



Executive Summary

PART 1

INTRODUCTION

In 2016, the Air Force announced their final decision to station two squadrons of F-35 Lightning II fighter jets at Eielson Air Force Base. Over the next several years and beyond, the arrival of the F-35s, referred to as the “F-35 Beddown”, will bring 3,300 additional residents (by 2022), businesses and employment opportunities, construction and infrastructure investments, and much more to the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB).

The Borough sought and secured a grant from the U.S. Department of Defense, Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) to develop this Regional Growth Plan (RGP) toward assessing and preparing the FNSB community for the benefits and potential impacts of the F-35 Beddown. The RGP includes: a robust review of current and projected needs of incoming F-35 families, and existing and other future FNSB residents; a summary of existing programs, services and infrastructure, and

anticipated gaps; and recommended strategies for addressing gaps.

The RGP is a tool for preparing the community for the F-35 Beddown; equally important, it is a tool for improving quality of life for all existing and future FNSB residents. The RGP focus areas include: housing, utilities and infrastructure, transportation, planning and zoning, education and early childhood development, workforce development, health and social services, public safety, quality of life, and fiscal impacts. The RGP considers and aligns with other regional plans and studies, including the FNSB Comprehensive Plan, FNSB Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), the United States Air Force F-35 Operational Beddown – Pacific Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and many other plans led and supported by the FNSB community.

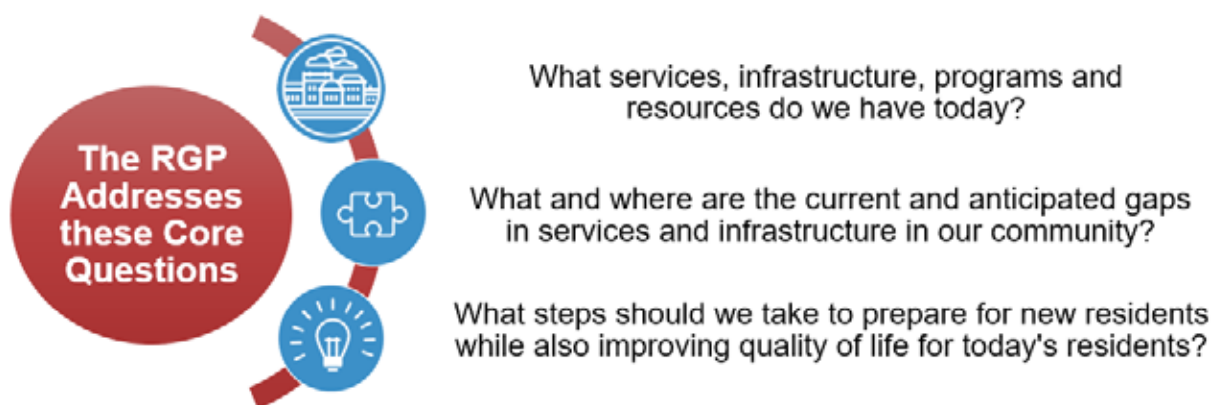
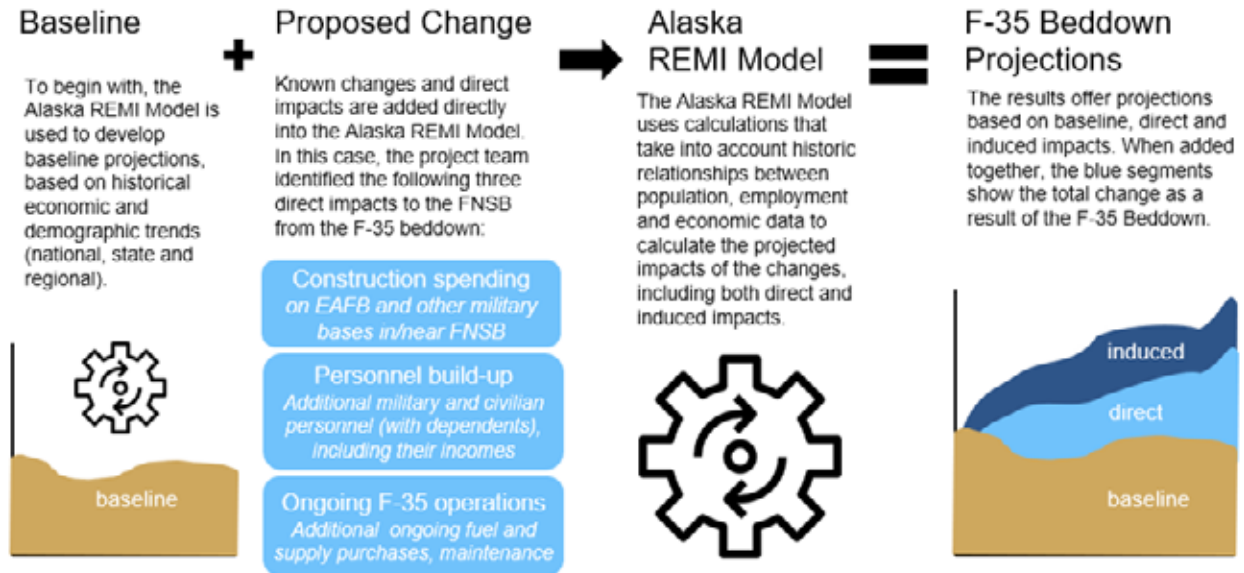


FIGURE 1: ALASKA REMI MODEL PROJECTION METHODOLOGY



Estimated Arrival Time of F-35 Personnel by Calendar Year: The Air Force estimates the F-35 mission will bring 1,353 additional active duty personnel to Eielson Air Force Base, and approximately 1,758 dependents (spouses and

children). Combined with federal employees and technical consultants, the Air Force estimates there will be an additional 3,256 direct employees and dependents by 2022.

