

Capital Improvements List



Vital Projects
Suggested Projects

VITAL PROJECTS

The following projects are deemed vital to economic development of the Copper River Region. Projected investment amounts (where referenced) are rough order of magnitude (ROM) estimates based on existing related data and similar projects elsewhere in the state. Projects below are prioritized.

1. GAS PIPELINE AND EXPLORATION

Description: Building of the Trans Alaska Gas Pipeline running through the Copper River Region from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez. This would lead to a temporary boom in employment which, followed by local exploration in the form of a refinery, would result in sustained employment opportunities for the region. Tapping in to existing local deposits of natural gas would significantly alleviate the high cost of living for residents.

Potential Partners: State of Alaska, Ahtna Inc, Private investment.

2. DEVELOP HYDROELECTRIC RESOURCES

A. Construct the Allison Creek Hydroelectric Project

Description: Allison Creek is a run of river hydroelectric project located near Valdez on Prince William Sound. CVEA filed an original application for license to develop this hydroelectric project with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in August 2011. When constructed the project will reduce fossil fuel generation by 16 million kWhrs annually and reduce CVEA electric rates.

Potential Partners: CVEA and the State of Alaska

Projected investment: \$40 million (2010 dollars); \$14 million of which has already been secured through state grants.

B. Assess the hydropower potential of the Tiekel River system

Description: The Tiekel River watershed contains substantial potential for power generation. The resource potential should be evaluated through reconnaissance and feasibility studies. In 2012, the Alaska Legislature appropriated \$500,000 to begin this evaluation.

Potential Partners: CVEA, the City of Valdez, the State of Alaska and other regional stakeholders.

Projected investment: The projected investment will be evaluated as part of the reconnaissance study being conducted in 2012.

3. LARGE SCALE BIOMASS BRICK/PELLET PRODUCTION INDUSTRY

Description: Building a brick/pellet production plant in the Copper River Region would significantly lower the cost of utilities for residents and businesses while creating year round, multi disciplinary employment. The potential to export is of considerable importance to the region. Completion of the Gulkana Pellet Mill project currently underway would initiate, on a small scale, the endeavor to create this industry in the Copper River Region.

Potential Partners: DNR, BLM, Ahtna Inc, Private investment.

Projected investment: \$1,000,000.00

4. VOCATIONAL TRAINING SCHOOL

Description: Operation of a small facility offering vocational training in key technical areas such as renewable energy system maintenance, electrical, HVAC, plumbing, heavy equipment operation, automotive mechanics, welding and, construction. Each program should be linked to local apprenticeship placement. Scholarship opportunities binding graduates to working in the Copper River Region for a set period of time would ensure quality services available locally. Use of the existing Copper River School District shop (no longer in use by the schools) represents a significant savings in start up costs. The school would also sponsor workforce development workshops in "soft skills".

Potential Partners: Copper River School District, Prince William Sound Community College, Copper River Native Association, Ahtna Inc., Greater Copper Valley Chamber of Commerce, State of Alaska Dept of Labor and Workforce, Alaska Works Partnership Inc, Private investment.

Projected investment: \$750,000.00

5. HYDROLOGY STUDY

Description: Develop an aquifer report for each Copper River Region community to determine feasibility of drilling community wells.

Potential Partners: Community Corporations, Resident Associations, Native Village Councils, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Village Safewater.

Projected investment: \$200,000.00

6. COMMUNITY WELLS

Description: Drilling a community well in each outlying area of the Copper River Region (where hydrology analysis deems it feasible) would significantly improve the quality of life of many residents currently hauling water from distances in the 20-60 mile range. Operation of each well would result in employment and pose an investment opportunity.

Potential Partners: Community Corporations, Resident Associations, Native Village Councils, Private investment.

Projected investment: \$500,000.00

7. CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENT AGRICULTURE (CEA) PILOT

Description: Construct a 60x72 CEA greenhouse for maximum productivity of local produce in an efficient and environmentally friendly way. This would enable local producers to meet regional needs year round and significantly reduce the cost of produce to residents and businesses. This CEA pilot should be tied to the Kenny Lake School biomass heating project, if possible.

Potential Partners: Copper River School District, Copper River Region Farmer's Association

Projected investment: \$100,000.00

8. MEAT PROCESSING FACILITY

Description: A portable meat processing facility within the Copper River Region's agricultural center for butchering and processing of local livestock would greatly lower the cost of meat to residents making regional livestock more competitive.

