

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2026  
EAGLE ROOM  
10:00 AM**

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**AGENDA**

1. Call to Order
2. Prayer/Reflection
3. Review and Adoption of Agenda
4. Declarations of Conflict of Interest
5. In Camera Matters
  - a) Correspondence
    - i. 2026-03-12 Honourable Minister of Environment and Climate Change
6. Public Matters
  - a) Public Briefing on Yellowknife Airport with Honourable Minister of Infrastructure – 10:30 a.m.
7. Recess
8. Public Matters
  - a) Public Briefing on Renewable Heating and Economic Diversification with Fred Behrens, SAO Wekweèti – 1:30 p.m.
  - b) Public Briefing on Renewable Heating and Economic Diversification with Tim Kalke, Sustainable Energy Galena Alaska Inc. – 3:00 p.m.
9. In Camera Matters
  - a) Debrief
  - b) Workplan
10. New Business
  - a)

11. Date and Time of Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 28, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.

12. Adjournment

# Yellowknife Airport (YZF)

## Where The North Connects

Economic strategic  
initiatives, goals, and  
objectives

March 24, 2026



Government of  
Northwest Territories



Yellowknife  
Airport | Aéroport

# Today's Objectives

The background of the slide features a faded image of an airport. In the center is a multi-story air traffic control tower with a glass-enclosed top section. Below the tower is a long, low airport terminal building with a series of windows. In the foreground, a white Canadian North turboprop aircraft is parked on the tarmac. The aircraft has "CANADIAN NORTH" written in red on its side. A white pickup truck is visible on the left side of the tarmac.

1

## **Gateway Strategy and Land Use Plan**

Provide insight into the evolution of our Gateway Strategy and the Land Use Plan.

2

## **Next Steps for ATB**

Provide you with an opportunity to comment on YZF priorities and the Land Use Plan.

3

## **“What we Heard”**

Provide key insights from Stakeholders.

4

## **DND Update**

Provide an update on where we are in the process.

# YZF's Value Proposition



**75,000**

Visitors to NWT in 2025,

**\$150 M**

in NWT Visitor spending in 2025

**74%**

of visitors to YZF are Canadian

**26%**

are international visitors

**> 45,000**

Aircraft Movements in 2025



**15,100**

flights scheduled in 2025

**73%**

On-Time Performance @+15 Minutes

**Most in-demand routes**



Edmonton



Vancouver



Calgary



Toronto



Inuvik

YZF generates over

**\$315 M**

in GDP annually.

**23,782**

NWT and NT medical patients transported via YZF in 2023



YZF supported nearly

**1,500**

jobs in 2024



# Existing State of the YZF Terminal

## Facility Age

Originally constructed in 1963, existing terminal assets are past their useful life which creates higher operating expenses for the airport to maintain a crippling facility.



## Adjacent Facilities

Areas surrounding the terminal have been developed to accommodate other tenant needs and airside improvements, limiting the airport's ability to expand the terminal without displacing other critical assets.

# YZF Continues to Operate Beyond its Capacity

## Boarding Areas

Additional holdroom area is required for both clean/southern and dirty/northern flights. Other passenger amenities such as concessions and restrooms are needed in addition to the holdroom requirement.



## Baggage Claim

One additional bag claim device or additional frontage on the two existing devices required to meet the demand.

# YZF Continues to Operate Beyond its Capacity



## Check-In Counters

Requirements exceed the currently provided capacity of 16 counters.



## Meet & Greet Space

Existing areas designated for meeters and greeters is sufficient to meet the current demand.



## CATSA Screening

A second CATSA screening lane required immediately.

# Need for Long-Term Plan

Identify locations of key airport facilities that support growth over the next 50 to 100 years

Understand the balance between aeronautical & non-aeronautical development

**Four key project outcomes were identified early in the planning process to establish clear success metrics**

Develop a roadmap identifying the optimal locations for the future terminal and related areas such as cargo and logistics.

Deliver a rationale and justifiable land use plan

# Land Use Plan - Principles



# Elements and Planning Parameters

01

## **Economic Value**

Ensure the land use plan considers the future development of assets that will provide economic value to the airport and the territory

02

## **Runway & Taxiway System**

Incorporate runway extension options outlined in the current airport master plan. Assumed that the taxiway design accommodates the correct aircraft and that the VOR remains in its current location when evaluating concepts

03

## **DND Requirements**

Develop a plan based on the largest known DND development concept

04

## **Terminal**

Situated centrally on the airfield, with peer airport benchmarks applied to determine the necessary amount of land to reserve

05

## **Air Cargo**

While some air cargo facilities may need to be located next to the terminal, the majority can operate independently, away from the terminal area

06

## **Corporate Tenants**

Maintain corporate tenants in their current location

07

## **Small GA Tenants**

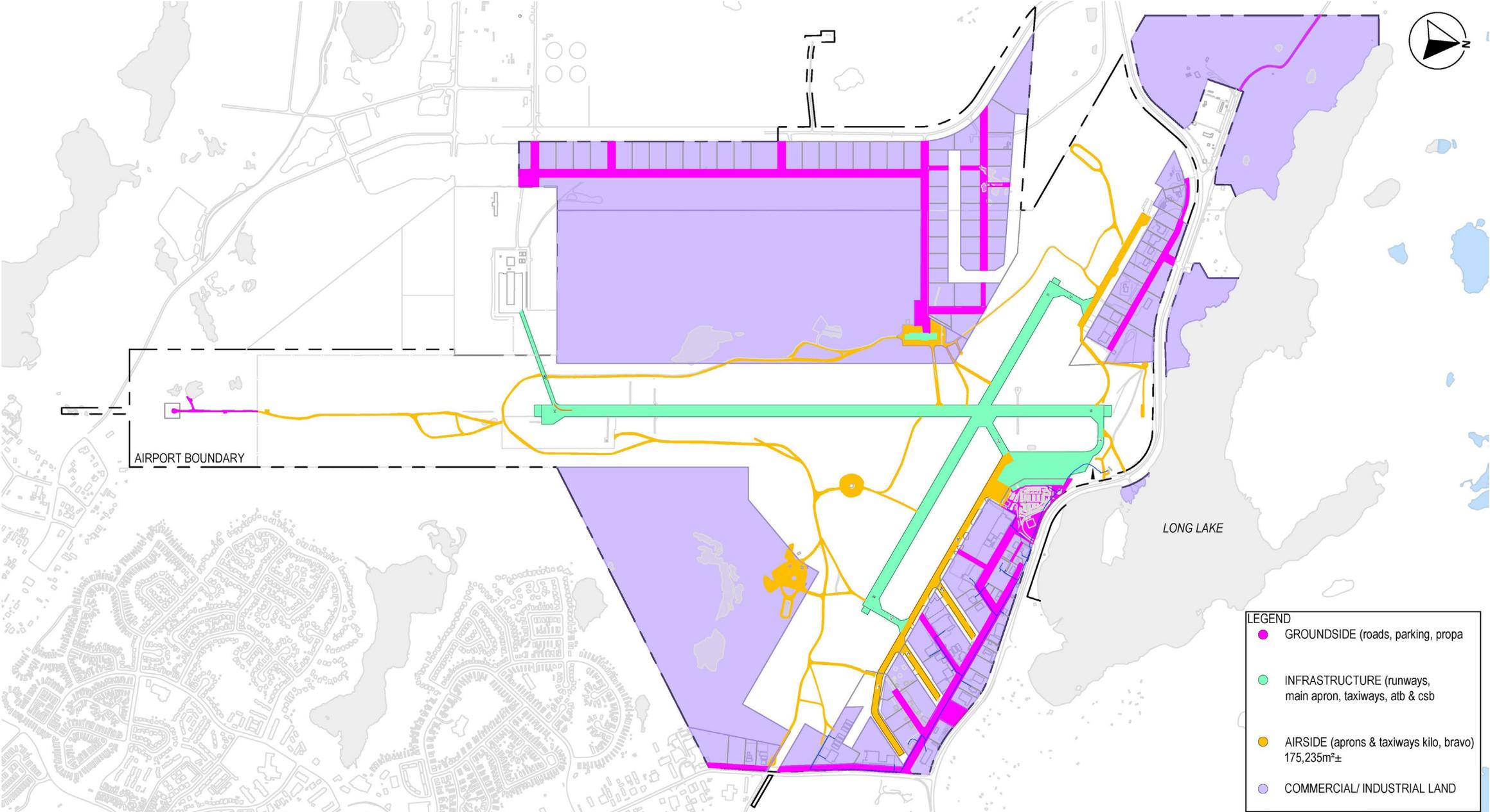
Maintain small general aviation tenants in their current location

08

## **Nonaeronautical Development**

Utilize the remaining available land for potential non-aeronautical development

# Land Use Concept



AIRPORT BOUNDARY

LONG LAKE

**LEGEND**

- GROUNDSIDE (roads, parking, props)
- INFRASTRUCTURE (runways, main apron, taxiways, atb & csb)
- AIRSIDE (aprons & taxiways kilo, bravo) 175,235m²±
- COMMERCIAL/ INDUSTRIAL LAND

# Defining Sizes for Each “Puzzle Piece”

## DND

**Reserved Area:** 72 ha

**Rationale:** DND has developed plans to support both existing and future development needs. Accommodating DND has a significant economic impact, and their presence can serve as a key driver for justifying future projects and initiatives at the airport.