FIGURE 2: ESTIMATED ARRIVAL TIME OF EAFB PERSONNEL BY CALENDAR YEAR²

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	TOTAL
F-35 active duty personnel at EAFB	18	9	77	465	617	166	1,353
F-35 active duty personnel dependents (using multiplier of 1.3 ³)	23	12	100	605	802	216	1,758

Source: Air Force Leadership and Planners

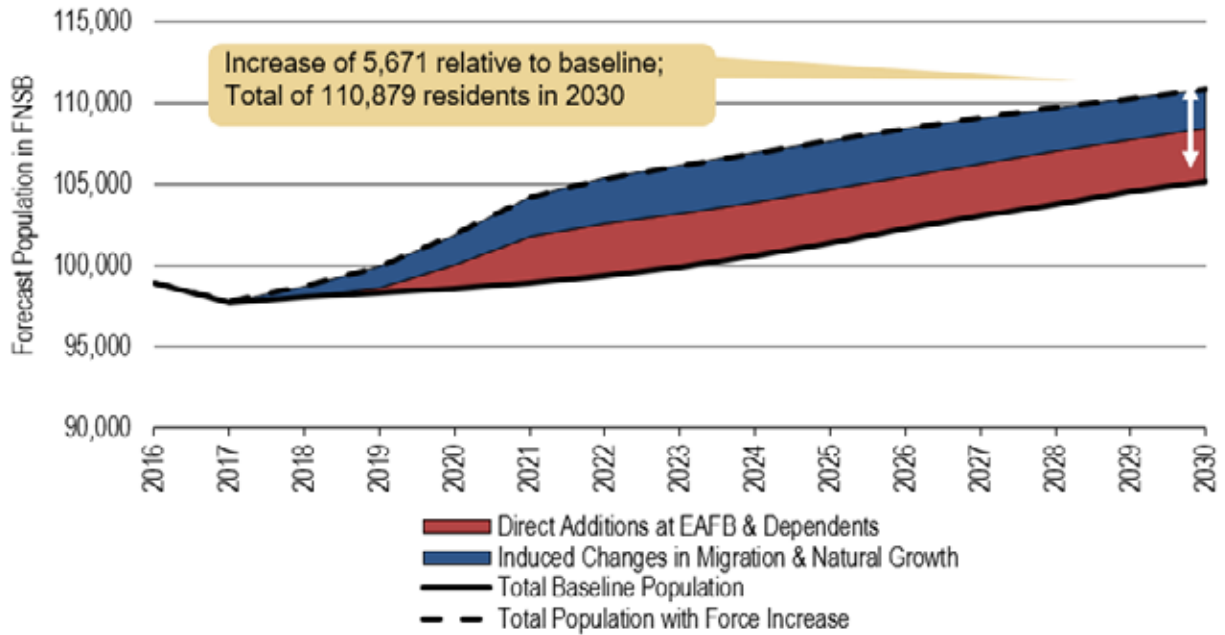
Projection Finding #1: The F-35 Beddown will result in a 5.4 percent increase relative to the baseline population (the future FNSB without the F-35 Beddown), or approximately 5,724 more people in FNSB by 2030. This brings the estimated 2030 population from a baseline of 105,208 residents to a revised total of 110,879 residents.

This includes direct F-35 employees and their dependents, retained existing residents and some new people that choose to stay or come to the FNSB to take advantage of increased employment or business opportunities, and, natural births and deaths.

² Subject to change.

³ Multiplier was provided by the Air Force and is based on national trends, average number of dependents (spouses and children) per active duty personnel.

FIGURE 3: BASELINE AND F-35 BEDDOWN PROJECTIONS OF FNSB POPULATION, 2016–2030

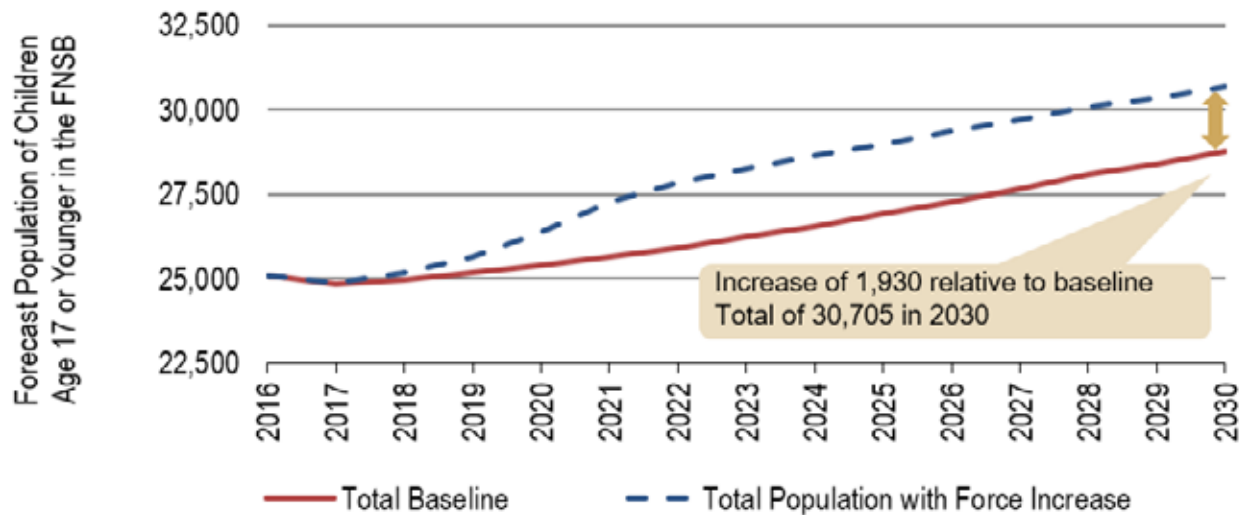


Note: “Other Civilian” includes federal civilians and technical consultants working at EAFB along with their dependents. Induced population is a combination of reductions in out-migration relative to the baseline, along with increases in natural growth.

