline that serves the community

Where do you spend more money?

Local store: 23 Online: 11 In the city: 12

What can be done to create stable jobs in the community?

- Part time job creation, Native Village Tribe build a tribally run store, higher wages, more education and training attainment, more wood vendors, expand community patrols, hardware store, three local governments (City, Tribe, CATG) sign resolution to work together on shared projects, get people off of drugs & alcohol to have them participate in workforce, grant writing, more small businesses

What sort of business opportunities would you be willing to support in the community?

- coffee shop, lash lifts, nails, small salon, restaurant, bakery, rec hall with food sales, tourism, wood vending, helping around town, brush and grass cutting, youth center, any, gift store, theater, new grocery store, hardware store, car/vehicle repair shop

What education and training would prepare you for the workforce?

- anything, would help others get further in life, high schoolers having a plan after graduation, refresher courses, police helping elders, drivers education, tribal management courses from UAF, vocational training, any trades training, basic business education

What are the main public utilities issues in the community?

- Water and sewer systems need to be upgraded, need a washeteria/laundromat, high fuel price, high energy cost, not everyone has electric

What other public utilities are needed?

- Improved internet service, improved street lights, new building at the airport, laundromat/washeteria

What are the main land and environment issues in the community?

- Plastic and raw sewer in the river, land drying up, litter, roads, fishing restrictions, low fish count, climate change affecting land and animals, need vehicle backhaul program, trespass issues, airforce base leaking oil barrels

What idea(s) do you have to help address the issue?

- Improved recycling program, yearly yard cleaning, old vehicle backhaul, renewable energy development, hazmat team clean up

CURRENT COUNCIL MEMBERS AS OF MAY 6TH, 2022

Seat A: First Chief Nancy James	Term: 2020-2023
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Seat B: Second Chief Michael Peter	Term: 2022-2025
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Seat C: Corrina Cadzow	Term: 2020-2023
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Seat D: Joshua Cadzow	Term: 2021-2024
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Seat E: Daphne Fields	Term: 2021-2024
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Seat F: Mary Solomon	Term: 2022-2025
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Seat G: Shannon Hardy	Term: 2021-2024
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Traditional Chief: Steve Ginnis

COMMUNITY PLANNING MEETING AGENDA AND SIGN-IN SHEET

– MARCH 22ND, 2022

Fort Yukon Community Planning Meeting Agenda

March 22nd, 2022 • 5:30pm • Chief Ezias Loola Cultural Center

Topic	Presented by
Welcome	Chief Nancy James
Introductions	
Community Planning Survey	TCC P&D
Goals	TCC P&D
Objectives	TCC P&D
Climate Change Mapping (Erosion, Permafrost, Flood Zones, Fire Protection)	TCC Natural/Cultural Resources Specialist, Debra Lynne
Office of Victim Crimes Survey	TCC Tribal Protective Services Program Manager, Constance Reimer-Ely
Flood & Erosion Projects American Rescue Plan	Melanie Herbert, Executive Director
Q&A / Adjournment	

For more information, contact:

Melanie Herbert, Tribal Administrator

907-662-2581

Selina J Sam, TCC Planning & Development

907-452-8251 ext. 3385



Tanana
Chiefs
Conference

Fort Yukon Community Planning Meeting 3/22/2022

Sign-in Sheet

Name & Title	E-mail Address	Survey Completed?
Rithme Peters		Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>[Signature]</i>	Garfelupa Zhao Taku	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Ed Carroll 62976 Tribal Ops	tribelops@fortyukon.org	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Shirley Fields	sfields147@hotmail.com	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Judy Peter	judy.peter201@hotmail.com	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
KILUSON, SAKRA		Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Aola Reh	alithsweet38@gmail	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Pat Stanley	stanley.pat@gmail	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Corrine Chadras	corrine.chadras@catg.org	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Wade Fields	Housing - Director@FortYukon.org	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Robert Thomas	Robert.Thomas@YFSD.org	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Heta Ketzler		Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Shannon Hardy	hardyShannon216@gmail.com	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Cheryl Kershner		Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Vergina Peter		Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Daphne Fields	daphne.fields@catg.org	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Michael Peter	FortyukonPeter@Gmail	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Dwight Stum		Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Melanie Herbert	Melanie.herbart@Fortyukon.org	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>