## Terminal Area

**Reserved Area:** 20 ha

**Rationale:** YZF has experienced a surge in passenger growth, and the existing facility is at or near capacity. The reserved land will provide enough space to meet needs over the next 50 years, allowing the terminal to grow incrementally while maintaining a high level of service for travelers.

## Air Cargo

**Reserved Area:** 40 ha

**Rationale:** Allows YZF to accommodate growth driven by e-commerce and time sensitive goods. Additionally, existing space is not fully optimized and can be further enhanced to ensure the airport remains competitive, supports regional economic growth, and sustain its role.

## Corporate Tenants

**Reserved Area:** +/- 49 ha

**Rationale:** As the surrounding community and region continue to grow, there is an increasing demand for corporations to have aircraft and facilities at YZF to support their operations. The reserved land provides the airport with a valuable opportunity to meet this demand and drive regional business and economic growth.

## General Aviation Tenants

**Reserved Area:** 5 ha

**Rationale:** General aviation activity enables a variety of operations, such as pilot training, recreational flying, and emerging services, all of which contribute to the aviation ecosystem and the local economy. Preserving this space for these activities allows the airport to promote growth while maintaining its role as a vital community and regional asset.

## Nonaeronautical Development

**Reserved Area:** +/- 55 ha

**Rationale:** Preserving space for non-aeronautical development enables the airport to offer a variety of services, diversify its revenue streams, and enhance its economic impact, ultimately better supporting the region’s needs.

## Airfield

# Building on Previous Work



- Four land use concepts identified through past work.
- Determined that upgrading or replacing existing site is impractical for a variety of reasons.
- Ultimately selected the **east and west side** concepts for further evaluation.

# Terminal Area Evaluation Summary

Evaluation Criteria	East Side Terminal Area	West Side Terminal Area
Compliance with Aerodrome Standards		
Long-Term Operational Readiness		
Optimized Facility Placement		
Prioritize Territorial Development		
Community Accessibility and Convenience		
Coordinated Support for the Department of National Defence and Arctic Sovereignty		
Environmental Sustainability		
Financial Sustainability		
Economic & Revenue Potential		
Noise Pollution Management		
Air Carrier Operational Costs		
Maintenance and Operational Support		

## Legend

-  Performs **well** compared to other alternatives
-  Performs **fair** compared to other alternatives
-  Performs **poorly** compared to other alternatives

# Key Conclusions for West Side Terminal

## Strategic Placement for Airfield Efficiency

The terminal's location allows operators to access either of the airport's runways via taxiways efficiently, eliminating the need to cross a runway for departures aligned with the airport's predominant wind direction.

## Consolidation of Land Uses

Defining zones for specific tenant needs allows space to be fully optimized, enhances operational efficiency and creates a tailored environment that meets the unique needs of each tenant.

## Reduced Environmental Impact

By situating the terminal further from existing developed areas, it could help minimize the environmental impact on residential or commercial properties.



## Long-Term Economic Diversification

Portions of undeveloped land on the west side of Deh Cho Blvd could be further developed to provide amenities or a business district.

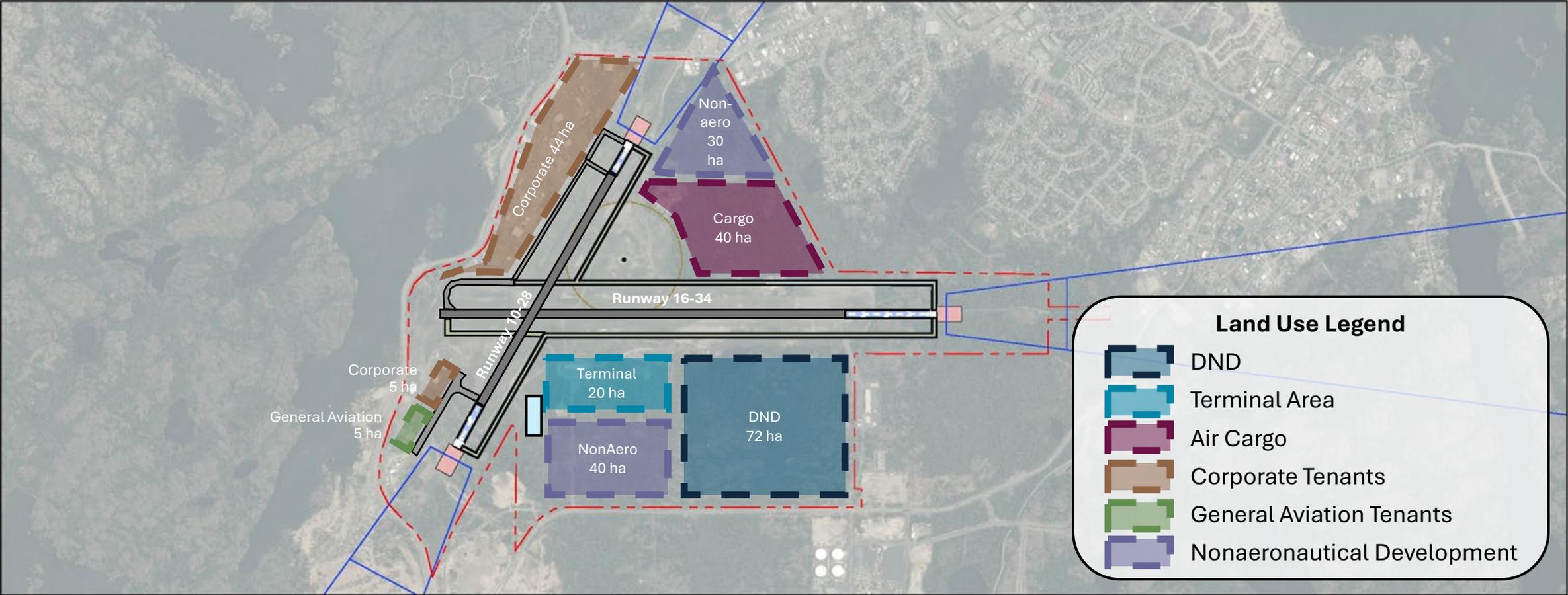
## Improved Traffic Flow and Accessibility

Improves access for passengers and employees needing airport access and avoids arterial roadways that can create bottlenecks for individuals.

## Foundation for Site Utilities

If DND moves forward with their proposed plan, they could help lay the foundation of the proposed utilities needed to support a future terminal area, helping to reduce overall implementation costs.