Source: Alaska REMI Model

Projection Finding #2: The F-35 Beddown will result in an additional 1,930 individuals ages 17 and under by 2030. The baseline 2030 population estimate for ages 17 and under is 28,774; with the F-35 Beddown, the revised population estimate for 2030 is 30,705. The biggest increases are preschool age children (infant to four years old) and elementary age children (ages five through ten).

FIGURE 4: POPULATION PROJECTIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS AGE 17 AND UNDER

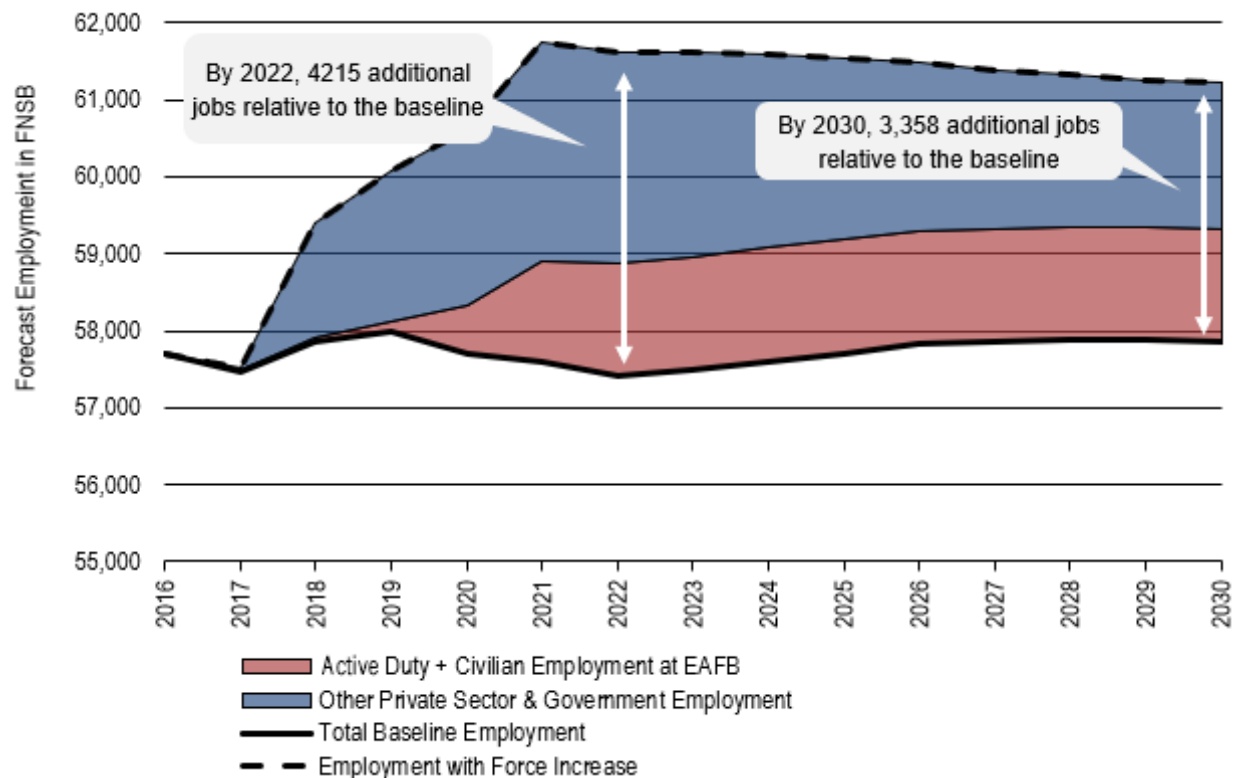


Source: Alaska REMI Model

Projection Finding #3: In 2022, with the full force increase, and at the peak of F-35 construction and related activity, the Beddown is expected to create an estimated 4,215 additional jobs relative to the baseline, for a total of 61,604 jobs. By

2030, with an anticipated decrease in construction and related F-35 activity, employment numbers are expected to level out at approximately 3,358 additional jobs above the baseline, for a new total of 61,212 jobs.

FIGURE 5: PRELIMINARY EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS FOR F-35 BEDDOWN OPERATIONS AT EAFB



Source: Northern Economics and the Alaska REMI Model

KEY TAKEAWAYS + RECOMMENDATIONS

The Eielson Regional Growth Plan is organized into ten focus areas. The key takeaways for each focus area are summarized below, along with priority recommendations for each focus area. For more background data, context and detailed recommendations, visit each of the focus area chapters.