Potential Partners: USDA, Copper River Region Farmer's Association, Private investment.

Projected Investment: \$200,000.00

9. PUBLIC FACILITIES

Description: Dump stations, dumpsters and rest areas with toilet facilities are needed to serve the traveling public. This will lead to a cleaner, safer environment, enhance the visitor's experience, and reduce conflict with area residents. This represents an immediate need; so while the challenges of funding are addressed, portable outhouses should be installed at the areas of greatest need; in particular, the Edgerton Highway.

Potential Partners: The Department of Transportation, Division of Tourism, Greater Copper Valley Chamber of Commerce, Private investment.

Projected investment: \$75,000.00

10. WASTE MANAGEMENT

Description: Sanitary landfill and transfer sites to accommodate Chitina and McCarthy communities. High tourism traffic dictates the urgent need for a transfer site at both locations and a sanitary landfill within a 60 mile radius of Chitina. Landfill should be fenced and manned by generated revenue.

Potential Partners: State of Alaska DNR, WRST National Park, Chitina Chamber of Commerce, McCarthy Area Council, Private investment.

Projected investment: \$250,000.00

11. TOURISM MARKETING PACKAGE

Description: Create by contract a Copper River Region marketing package for state, national and international distribution.

Potential Partners: DCCED, Greater Copper Valley Chamber of Commerce, Copper Valley Development Association, Private investment.

Projected investment: \$1,000,000.00

12. THREE PHASE POWER SYSTEM

Description: Provide three phase power along the Edgerton Highway where the regional logging and agricultural activity occurs.

Potential Partners: Copper Valley Electric Association, Chitina Electric Inc., Alaska Energy Authority.

SUGGESTED PROJECTS

The following projects are deemed important to economic development of the Copper River Region. Projected investment amounts (where referenced) are rough order of magnitude (ROM) estimates based on existing related data and similar projects elsewhere in the state. Projects below are prioritized.

1. ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY

Description: Purchase/Lease a facility in a centralized location of the Copper River Region for assisted living services.

Potential Partners: CRNA, Cross Road Medical Center, Connecting Ties.

Projected investment: \$750,000.00

2. HOSTEL

Description: Develop low-cost seasonal lodging in a centralized location of the Copper River Region. Currently low budget travelers to the region do not have indoor lodging options lower than \$60/night. The availability of a shared room/bath, bunk bed type accommodation would enable the extension of the travel season in the Copper River Region for such travelers.

Potential Partners: Greater Copper Valley Chamber of Commerce, Private investment.

Projected investment: \$500,000.00

3. COMMUNITY BEAUTIFICATION

Description: Removal of abandoned/dilapidated structures in a multi phase project beginning with the commercial center of the Copper River Region on the Glenn Highway (miles 175 to 189). Property values would increase as a result. Local hire would be used in the removal of these structures and, the general appearance of the community would benefit in support of local tourism.

Potential Partners: Copper Valley Development Association, Private investment, EPA

Projected investment: \$150,000.00

4. SPORTS COMPLEX

Description: Construct a sports complex in a centralized location of the Copper River Region to serve the Copper River School District and private membership. Facility would offer a small indoor swim labs, weight room, cardio room and running track. As a privately run enterprise, the complex would create employment and provide year round activities to residents and visitors alike.

Potential Partners: Copper River School District, CRNA, Private investment.

Projected investment: \$800,000.00

5. SALMON VIEWING PLATFORM

Description: Construct a salmon viewing platform strategically placed for visitor viewing of salmon migration during the spawning season. A small support facility, offering information in the form of panels and video, would assist in educating visitors. The structures could be co-located with a travel rest area.

Potential Partners: Greater Copper Valley Chamber of Commerce, Copper River Watershed, State of Alaska Fish and Game, Fishing Guides Association, Private investment

Projected investment: \$75,000.00

6. MUSEUM/EATERY ON NABESNA RD

Description: Construct a small facility on private land at the entrance to the Nabesna Rd which would enhance the WRST National Park visitor's experience. The history of the park and homesteading on Nabesna would be the central themes to the museum. A simple eatery would service visitors passing through and those staying in B&Bs nearby.

Potential Partners: Slana Residents Association, WRST National Park, Private investment.