# Land Use Concept – West Side Terminal Area



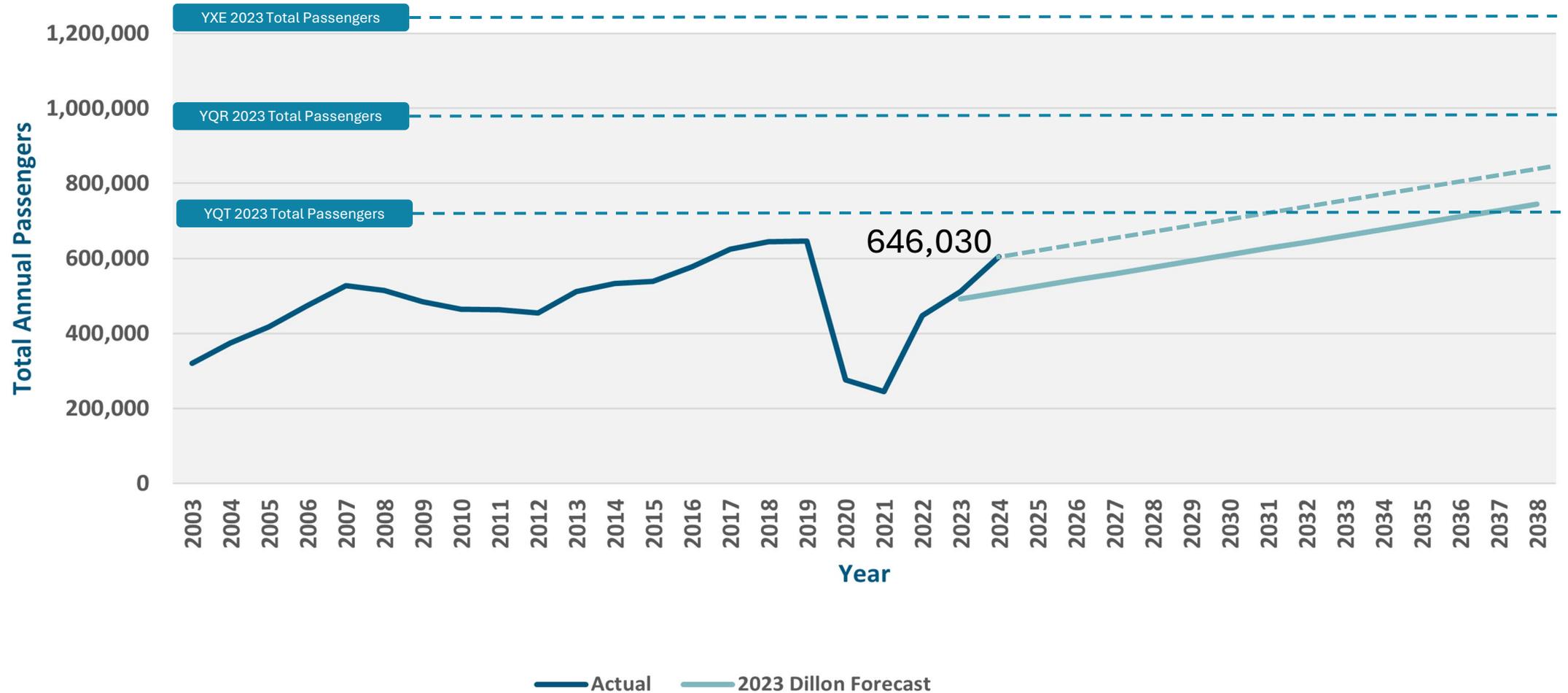
**Legend**

- Existing Runway Pavement
- Existing Taxiway Pavement
- Proposed Pavement
- TP 312, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition Proposed RESA
- TP 312, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition Approach Surface
- Airport Property Boundary
- VOR Critical Area
- Relocated Combined Services Building



# Traffic Growth Outpacing 2023 Forecast

## Total Annual Passengers



# Peer Airport Benchmarking

## Thunder Bay International Airport



### Key Metrics

- 714k total passengers in 2023
- 7 aircraft gates
- 3 RON positions
- 4,000 m<sup>2</sup> terminal building
- 31,000 m<sup>2</sup> apron
- 25,000 m<sup>2</sup> parking

## Regina International Airport



### Key Metrics

- 980k total passengers in 2023
- 7 gates connected with PBBs
- 5 RON positions
- 9,000 m<sup>2</sup> terminal building
- 75,000 m<sup>2</sup> apron
- 60,000 m<sup>2</sup> parking

## Saskatoon International Airport



### Key Metrics

- 1.27 million total passengers in 2023
- 8 gates connected with PBBs
- 4 RON positions
- 13,000 m<sup>2</sup> terminal building
- 70,000 m<sup>2</sup> apron
- 60,000 m<sup>2</sup> parking

# Key Insights from Stakeholders

## Participants (October 20-22, 2025)

- Air Canada, Air Tindi, Canadian North, Buffalo Air, Summit Air, Great Slave Helicopters, General Aviation
- Transport Canada, Nav Canada, Department of National Defence
- City of Yellowknife, North Slave Metis Association, Yellowknife Dene First Nation, Deton Cho Logistics

1

## Broad Alignment on West-Side Development

- East-side congestion, cost of extending utilities, and long-term growth pressures support a shift to the west side.
- New terminal, expanded cargo area, and future runway upgrades are seen as essential for long-term capacity and safety.

2

## Integration with DND is a *Critical Driver*

- Runway expansion and several major infrastructure elements are tightly linked to DND timelines, notably the arrival of F-35 aircraft (expected by 2030).
- DND supports the land use direction and is conducting studies to finalize their exact requirements.

3

## Need for Detailed Planning

- The current land use plan is acknowledged as high-level.
- All stakeholders expressed the need for forthcoming detail on:
  - Facility layouts
  - Utilities
  - FBO/FA capacity
  - Access and circulation (cargo, airside, groundside)
  - Tower location and airfield navigation
  - Roles, responsibilities, and cost-sharing formulas

# Key Insights from Stakeholders

4

## Infrastructure and Utilities are major cost drivers

- Utility upgrades (power, water, sewer) present significant project costs across east and west sides.
- City and DND stress the importance of co-investment opportunities to reduce duplication.

5

## Demand and Forecast Uncertainty

- Passenger and traffic projections questioned.
- Airlines expect continued growth but note operational limitations in the current environment.

6

## Operational Pressures on the Existing Terminal

- Current east-side terminal faces safety, congestion, and winter operations challenges.
- Interim investment may be required while the new terminal is built.

# DND – Advanced Procurement Notice

The **advance notice** of potential contracts with anticipated security requirements, providing interested design-builders with an opportunity to begin the sponsorship request process for potentially obtaining the required security clearance(s) that are anticipated.

Hangar	Northern Basing Initiative - Large, dual-bay Multi-platform with Strategic Tanker Transport bay	NB	Inuvik, Goose Bay, Yellowknife, Iqaluit
Hangar	Northern Basing Initiative - Medium, dual-bay Multi-platform	NB	Inuvik, Goose Bay, Yellowknife, Iqaluit
Hangar	Northern Basing Initiative - Small, dual-bay Multi-platform	NB	Inuvik, Goose Bay, Yellowknife, Iqaluit
Multi-purpose bldg	Northern Basing Initiative - Multi-purpose bldg	NB	Inuvik, Yellowknife, Iqaluit

# NORAD Northern Basing Infrastructure (NNBI)



Canada's NORAD modernization investments focus on the following five inter-related areas:

1. Improving situational awareness;
2. Modernizing command, control, and communications systems;
3. Modernizing the CAF's air weapons systems;
4. Improving and adapting infrastructure and sustainment capabilities in the North, including:
  - Northern basing infrastructure at four locations in Canada's North, and
  - Fighter infrastructure and NORAD Quick Reaction Alert capabilities.,
  - Modernizing our air operational training infrastructure, and
  - Additional air-to-air refuelling capacity.
5. Fostering collaborative research, development and innovation.