Housing

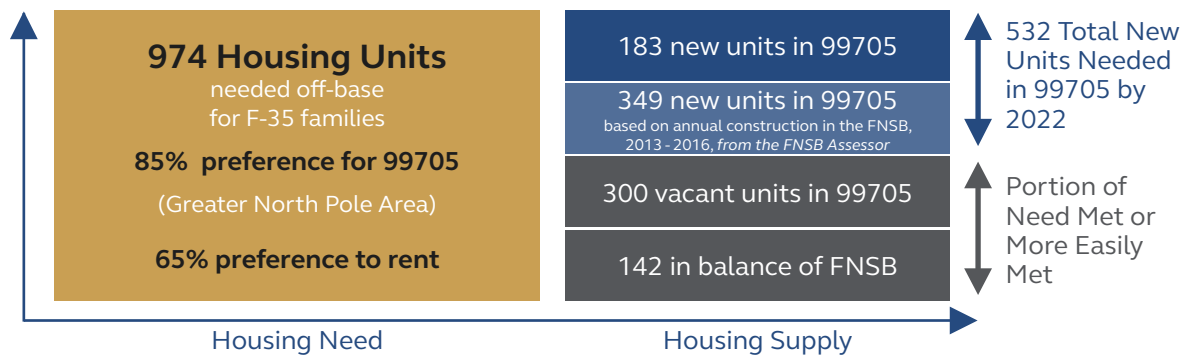
Key Takeaways

- **Housing Demand.** The F-35 Beddown at Eielson Air Force Base will bring 1,474 new personnel and their families who will need 974 housing units off-base.
- **Housing Supply Compared to Demand Borough-wide.** Borough-wide, the combination of vacant rental housing and the continued pace of new construction, is anticipated to be sufficient to meet housing demands from the F-35 Beddown.
- **There is a preference for housing in the North Pole Zip Code (99705).** Currently, 85 percent of Air Force personnel who live off base opt to live in the Greater North Pole area, or 99705 zip code. That trend is expected to continue for the new personnel.
- **Housing gap in Greater North Pole (99705). Unlike the borough-wide estimates, vacant rental units, alone are not sufficient to meet the demand for housing in 99705.** If the pace of construction in 99705 continues at a rate of 70 units per year, as has been the case over the past five years, an additional 183 units will need to be constructed to meet the off-base housing demand for the F-35 Beddown personnel. This is as total of 532 new units in 99705.
- **Air Force partnership necessary for large military housing project.** Stakeholders, investors, and developers indicate that large scale (100 to 200 units) of speculative rental housing development to serve military personnel is not feasible without some type of non-compete clause, master lease agreement, or base closure guarantee. Some certainty associated with the Air Force presence and a housing development decision is necessary to mitigate the potential for changes in Air Force personnel plans. This is necessary to secure financing for such a large project.
- **A locally-driven private sector approach with incentives is recommended.** Absent an Air Force partnership to support the development of a larger scale military housing project, a more incremental locally-driven approach is recommended and is already happening in the 99705 zip code. The private sector is currently developing subdivisions, building custom homes, and creating new models of detached four-plex projects near EAFB.
- **Establishing a Housing Task Force and Shared Knowledge Base a Critical First Step in Addressing Existing and Future Housing Needs.** The projected housing need, supply and gap summarized in the RGP is based on the best and most comprehensive information available during the project period, but also assumptions regarding historical and existing trends grounded in multiple and robust conversations with Borough staff, local builders and developers, property owners, real estate brokers and lenders. To better understand and respond to current and future housing needs, the community needs a tool, a body and a process for assessing, monitoring and addressing housing needs and development

projects in the FNSB. A comprehensive tool that summarizes details on and status of existing and newly approved subdivisions, including: location and overall goal for the development; number and type of newly constructed and/or rehabilitated units; quality of existing units; proposed construction; and population data such as in/outmigration patterns, would assist the community in addressing both short-term (incoming F-35 population) and longer-term planning (anticipated growth resulting from planned and/or potential economic development projects). In the short-term, a

comprehensive picture of the pace of new construction, and the rate at which new units are (or are not) being absorbed by existing residents, and what is happening to the homes they leave behind, will provide the community a more accurate picture for strategically addressing anticipated gaps. A representative body, like a Housing Task Force, could develop and update the tool, and then work together, with other public, private and non-profit sector partners, to create and implement targeted strategies that will meet the community's housing goals and vision.

FIGURE 6: FNSB HOUSING NEED/SUPPLY TO SUPPORT F-35 FAMILIES



Recommended Strategies

Stakeholder Involvement and Implementation

- H1: Create a housing task force; identify and implement priority housing-related actions.

Market Response to Housing Need

- H2: Allow the market to absorb available rentals.
- H3: Monitor the market's response.
- H4: Work toward a mix of housing types.

Financial Incentives

- H5: Develop a targeted tax exemption program.
- H6: Create new sources of capital and fully maximize existing opportunities.

Housing Supportive Policies

- H7: Utilize military facility zones as appropriate.
- H8: Improve land use planning in 99705.

Utilities and Infrastructure

Key Takeaways

- The Greater North Pole 99705 zip code area, where most F-35-related growth is expected, offers varied levels of public utilities. Most of the area has access to electrical power. Water and sewer in this area is limited to approximately three quarters of the land within the City of North Pole, and one small water service area on the far western side of Badger Road. The quality of cellular phone service and internet access is inconsistent across this large area.