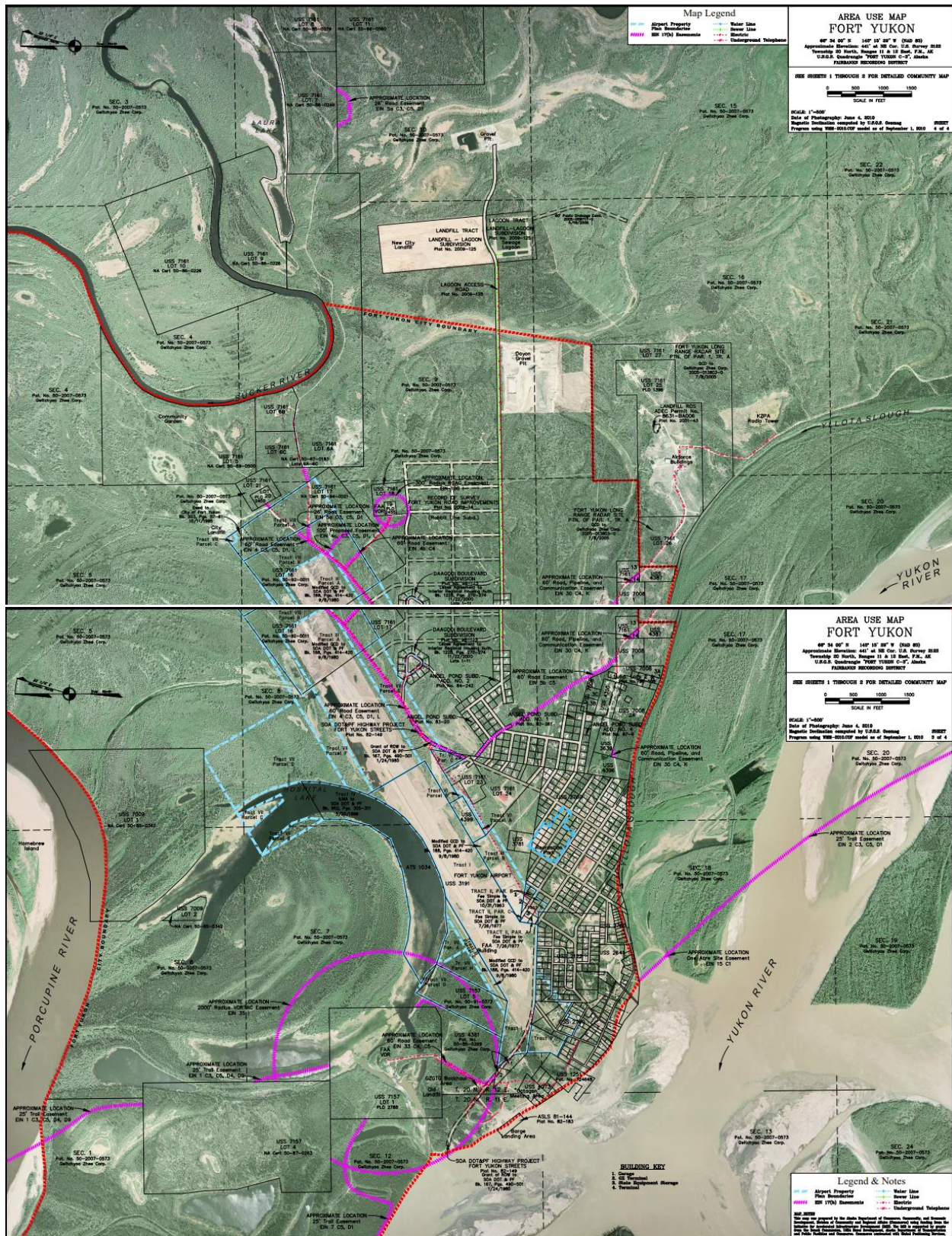
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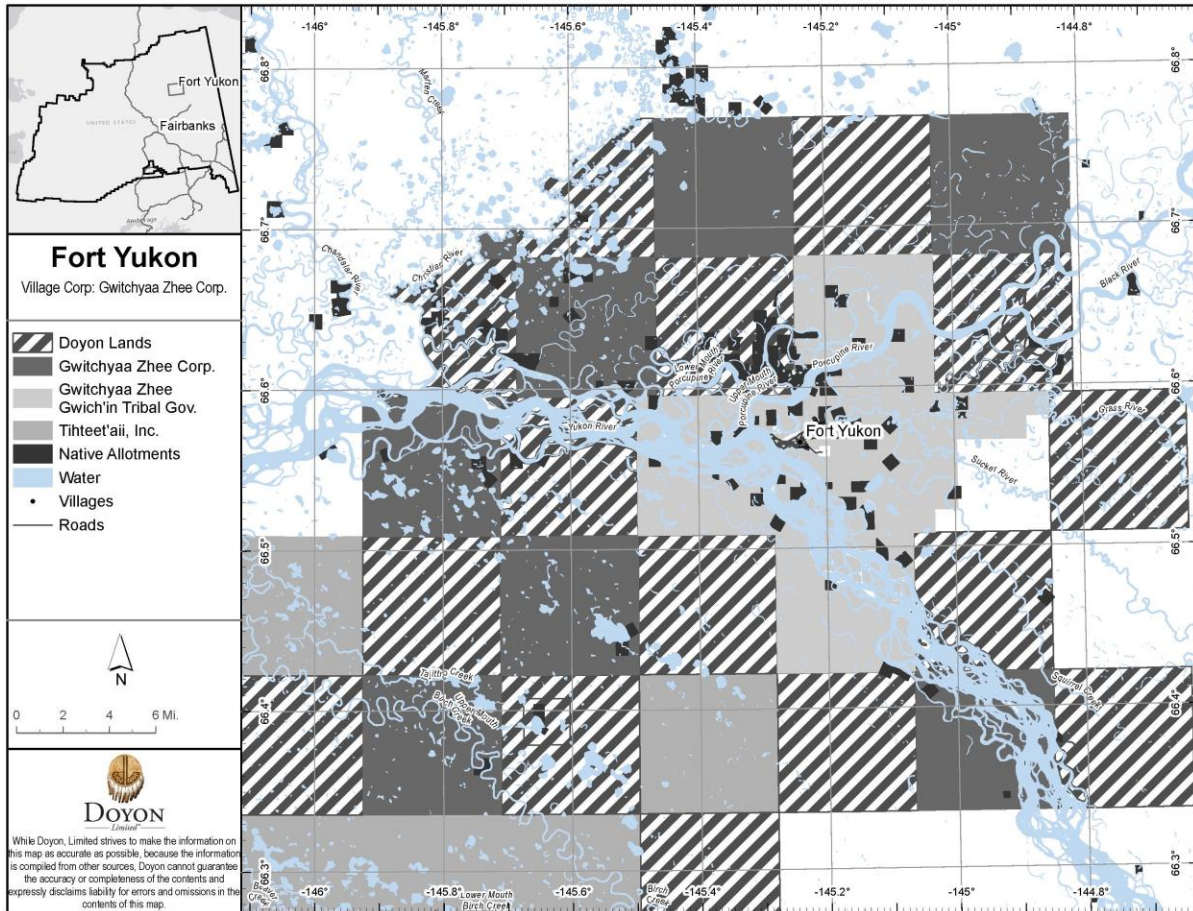
3/22/2022

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Photos from State of Alaska Community Profile Maps





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VILLAGE CONTACTS

Yukon Flats Health Center

PO Box 309

Fort Yukon, Alaska 99740

Phone: (907) 662-2460

Fax: (907) 662-2709

Hours of Operation (YFHC)

Mon – Fri, 8AM to 12PM and 1PM to 5PM

Sat, 12PM to 4PM

Gwitchyaa Zhee Corpoation

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Fort Yukon, AK 99740

Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government

PO BOX 126

Fort Yukon, AK 99740

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City of Fort Yukon

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Fort Yukon, AK 99740

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Yukon Flats School District

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Fort Yukon School

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907-662-2352