# Arctic Infrastructure Fund

The Arctic Infrastructure Fund features two funding streams:

**Stream 1:** Dual Use Transportation Infrastructure that Supports Defence and Community/Civilian Requirements in the Arctic (Invitation Based)

**Stream 2:** Investing in Industry and Community-Led Transportation Infrastructure with Dual-Use Benefits (Open Call)

**GNWT has been invited to submit an application through Stream 1**



Yellowknife  
Airport | Aéroport

Thank You

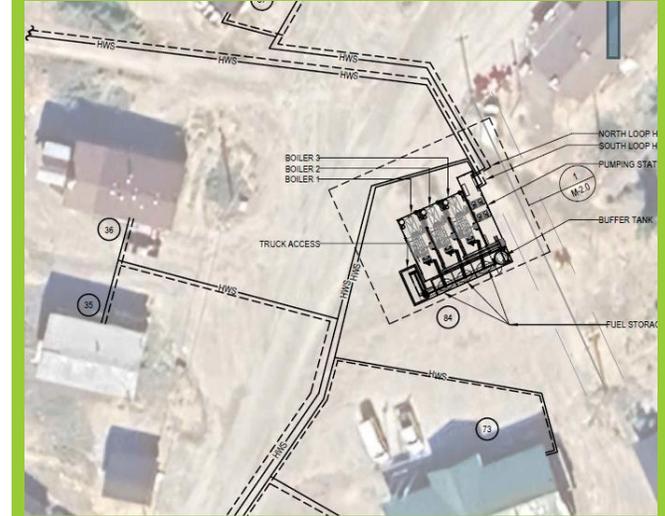
# Wekweeti Wood chip District Heating Network Project and Fall 2025 FireSmart program

- NT Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment
  - Yellowknife, NT
  - March 24, 2026

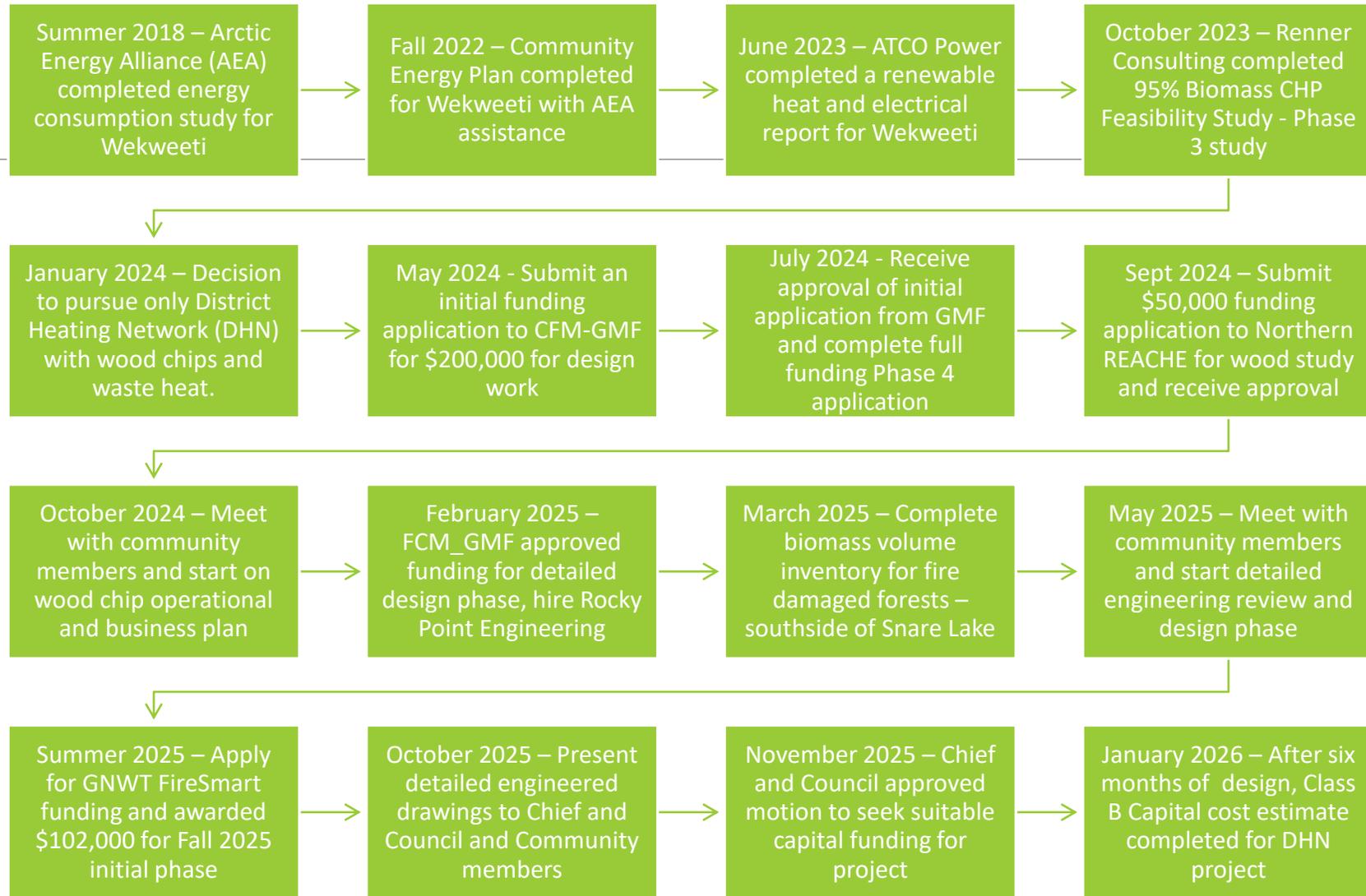
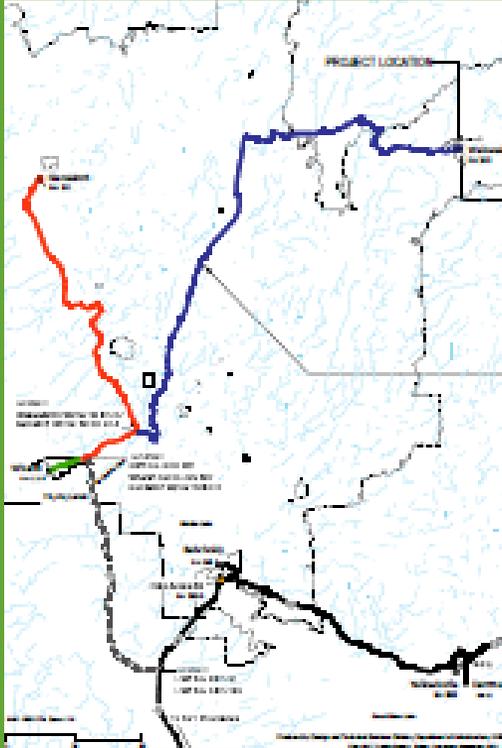
Presenter: Fred Behrens

Wekweeti - Senior Admin Officer

867-445-4394



# Wekweètì's Thermal Energy Planning Process



# District Heating Network (DHN) Design Phase

Rocky Point Engineering visited Wekweeti in May 2025 to research and start detailed design phase, funded by FCM-GMF

Design includes thermal heat plant, underground District Heating Network (DHN), building connections, and diesel heat capture