- Due to groundwater contamination, and the planned solutions to address that issue that include new infrastructure, areas west and north of the City of North Pole will receive public water service. A similar issue and solution is likely in the Moose Creek area. Additional research and coordination is needed to identify if these required solutions might be leveraged to support water service in addition to the areas directly impacted by groundwater contamination. Small increases in the capital costs for these projects could lead to substantial increases in areas with water service.
- New residents associated with F-35 related growth and other borough residents are looking for quality, moderately priced housing. Expanding areas where water and sewer service are available is an essential step in meeting this need, as only with water and sewer can more affordable, smaller lot single family homes and multifamily housing be built. Work is in progress and must continue to find solutions to the near-term challenges of funding public water and sewer.
- An active partnership should be developed with FNSB, the Cities of North Pole and Fairbanks, EAFB, and private cellular services providers, to improve the quality of cell service across the greater North Pole, Eielson and Salcha areas.
- Through this plan, and the Salcha-Badger Road Subarea Plan happening in parallel, the FNSB and partners should initiate more active and effective planning, working to better integrate planning for land use, transportation and utilities. One goal should be supporting expansion of water and sewer as a strategy to concentrate development and address air quality challenges.

- The Borough, the cities, and economic development organizations should implement public education and outreach to build support for improved utilities, including considering new utility organizational structures and boundaries and new funding strategies.

Recommended Strategies

- UI1: Integrate planning for land use, transportation and utilities.
- UI2: Identify and implement funding strategies for expanding water and wastewater service areas and distribution systems.
- UI3: Work with cell service and internet providers to improve cell phone reception.
- UI4: Build from the work of the Alaska Broadband Task Force, Arctic Council and best practices to develop reliable broadband connectivity in the Salcha-Badger Road area.
- UI5: Use utility and land use planning to support air quality solutions.

Transportation

Key Takeaways

Road Capacity/Improvement Projects

Recent traffic modeling completed as part of the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Update concludes that the Borough's regional transportation system – primarily the backbone system of major, region-serving highways and arterials – has the capacity to meet projected growth, including the incremental F-35 growth. This presumes the Borough proceeds with the 100-plus previously approved MTP transportation projects in the region. Some re-prioritizing of these approved projects is recommended, to place greater emphasis on projects in the greater North Pole 99705 zip code area. The emerging MTP analysis also shows that some specific locations will likely need

improvement to serve local needs. These include improving several intersections in the Badger Road area expected to be at or near capacity over the next 20 years, including the side streets at the Badger/Nordale and Richardson/Peridot intersections.

Changing State Finances

State fiscal challenges are reducing State of Alaska (SOA) funding for transportation capital improvement projects, affecting both projects wholly funded by the State, and the ability of the State to gain available federal funding which requires a relatively small (typically 10 percent) State match. To fill this gap, the Borough needs to begin generating more funding at the local level, to leverage state and federal funds, and begin covering a larger share of the costs for ongoing highway construction and maintenance.

Policy Framework

The Borough's current set of policies that control planning and funding transportation and land use activities needs significant improvement. This includes developing better ways to plan for and integrate land use and transportation improvements, new approaches to funding maintenance and capital projects, and improving Borough road service areas policies/regulations. Issues to resolve include numerous substandard roads, thousands of miles of orphan roads (roads without any means for maintenance) and limited options for moving safely, efficiently and enjoyably around the Borough without a private vehicle. Reforming this system will require an active public outreach and education program, to help the public understand and then support the need for new policies and funding strategies required to meet current and future transportation needs.

Air Quality Standards

Without an EPA approved air quality plan and active measures to improve air quality, the FNSB stands to lose vital federal funding that helps

improve the region's transportation system. Most of the region's air quality challenges are tied to emissions from heating buildings, but reducing vehicle miles traveled is one important step in improving air quality.

Recommended Strategies

- T1: Use transportation (and land use) planning to support air quality solutions.
- T2: Continue regional-scale transportation system improvements.
- T3: Carry out subarea land use and transportation planning - see Planning and Zoning Strategy PZ1.
- T4: Identify and implement funding strategies for local/regional-based transportation.
- T5: Advocate and seek funding options for the North Pole Road Rail Crossing Reduction Project and broader scale railroad expansion.
- T6: Address challenges of Road Service Areas (RSAs).
- T7: Work to develop transit options between North Pole, Fairbanks and Eielson AFB - see also Quality of Life Recommendation QOL5.
- T8: Update and improve the FNSB Comprehensive Road Plan.

Planning and Zoning

Key Takeaways

- A primary goal of the Regional Growth Plan is to help ensure new F-35 personnel, single airmen, families and other new residents can find and secure quality housing, in nice neighborhoods, close to high quality schools, retail stores and other services. Through this plan, the Borough aims to provide a welcoming, high quality of life so F-35

personnel choose to bring their families with them to the borough. Ideally, those who relocate for the F-35 jobs will sufficiently enjoy their stay so they ultimately find a way to live in the borough. Equally important is ensuring F-35 related growth helps maintain and improve the areas where existing Borough residents, land owners and businesses live and work.

- As is the case today for approximately 85 percent of active duty Air Force personnel stationed at Eielson Air Force Base, most of the new F-35 Beddown residents are expected to seek housing in the "Greater North Pole" 99705 zip code area. In recent years this has been the fastest growing part of the borough, due to its combination of affordable and available properties and attractive, low density residential character. While offering these advantages, the area is currently characterized by inconsistent quality and limited supply of rental housing. The quality of roads and other infrastructure is also inconsistent, and in many locations, roads are not publicly maintained and do not meet the needs of a changing and growing population.
- Compared to the places from which most F-35 Beddown families will be arriving, much of the land in the borough is only lightly regulated. Like much of Alaska, the "toolbox" of policies for guiding growth in the borough - building codes, zoning and subdivision codes, planning for infrastructure - is currently very limited compared to what is common in the Lower 48, and the tools that are available are not applied in all locations. The absence of these policies makes it challenging to meet expectations for quality housing and neighborhoods, for water and wastewater solutions, safe/quality roads and other public services and facilities. The arrival of the F-35s gives an incentive for

improved approaches to managing land use and infrastructure in the borough. Examples of issues to address include land use conflicts, poor quality/energy-inefficient building construction, inefficient land use patterns, and the need for improved roads and other public infrastructure. Working on these topics is an important response to F-35 growth and at the same time offers the chance to improve neighborhoods and roads for existing residents and businesses.