Projected investment: \$75,000.00

Documentation of Process



Community Participation
Endnotes

Community Participation and Methodology

This report contains a summary of the results of public meetings, surveys, and feedback administered between January and June of 2012. Numerous community planning sessions were held in each of the outlying areas and two (2) Regional Roundtable sessions were held at Prince William Sound Community College in Glennallen. All meetings were advertised in the Copper River Region Bi-Weekly Newspaper, KCAM Radio Station, Copper Valley Development Association website and by means of a mailing campaign to every box holder in various communities of the Copper River Region.

Participation in each of these community meetings ranged from 12 to 30 people. Participants were asked to voice values and concerns around specific aspects of community life such as housing, education, business, resources and, others, that were then written on flip charts. From these and guided discussion, goals, objectives and potential strategies were created. The results of the highest priority items are contained within this document. Every attempt to include all opinions shared has been made. Resident and business surveys were made available by U.S.P.S and on the Copper Valley Development Website.

The Copper River Region is an unorganized borough and limited data is available from which to formulate analysis. Various reports were compiled and are referenced in the endnotes of this CEDS. Community profile data was compiled from the 2006-2010 American Community Survey, US Census 2010 data and existing community planning documents.

The vast majority of residents feel strongly about little to no government interference and were hesitant to participate in this planning effort. Some expressed their concern that this effort could result in the establishment of a borough. Many voiced their desire to remain a small, rural region, connected yet self sustaining.

ENDNOTES

- ⁱ I H S G L O B A L I N S I G H T Alaska Forward Project- Situational Analysis Report, , 2010, 2
- ⁱⁱ Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness of Harvard Business School, US Cluster Mapping Economic Performance Indicators, 2012
- ⁱⁱⁱ StatsAmerica.org, Innovation Index, 03/19/2012
- ^{iv} I H S G L O B A L I N S I G H T , Alaska Forward: Phase I Situational Analysis Report, 2010, 31
- ^v FORECLOSURES IN ALASKA AND US, www.economicinfo.org, 12/28/2011
- ^{vi} Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; and Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, 2011 Rental Market Survey, 2011
- ^{vii} State of Alaska, Workforce Development, Research and Analysis, April 2012
- ^{viii} DCCED, Alaska Visitor Statistics Program VI: Summer 2011, 2012
- ^{ix} DCCED, Alaska Visitor Statistics Program VI: Summer 2011, 2012, vi-14
- ^x Alaska Fish and Game Special Publication 12-01, 2012
- ^{xi} State of Alaska Div Forestry, Statewide Assessment of Forest Resources, 2010
- ^{xii} USDA, Soil Survey of the Copper River Area, Alaska, 1980, 3
- ^{xiii} USDA, 3
- ^{xiv} USDA, 4
- ^{xv} USDA, 4
- ^{xvi} CVDA, CEDS Business Survey, 2012
- ^{xvii} Keller Williams Realty, Copper River Region Realtor interview, 2012
- ^{xviii} US CENSUS, Population and Housing Characteristics, 2010
- ^{xix} Alaska Department of Administration Personnel and Labor Relations, Alaska Geographic Differential Study, 2008, IV
- ^{xx} American Community Survey, 2005-2009 data set, 2012
- ^{xxi} DCCED, Alaska Visitor Statistics Program VI: Summer 2011, 2012, 111-15
- ^{xxii} McDowell Group, A Profile of Visitors to Rural Alaska and the Copper Basin Region, 2006
- ^{xxiii} WRST National Park, Interview with Superintendent Rick Obernesser, Concessions Management Specialist Mark Keogh and Chief of Interpretation Todd Stoeberl, April 2012
- ^{xxiv} State of Alaska Department of Transportation, dot.alaska.gov/projects-status, July 2012
- ^{xxv} Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Pub 12-01 Run Forecasts and Harvest Projections for 2012, February 2012
- ^{xxvi} Community Planning Committee, Community Plan, 2009
- ^{xxvii} Community Planning Committee, Community Plan, 2009
- ^{xxviii} Community Planning Committee, Community Plan, 2009
- ^{xxix} Cheesh'na Tribal Council, Community Plan, 2012
- ^{xxx} Cheesh'na Tribal Council, Community Plan, 2012
- ^{xxxi} Cheesh'na Tribal Council, Community Plan, 2012
- ^{xxxii} State of Alaska Department of Transportation, dot.alaska.gov, Project Homepage, July 2012
- ^{xxxiii} Kenny Lake League, Kenny Lake Community Plan, March 2007
- ^{xxxiv} Mendeltna/Nelchina Corporation, Telephone Interview, July 2012