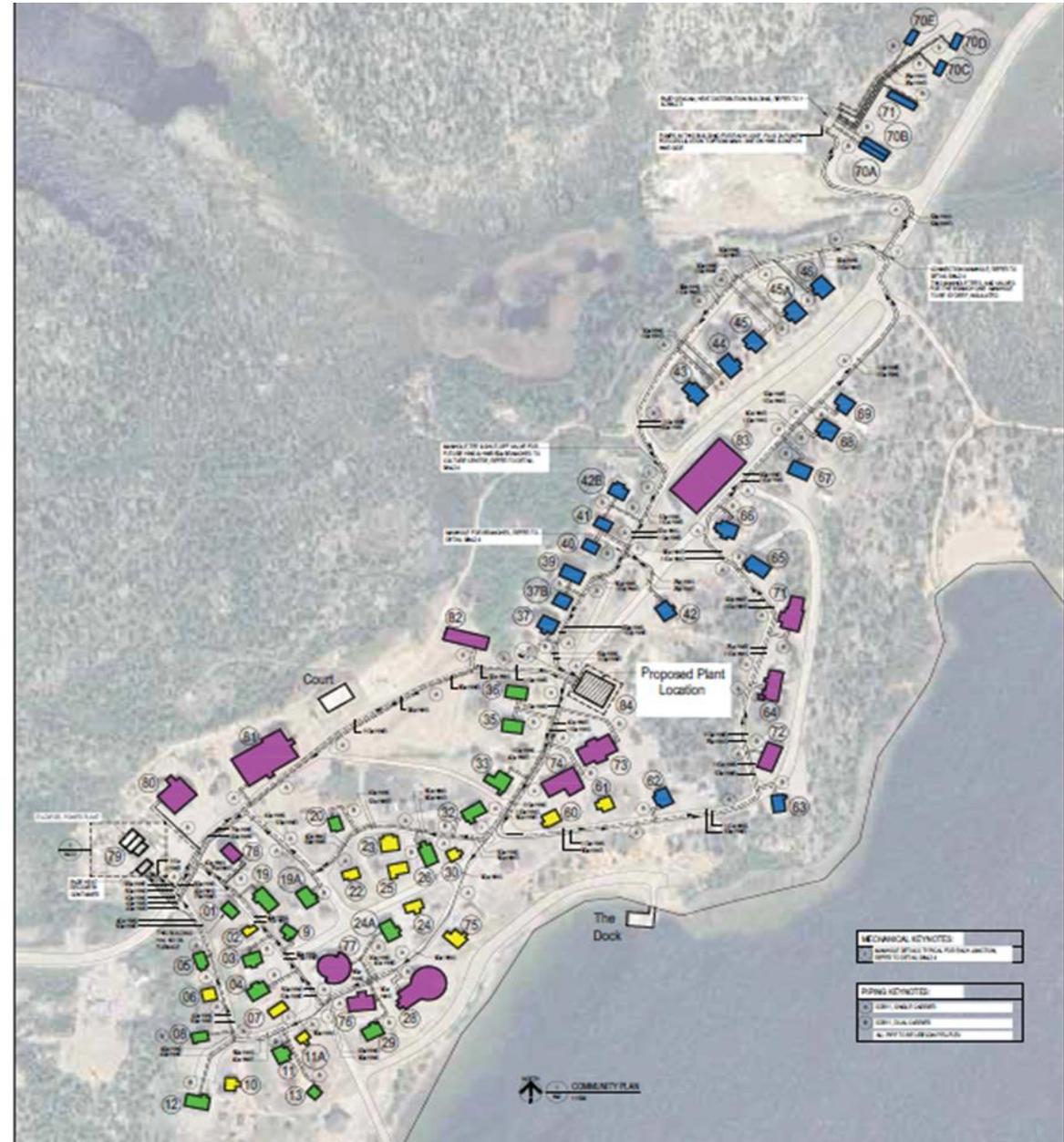
Designed to connect all 14 institutional buildings and up to 44 homes

Ability to connect future buildings

Class B Cost Estimate has now been completed based on detailed design drawings

Project is close to shovel ready and now seeking suitable capital funding

District Heating Network map



# Wood chip heat plant

The heat plant is centrally located, creating two separate DHN zones

Minimizes pipeline sizes, distances, and material costs

Waste heat from the diesel generators is the primary heat source

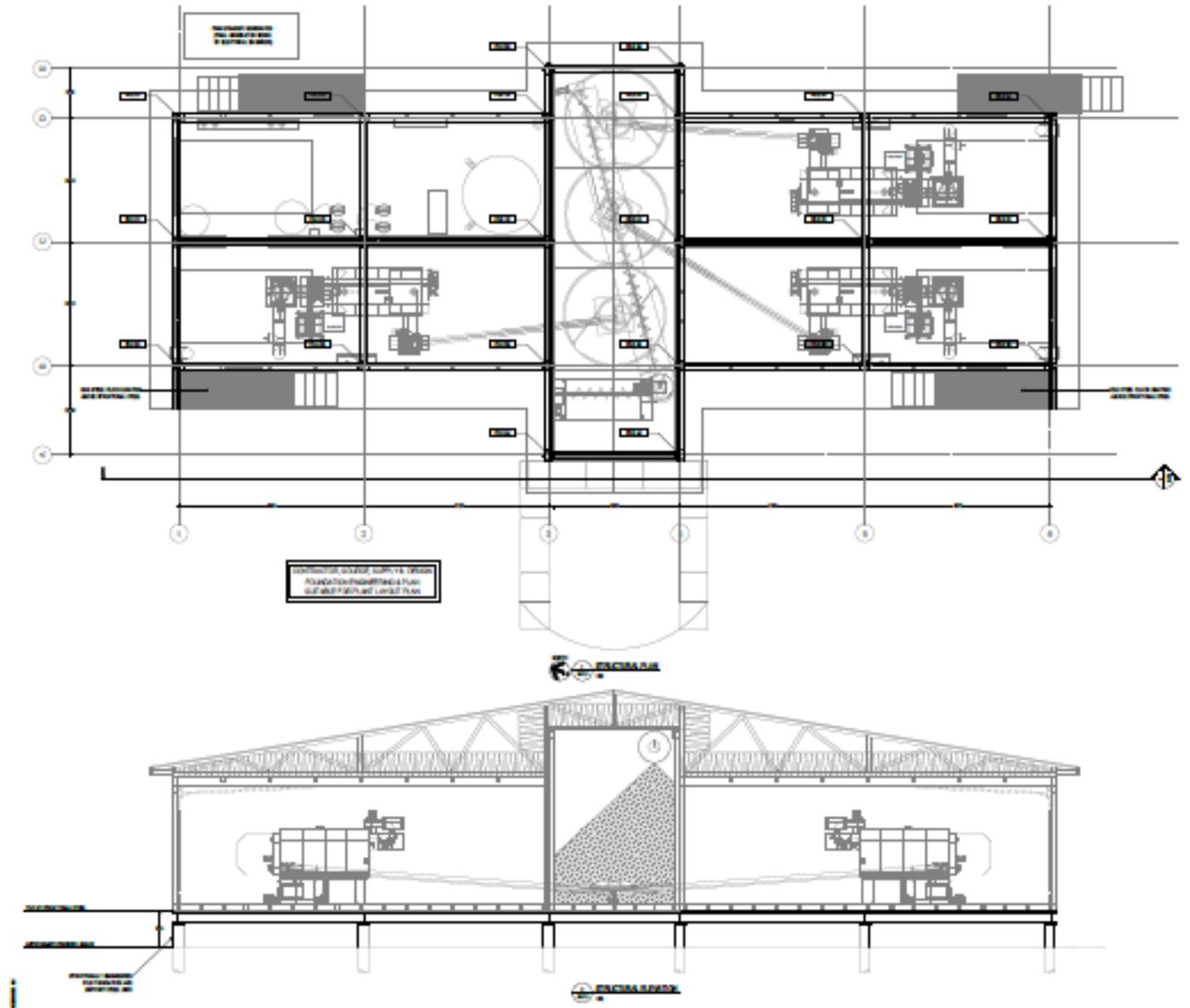
Wood chip heat is only supplied during coldest winter months, requiring 210 Air Dried Tonnes/year (ADT = 20% MC)

Based on three – 300 Kw wood chip boilers

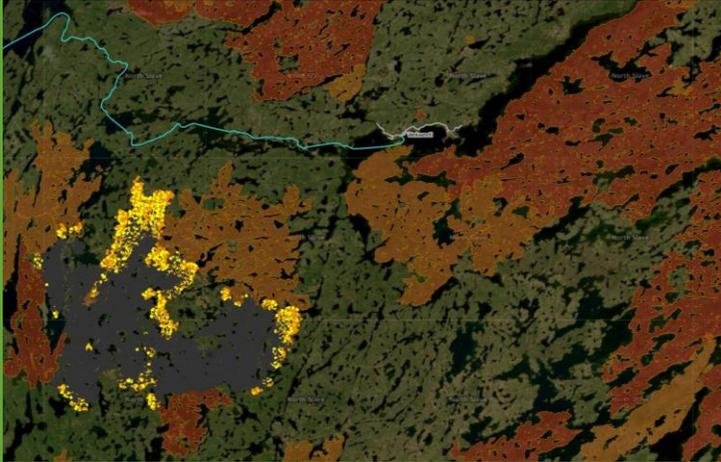
Heat plant and wood chip supply are contained in five – factory-built units to be shipped on the seasonal ice road

Modular units allow for easier and quicker installation once on site

Design includes back up generator and biomass CHP is also being re-evaluated



## Wood chip DHN summary



## What makes this project unique and innovative?

- Community is totally off-grid, relying on a seasonal ice-road, and was evacuated twice in 2023 due to 85,000 ha wildfire
- DHN project has been studied since 2023 and detailed design is now completed, thanks to four different funding grants.
- Community mandate is to supply 95% of annual thermal heat
- Designed to capture over 50% of thermal heat from Naka Power owned diesel-powered generators that operate year round
- Biomass Heat plant is modular, contains 3 -300 kW boilers, and built to store and use locally produced wood chips
- After three community engagement meetings and four Chief and Council meetings, community support is growing stronger
- The Community Government of Wekweeti manages 17,000 hectares of community owned forest lands around village
- The Fall 2025 FireSmart program is demonstrating that forest management, fuel procurement, and wildfire risk reduction programs are compatible, economical and feasible.
- Wekweeti is implementing a step by step, proactive approach towards energy sustainability and wildfire management



## Fall 2025 FireSmart process



Trained six residents to complete the first year of the FireSmart program, focused on the Cultural Camp and towards Airport



Used a “Leave Tree Selection Guide”, resulting in 400 mature conifer trees per hectare or 1 mature conifer tree per 5 x 5-meter square.