- By design, this plan is directed at regional scale issues and solutions. The Salcha-Badger Road Subarea Plan, in progress starting Spring 2018, provides the means to make progress on more detailed, site specific land use and infrastructure planning issues in the heart of the area affected by the F-35 Beddown.

Recommended Strategies

- **PZ1:** Use the Salcha-Badger Road Subarea Plan to guide growth, and better integrate land use and infrastructure planning.
- **PZ2:** Improve standards and processes affecting building quality for residential, commercial and other uses.
- **PZ3:** Update and improve FNSB land use categories and map.
- **PZ4:** Improve existing FNSB borough-wide zoning code.
- **PZ5:** Improve planning tools to respond to natural environmental constraints and opportunities.
- **PZ6:** Develop an active monitoring process to assess need and track progress on land use goals.

Education and Early Childhood Development

Key Takeaways

- The F-35 Beddown at Eielson Air Force Base will bring an additional 1,922 individuals under the age of 17, for a total of 30,705 individuals age 17 and under in the FNSB by 2030. Approximately 60 percent of these individuals will be school-age, and 40 percent under the age of four.
- Overall capacity is available at the school district level to support this increase, but many of the individual schools near Eielson AFB are at capacity and may struggle to accommodate more students. A shortage of facility capacity for elementary and middle school age students may occur.
- The FNSB region has a shortage of affordable infant and preschool age child care options. On-base care at EAFB is also at capacity, although in recent months the Air Force has successfully expanded provider capacity, thereby increasing the number of child care slots and reducing the waiting lists.

Recommended Strategies

Education

- **E1:** Improve information-sharing between the Air Force and the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (FNSBSD) around arrival and demographics of families with school-aged children.
- **E2:** Continue to encourage Air Force families to enroll their children in on-base schools, even if living off-base.

- E3: Explore options for elementary and middle schools that are anticipated to reach maximum capacity in 2021 and 2022, especially in the Greater North Pole and Salcha areas.
- E4: Support implementation of existing military grants and explore additional funding opportunities.
- E5: Encourage the State of Alaska to maintain or increase existing levels of funding.
- E6: Streamline the approval process for military-connected students transferring from other states.
- E7: Modify schedules for on-base family events and activities to make it easier for military families with children enrolled in off-base schools to participate.
- E8: Encourage off-base schools and parent-teacher associations (PTAs) with high military-connected student enrollment to expand outreach and education to better engage military families.
- E9: Continue to encourage the bus contractor First Student to improve the reliability of bus transportation
- E10: Offer before and after school programming and/or child care at all local elementary schools.
- E13: Expand workforce recruitment to encourage residents and incoming dependents to get trained and licensed as child care providers.
- E14: Continue to implement Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS) program.
- E15: Increase communication and collaboration between EAFB Child and Youth Services programs with community and state child care organizations to increase utilization of community resources.

Workforce Development

Key Takeaways

- The F-35 Beddown is expected to create an estimated 4,215 additional jobs relative to the baseline by year 2022. This job growth will be phased over multiple years.
- An estimated 1,474 jobs, or one-third of total job gains will be from active duty and civilian employment at EAFB; the remaining non-military related jobs are: forecasted increases in construction (563 jobs), business and household services (477 jobs), retail/wholesale trade (477 jobs) and other categories during the peak of F-35 Beddown-related employment in 2022. Construction employment peaks earlier than overall employment, with 922 additional jobs relative to the baseline in 2019.
- The FNSB workforce must be prepared to fill the increase in new non-military jobs. Targeted and accessible workforce development programs and policies will play an important role in recruiting and training residents and military spouses for these jobs. Partners such as the University of Alaska Fairbanks Community and Technical College (CTC), the Fairbanks Job Center, and the Fairbanks

Child Care

- E11: Work with the Air Force to waive part of the national accreditation requirements so licensed Alaska providers are eligible for Air Force Child Care Fee Assistance.
- E12: Conduct marketing efforts to ensure local child care providers know about the opportunities, training needs and requirements associated with the F-35 Beddown.

North Star Borough School District's Career and Technical Education Program all have adaptable and community-focused training programs; building on these existing programs to meet incoming needs will be critical.

- An estimated 535 non-military spouses will be accompanying active duty members to EAFB. Many of these individuals will be seeking local employment. The community, the Air Force and the State of Alaska can reduce barriers to military spouse employment through better information sharing, expanding access to affordable child care and removing occupational licensing barriers.
- Military bases are made up of transient households. While there will be a short-term increase in demand for workforce training and employment needs for EAFB dependents, this demand will not go away after the F-35 force increase. To fully support workforce development opportunities for military spouses and families, the FSNB community should put in place long-term sustainable tools for working with the Air Force to proactively assess and address needs to support incoming dependents, including conducting employment-related outreach to families prior to their arrival.

Recommended Strategies

Connect Military Spouses with Local Employment

- WFD1: Remove barriers for military spouses to obtain occupational licenses.
- WFD2: Coordinate with the Airman and Family Readiness Center (A&FRC) to supplement existing information sharing with Air Force families before they arrive at EAFB.
- WFD3: Encourage FNSB-located Job Centers, workforce development program representatives and large employers to participate in welcoming programs.
- WFD4: Prior to PCS, conduct debrief/ departure interviews or focus groups with military families regarding experience with FNSB employment and workforce development.
- WFD5: Expand access to affordable child care services for military households.

Training the FNSB Workforce to Meet Industry Needs

- WFD6: Host local training and employment events for residents and incoming military families to learn about the many education, training and employment opportunities available in FNSB.
- WFD7: Conduct targeted recruitment efforts to encourage businesses to relocate to the FNSB area – see also Fiscal Impact Recommendation FI3.
- WFD8: Support implementation of Alaska's five workforce development plans, including the Maritime Workforce Plan, the Teacher Education Plan, the Oil & Gas Workforce Plan, the Mining Workforce Plan and the Health Workforce Plan.

Preparing Future Workers

- WFD9: Continue to strengthen and expand existing secondary and postsecondary vocational and technical education programs (i.e., workforce-focused education).
- WFD10: Expand and market the use of University of Alaska's Career Coach, as developed by ESMI.

Health and Social Services

Key Takeaways

- Military and community health care providers are cooperating and engaging in strategic planning to meet the medical services needs of the increased EAFB population.
- The FNSB has adequate capacity to meet primary care, most specialty care, hospital and surgical needs of the increased population.
- Otolaryngology (Ear, Nose, Throat) is the one specialty where capacity is limited and may be further reduced by providers being transferred from Basset Army Community Hospital and community providers retiring or leaving the community.
- Access to behavioral health services for service members and their families is not available at EAFB; limited services are available through the TRICARE network, currently managed by Health Net Federal Services, and through agencies in the surrounding community. Priority gaps include pediatric services for children with developmental disabilities or other behavioral health needs, and supportive services for families.

Recommended Strategies

- **HSS1:** Maintain joint planning and cooperation among military and civilian health planners and health and social service providers serving the region. Consider conducting a joint assessment of health needs and resources on a regular basis.
- **HSS2:** Address known gaps in medical specialty care and behavioral health services.
- **HSS3:** Ensure adequate availability of family support services to build on the strengths of military families and mitigate risks.

Public Safety

Key Takeaways

- As a second class Borough, the FNSB has the legal authority to provide a suite of emergency operations services as mandated in Alaska Statute, Title 29: Municipal Government, and as specifically acquired by election or ordinance. These powers include: animal control, fireworks control, emergency medical services (EMS), emergency management, fire protection, and emergency communication services.
- Overall, with existing mutual aid agreements in place, and a potential expansion of those agreements, existing fire protection and EMS resources are adequate to meet increased demand related to the incoming F-35 population. The 911 infrastructure is also adequate to support additional population.
- In the Greater North Pole Area, where most F-35 families are anticipated to live, there may be a need for additional public safety staff, and an evaluation of the location of fire stations and apparatus. This need will be mostly determined by the location of new housing.
- The Alaska Land Mobile Radio (ALMR), a shared and primary radio system for all local, state and federal public safety entities, is challenged by uncertain state funding and poor coverage in some areas of the borough, including those most likely impacted by historical and projected growth (Greater North Pole, Moose Creek and Salcha). FirstNet, a nationwide broadband network for first responders, would supplement and replace ALMR, but the cost and capabilities are uncertain.

- The current process to update the 2015 FNSB Emergency Management Plan is an opportunity to better coordinate across municipalities toward a shared and tested set of borough-wide emergency management priorities.
- The Borough's Animal Control/Shelter has adequate capacity to address F-35 related needs. However, the facility is dated and in need of major upgrades or total replacement to effectively and efficiently address current and projected need. Additionally, the facility was never designed to care for and shelter exotic birds, reptiles and other animals, which comprise an increasing number of animals surrendered to the facility.

Recommended Strategies

Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services

- PS1: Form a mayoral task force to evaluate how the Borough forms, staffs and offers incentives to the volunteer fire and rescue departments.
- PS2: Conduct a detailed analysis of need, location of fire stations and ambulances, and identify optimal positioning.
- PS3: Consolidate local fire and rescue departments and/or consolidate administrative functions.
- PS4: Combine fire and EMS service areas into one large service area.
- PS5: Establish more sustainable funding for existing and/or consolidated fire departments.

911

- PS6: Fill positions and add an additional .5 FTE to adequately address additional call volume related to the incoming F-35 population.

Law Enforcement

- PS7: Consider joint recruitment practices aimed at developing attractive incentive packages and identifying quality recruits for the region.
- PS8: The State of Alaska should explore and implement new methods of retaining Alaska State Troopers.
- PS9: Explore new methods of compensation for public safety employees to increase recruitment and retention.

Emergency Management

- PS10: Develop and actively test a more coordinated and unified disaster management plan.

Fire Marshal

- PS11: Fire inspectors should have a role in subdivision approvals to address quality of commercial, industrial and residential construction.
- PS12: Request deferred fire marshal authority to employ an inspector within each fire department.

See Planning and Zoning focus area for a related strategy to develop and implement borough-wide building and construction standards.

Animal Control

- PS13: Develop a master memorandum of agreement with Fort Wainwright and Eielson Air Force Base to provide animal control services.
- PS14: Construct a new animal shelter.

- **PS15:** Update the Borough's 2015 Emergency Management Plan to include actions for shelter and care of domesticated animals during major borough-wide emergency events.