Piled all harvested fuels, smaller trees and branches over 1 m in length in piles for later transport to roadside for chipping into truck



Create multiple piles to minimize hand dragging of biomass material



Collect labor hours, harvest area, and volume data for further analysis



Hand piled material will air-dry over summer and then chipped at the roadside for Fall 2026 heating fuel



Completed over 65 hectares in one month and gathered more biomass than anticipated. (Est. 8 ADT of wood chip material and 2 cords of firewood per hectare)

# Lessons Learned, so far

Wekweeti has a mandate to supply 95% of community thermal and electrical requirements with renewable, local energy

Proactive forest management can supply sufficient, sustainable biomass fuels while creating healthy forests that lower wildfire risk and intensity.

Feasibility studies, community engagement, grant writing, and detailed design take time, patience, funding, and outside expertise.

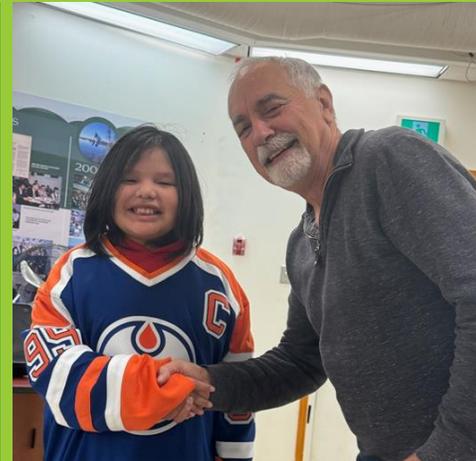
Suitable funding programs change frequently and are over-subscribed

Locating suitable capital funding is difficult as governmental changes bring new mandates and remove existing programs

These projects require numerous steps, research, partnerships, and significant leadership decisions along the way

This DHN project is a long-term infrastructure project, that can be implemented in multiple NT communities while impacting economic development and local environments for future generations.

Wekweeti is planning to double the size of their Fall 2026 FireSmart program. Currently collaborating with Behchoko to demonstrate a mechanized FireSmart project to create local wood chips in Fall 2026.



# Galena Community Energy

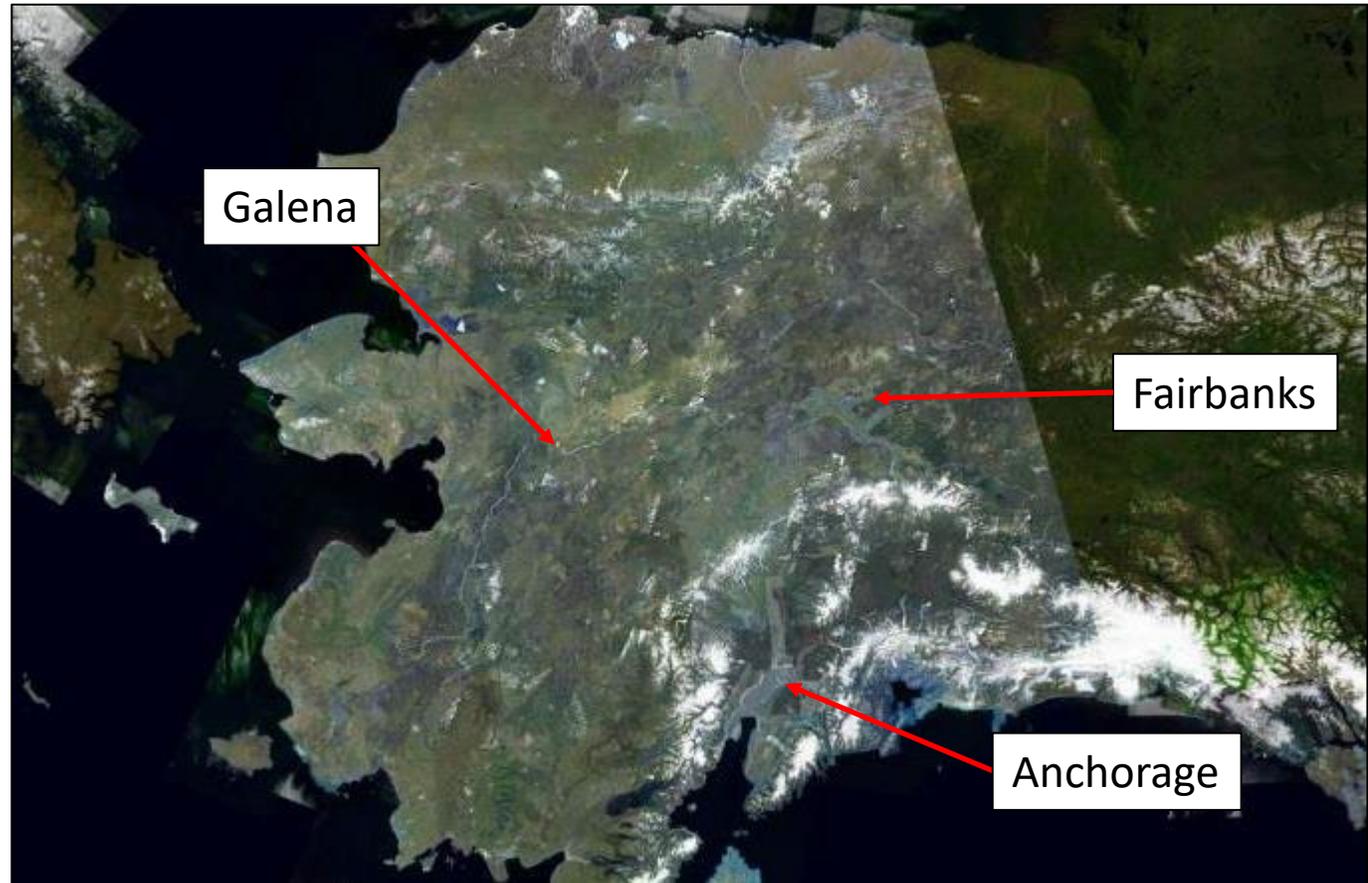


TIM KALKE  
SEGA GENERAL MANAGER  
ACEP ADJUNCT RESEARCH FACULTY

# Presentation Agenda

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- Community Energy
- Galena Context
- RE Integration Projects
- Building Energy Literacy and Future Planning Initiatives



# Community Energy – What does it mean?

- Case Study – Action Research
- Framework based on the main components of **Energy Justice**:
  - Procedural (*Participatory Decision-Making Process*)
  - Recognition (*Ownership/Management Models*)
  - Distribution (*Community Benefit Plan*)