Quality of Life

Key Takeaways

- Quality of life is a broad topic that focuses on the characteristics and features in a community that contribute to the overall well-being and satisfaction of its residents. This focus area considers the dining, entertainment, retail, and indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities available to active duty EAFB members and their families; it also relates to and references many of the other focus areas in the RGP.
- Active duty personnel and their families want to feel like they are part of their surrounding civilian community. Unfortunately, achieving community connection and integration is an ongoing challenge across all military bases due to frequent location changes. FNSB is a military-friendly community, which is reflected in its high concentration of military veterans; however, there is still greater opportunity for expanding connections between local businesses, organizations and EAFB families.
- EAFB has many activities and resources available on-base for EAFB personnel and their families. The 354th Force Support Squadron oversees most of these programs through the Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) program. Current facilities and programs have sufficient capacity to absorb the increase in personnel associated with the F-35 Beddown, and should be able to meet increased demand by adding staff and extending facility hours as needed.
- Military families enjoy the extensive outdoor recreation opportunities unique to Interior Alaska, including hiking, hunting, fishing, boating/rafting, gold panning, camping, visiting the hot springs and viewing the northern lights (aurora).
- The City of Fairbanks is the second largest city in Alaska after Anchorage, and offers many retail, dining and indoor recreation opportunities. However, the area within a 20-minute drive radius of EAFB, including the nearby City of North Pole, has limited retail, dining and indoor recreation options. Both civilian residents and military families have indicated support for increased availability of retail, restaurants and other commercial development in the North Pole area.
- Access to health and social services is a critical component of quality of life. There is limited health care available in the immediate vicinity of EAFB. Active duty personnel and their families must travel to Fort Wainwright or Fairbanks for many types of care, and for some specialties, all the way to Anchorage or Seattle. There are gaps in access to behavioral health care, supportive services for families and Otolaryngology (Ear, Nose, Throat) care. Non-military residents in the area have also expressed interest in expanding local options for health care, including primary care providers in the North Pole area.

Recommended Strategies

Strengthen Community-Military Partnerships

- **QOL1:** Increase the dissemination of information to EAFB families to increase awareness of and participation in local activities and events.

- **QOL2:** Increase distribution of Explore Fairbanks' list of businesses and partners who offer military discounts.
- **QOL3:** Create a list of volunteer opportunities in the FNSB for military spouses and civilian residents.
- **QOL4:** Improve education and outreach about the availability of existing facilities and outdoor recreation options.
- **QOL5:** Consider providing bus transportation options from EAFB to North Pole and Fairbanks during large events and festivals to increase military engagement in community activities - see also Transportation Recommendation T4.
- **QOL6:** Develop guided programs to introduce newcomers to Alaska's unique outdoor recreational opportunities.
- **QOL7:** Investigate options for developing a community center in the Greater North Pole area.
- **QOL12:** Support implementation efforts to increase bike and pedestrian safety in high-use areas already identified in previous transportation planning.
- **QOL13:** Continue to work with landowners and developers to establish designated recreation areas, including creating and preserving access to trails and recreation from residential areas.

Fiscal Impact

Key Takeaways

- The incoming F-35 population will increase the number of residents and students served by local government entities including Fairbanks North Star Borough, the City of Fairbanks, the City of North Pole and the FNSB School District (FNSBSD).
- Increased population and more K-12 students will lead to both greater education revenues and greater expenditures.
- With F-35 Beddown, revenues and expenditures for the FNSB, City of North Pole and City of Fairbanks will increase proportionately, with one important exception:
 - FNSB population growth rates for school age children will far exceed growth rates for adult residents (the number of residents paying property tax, thereby contributing to Borough education funds). Youth population growth, coupled with stagnant State of Alaska funding, could lead to funding challenges for the FNSBSD.
 - FNSB revenues are forecast to exceed expenditures from 2017 to 2024, but in 2025 through 2030, expenditures are expected to exceed forecasted revenues.

Expand Retail and Commercial Activities near EAFB

- **QOL8:** Establish a military-community liaison to coordinate the sharing of information with EAFB personnel.
- **QOL9:** Continue progress on commercial district rezoning efforts in the City of North Pole.
- **QOL10:** Consider policies that will attract additional businesses to the City of North Pole.
- **QOL11:** Continue to support the wholesale retailer Costco's entry into the FNSB market.
- Expand bicycle and pedestrian connectivity in FNSB

- State of Alaska expenditures are forecasted to exceed anticipated revenues with F-35 Beddown starting in 2025. Specifically, the State of Alaska is a major funder of education, infrastructure, and public safety in the region. Without new revenue streams, the F-35 Beddown would place additional pressures on the dwindling State of Alaska budget.
- Providing high quality on-base housing options for incoming F-35 dependents could help relieve fiscal pressure on FNSB/FNSBSD as a result of greater Federal Impact Aid for students living on base (\$7,725 per student compared to only \$80 for each student living off base).
- Encourage incoming F-35 families to enroll their school-age children in the on-base schools to utilize the excess capacity within the schools located on-base.
- FNSB and FNSBSD should conduct further demographic analysis to confirm projected student populations and develop incremental funding strategies that will adequately fund increased student populations.
- FI2: Encourage EAFB families living on-base to enroll their school-aged children in FNSBSD schools.
- FI3: Develop, implement and support a comprehensive economic development strategy aimed at diversifying and strengthening the FNSB economy.

Recommended Strategies

- FI1: Conduct further demographic analysis to confirm projected student populations and develop incremental funding strategies that will adequately fund increased student populations.