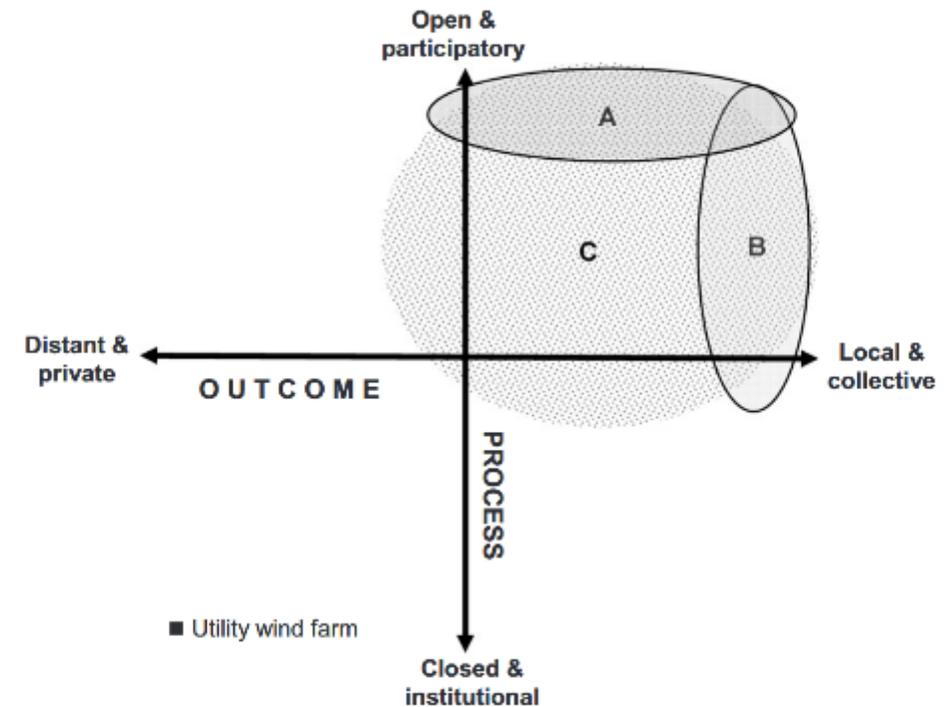


Fig. 1. Understanding of community renewable energy in relation to project process and outcome dimensions.

Walker, G., & Devine-Wright, P. (2008). Community renewable energy: What should it mean? *Energy Policy*, 36(2), 497–500. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enpol.2007.10.019>

# Notaalee Denh – Galena, AK

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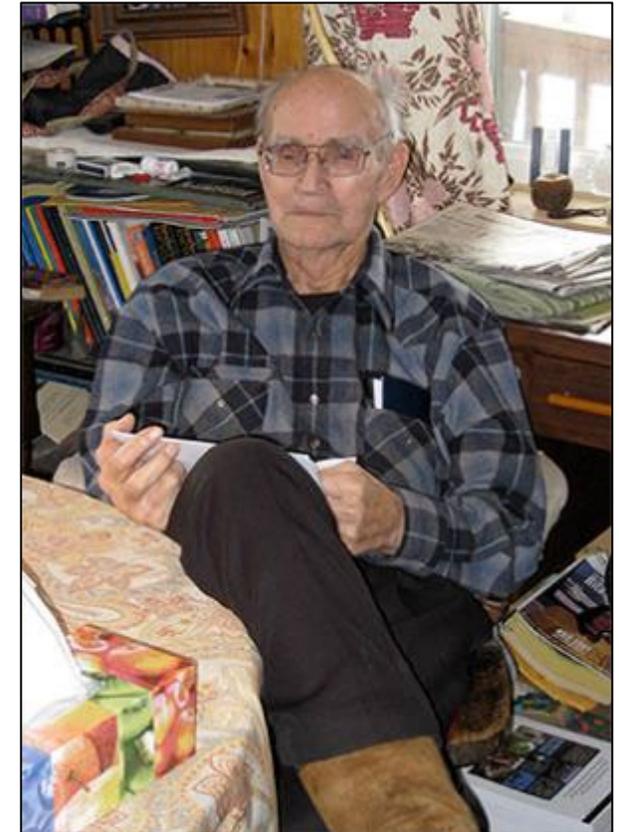
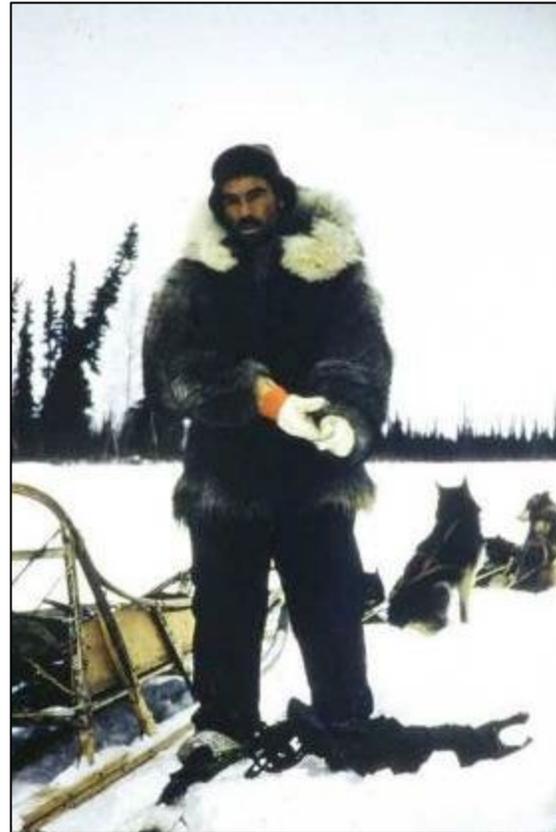
- Koyukon-Athabascan
- 400 residents – 65% Native Alaskan
- Mining Camp, U.S. Air Force, Education
- Mixed-Economy



# Notaalee Denh – Galena, AK

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- Koyukon-Athabascan
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# Community Energy Challenges

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- High-cost of fossil fuel for energy generation.
  - Electricity - \$0.72USD(\$0.99 CAD)/kWh
  - Heating Fuel - \$8.50USD(\$11.65CAD)/g
    - \$2.91CAD/Liter
- Long-transportation lines
- Limited capacity (e.g., physical, administrative, economic)



(photo credit Jeff Fisher – Alaska Center for Energy & Power)

# Biomass Project

Former Galena Air Base

- Ownership transition to City of Galena
- Rural Energy Issues
  - Inefficient and aging infrastructure
  - Old steam distribution system consumed ~230,000 gallons (870,550 liters) annually
  - Expensive diesel fuel
- Project Funding
  - AEA Grant
  - AHFC & ADEC Loans



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# Sustainable Energy for Galena Alaska, Inc.

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## Timber Harvest & Chip-Processing Entity

- The City of Galena, Galena City School District (GCSD) and Louden Tribal Council (LTC) created a local non-profit organization, **Sustainable Energy for Galena, Alaska (SEGA)** tasked with providing wood fuel supply
- Successfully completed 10 timber-harvest and chip-processing seasons!



# Avg. Estimated Results

Est. 16.5 billion Btu Heat Requirement

Annual averages:

- Oil used – 25,000 gallons (g) (94k liters)
- Wood used - 60,000 cubic feet (cf) / 1700 cubic meters  
*\*Solid Wood Estimate*
- Oil displaced - 200,000 g / (757,000 liters)
- Oil displaced **due to biomass** – 100,000 g (378,500 liters)



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# Sustainable Energy for Galena Alaska, Inc.

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## Expansion of Purposes (2018)

- Provide wood fuel supply
- Facilitate sustainable energy education initiatives
- Implement other EE and RE projects in the community



# Additional Equipment = Increased Capacity

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# 2023- 3 Bedroom Homes

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# 2024 - 2 Bedroom Home

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# 2025 & Beyond

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- Future construction includes 10 additional Tribal homes and 6 teacher housing (Rural Professional Housing Grant opportunity through AHFC)

# Increased Capacity = Increased Activities

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- On-Call and Repair Maintenance for Clinic and Elder's Center
- Completed Contracts for School District, US Post Office, local grocery store, radio station
- SAFE Home
- Milling Services
- Healthy Homes (NREL/CCHRC)
- Homeowner Assistance Fund (Louden Internal Program)



# Increased Activities = Increased Community Well-Being

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- Fish-Wheel
- Smoke House
- Healthy Food Distribution Program
- Elder Assistance Program
- Temporary Summer Hires
- Wellness Events & Workshops



# Galena Solar Farm Project (2024-25)

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- System will consist of 1.5 MW Solar PV array with 1 MWh/1 MW BESS
- Designed to displace approximately 20% of utilities annual diesel fuel used for electrical generation.

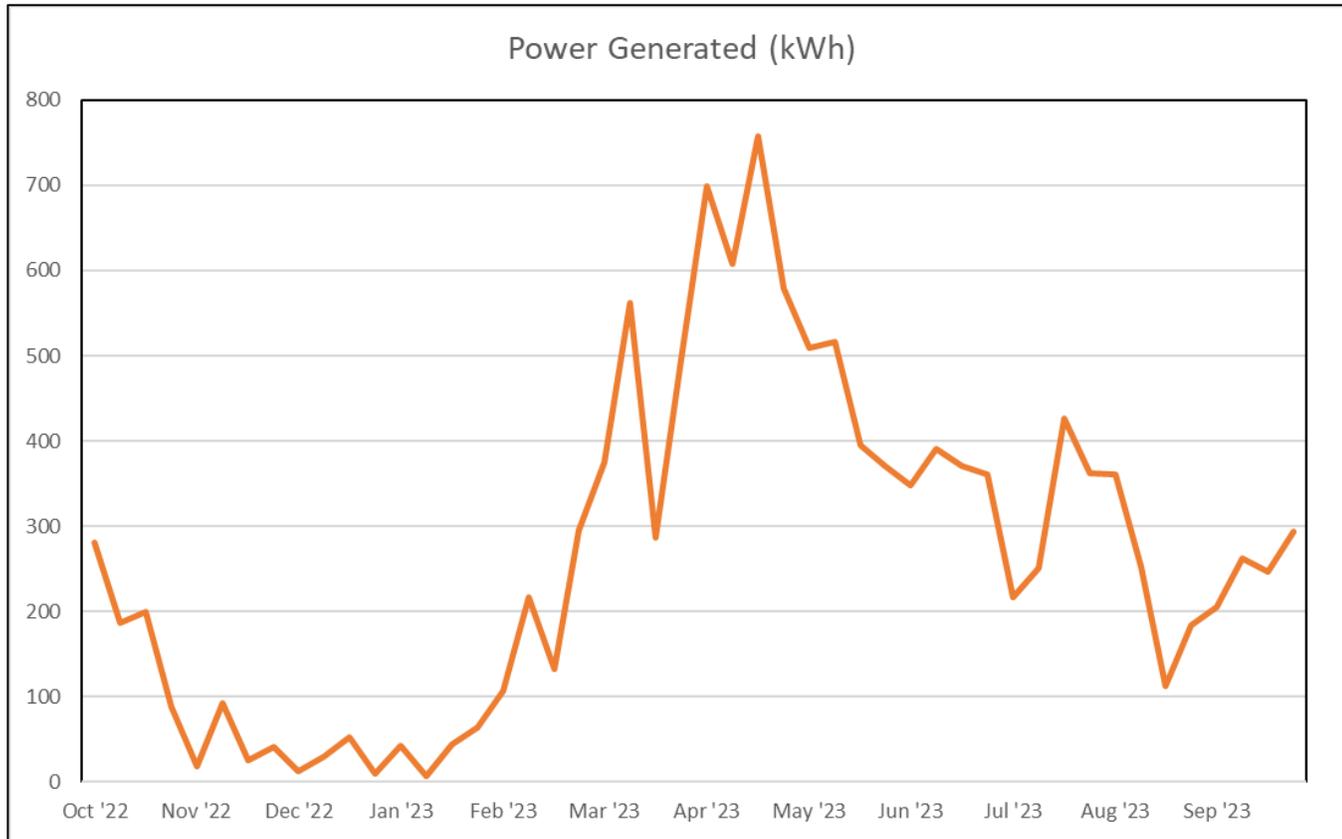
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# Example Solar PV Potential



Constructed by local contractor

SEGA established as Independent Power Producer (IPP)

Contracted to manage, operate and maintain a 50kw solar array, owned by Loudon Tribe, interconnected to the City of Galena's electrical distribution system.

# Example Solar PV Potential

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# Galena River Energy Project Summary

- Funded DOE
- 5 year project starting April 2024
- Budget - \$9.5M



Debris accumulation on surface turbine. Ruby, AK ~2010?

# Galena River Energy Project Summary

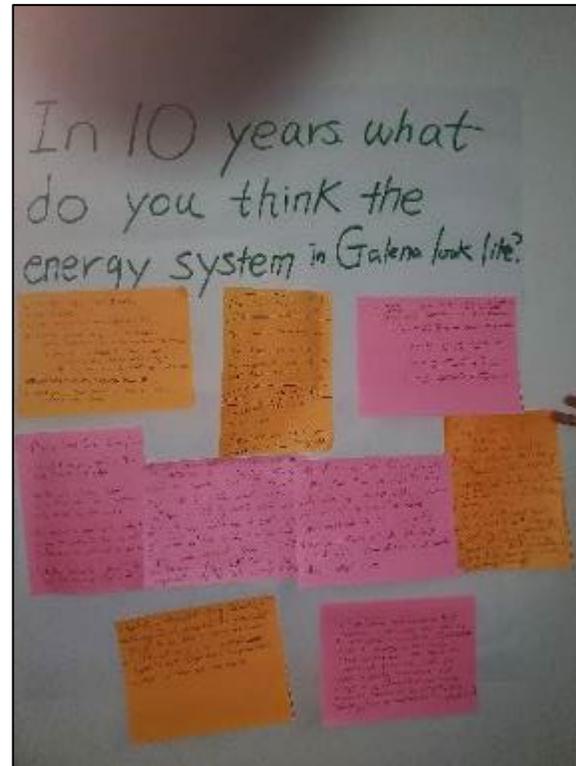
- Funded DOE
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ORPC RivGen, prior to submersion. Igiugig, AK 2020

# Community Energy Planning

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Purposes that align with local values

Risks/Benefits Conversations

Context Specific Challenges / Limitations

Need for Specific Energy Planning



# Community Energy Planning



## Benefits

Indirect

Direct

## Identified Needs, Desires, Pathways, Solutions

City of Galena

Louden Tribe

Galena City School District

Community At-Large

# Community Energy Planning

City of Galena

Louden Tribe

Galena City School District

Community At-Large

- Invest in existing infrastructure
  - System upgrades
    - Improve services
      - Install additional Renewable Energy fuel sources
      - Invest / Save
        - Establish Funds for future cost savings
          - Residential & Commercial cost-savings / rate-savings / cost-of-living-allowance
          - Educational opportunities
            - Economic Development
              - Community Attraction / Reputation-Building



# Community Energy Planning

## Priorities & S.M.A.R.T. Goals

- Diesel Reduction
- Monitor Air Quality
- Renewable Energy Education Center
- Data Management Plan
- Distribution of Benefits Plan
- Reduce Power Outages

**GALENA'S FUTURE ENERGY OPTIONS**

**Energy Vision**

The Community Energy Planning (CEP) Advisory Group envisions a future where sustainable/renewable energy systems protect our environment, support community well-being, and increase the use of local resources. We strive for cleaner air, safer water, and energy technologies that are reliable, affordable, and align with our values. Through hands-on education, innovation, and economic opportunity, we are developing a resilient future, rooted in local knowledge and guided by community voices. Our plan ensures that energy development contributes to healthier lives, a thriving ecosystem, and a stronger community as Galena stands together for all future generations. Source: Galena Community Energy Planning Advisory Group

**Renewable Energy Attitudes**

Percentages of positive or very positive attitudes

Renewable Energy 90%	Solar 94%	Water 83%	Biomass 82%	Renewable Heating 81%	Wind 73%	Biogas 72%

**Renewable Energy Beliefs**

Majority of respondents agree or strongly agree adding renewable energy in Galena will:

- Improve quality of life
- Generate revenues for the community
- Benefit wildlife or wild areas
- Improve air quality
- Add more reliable electricity
- Create local jobs or economic development
- Reduce electric bills
- Improve water quality

# Community Energy Planning

## GALENA'S FUTURE ENERGY OPTIONS



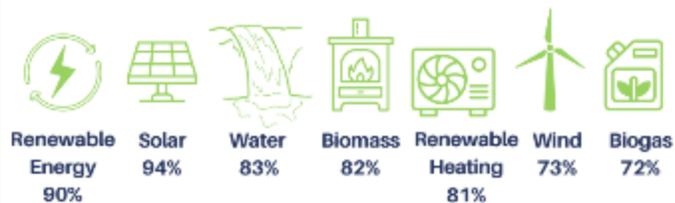
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# Sustainable Energy for Galena, Alaska



THANK YOU!