Figure 1 - The community of Elim pictured in summer 2025. Photo by Kawerak, Inc.

Elim | Neviarcurluq Local Economic Development Plan 2025-2030

APPROVED DECEMBER 5, 2025

By: Native Village of Elim, Elim Native Corporation, City of Elim
Facilitated & Compiled by Kawerak, Inc. Community Planning & Development

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1. OUR VISION

By 2030, Elim will…

- *Continue to protect subsistence and keep traditional values.*
- *Improve local infrastructure and energy systems.*
- *Encourage local students to get higher education and training.*
- *Create sustainable jobs for local certified and trained workforce.*
- *Improve access to health care and diagnoses.*

2. TOP COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

ELIM'S PRIORITIES

1. Housing
2. Opposition of Uranium Exploration & Mining
3. Protecting Language and Culture
4. Protecting Subsistence Resources
5. New Water Source
6. Water & Sewer
7. Erosion mitigation & adaptation
8. Rock Quarry
9. Boat Harbor
10. Upgrade & New Community Facilities
11. Timber Development
12. Boys' & Girl's Club
13. Affordable Energy

3. OUR GOALS 2025-2030

Based on the community development priorities, the goals for Elim's economic development over the next five years include:

1. CONTINUE TO PROTECT SUBSISTENCE RESOURCES

During the 2025-2030 economic development period, Elim will continue to work on protecting their subsistence resources. A main focus of this goal will be the community's opposition to uranium mining exploration and development in the area. Also, the community will work to protect subsistence food harvests, advocate for cleaner land water and air, and improve infrastructure to better access their food resources.

2. IMPROVE AND UPGRADE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Elim will work on improving housing infrastructure, identifying and accessing a new water source, water and sewer system improvements, implementing erosion mitigation strategies, continuing upgrading community facilities – including the Boy's & Girl's Club – and finding affordable energy options for the community.

2. USE OUR NATURAL RESOURCES TO ENHANCE OUR ECONOMY

Elim will utilize their natural resources to enhance the economy, including the continued development of the Elim Rock Quarry project, accessing a new water source, adapting their shoreline for erosion mitigation strategies, planning for a new subsistence boat harbor, and increasing economic opportunities in timber development for the community.

3. INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRADITIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Elim will increase opportunities for traditional skills development and will focus on the protection and preservation of their language and culture. The community will identify more opportunities for volunteer work to teach important traditional skills, utilize the Boy's and Girl's Club for connecting with youth, and continue to advocate for cultural and language immersion programs in the schools.

4. PLANNING PROCESS & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

4.1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF ELIM'S 2025-2030 LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Local Economic Development Plan (LEDP) is a critical step in the on-going development of the tribe and its efforts to improve community conditions and the wellbeing of its members. This plan is structured to:

- Provide the community with a complete inventory of existing demographics, races, social conditions and services, economic conditions and activities, public services provided, and a listing of public and private facilities in the community.
- Equip the community with the basic informational tools of local planning that accurately show land status and ownership as well as traditional resources and subsistence areas.
- Provide implementation strategies for development priorities, including land use, public facilities and services, capital improvements, economic development and community governance.
- Place emphasis on crucial development issues, such as economic and resource development, land use and infrastructure planning, and prioritizing capital improvement projects.
- Involve key decision makers to assist in the identification of common goals and direction to achieve those goals.

4.2 PLANNING HISTORY AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Kawerak's Community Planning and Development program (CPD) worked with the Community of Elim to develop its LEDP. LEDPs describe local conditions, opportunities, goals, strategies, and other aspects of community development. Elim's last LEDP was completed in 2012. The Tribal, Corporation, and City Councils of Elim regularly update the priorities of the Community and the Tribe. Below are some of the major accomplishments toward their goals since 2012:

- *New bridge*
- *Teen center progress*
- *Landfill upgrades and two new burn units*
- *Rock quarry progress*
- *New water source progress*
- *RUBA score improvements*
- *New housing units*
- *Water treatment plant upgrades*

4.3 PLANNING COMMITTEE AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The LEDP meeting participants include members of Elim's tribal council, Native corporation board, City council, as well as community members. A trained facilitator from Kawerak's Community Planning and Development Department conducted the community planning meeting. At the conclusion of the first meeting on May 15, 2025, the community agreed to its Top 13 Priorities and discussed implementation strategies for their accomplishment in detail. A follow-up meeting to focus on goal setting took place on May 29, 2025, in Elim. *The final draft of the LEDP was reviewed on December 5, 2025, and approved by tri-party.*

Figure 2 Community members gather in the IRA Building for the LEDP Community Meeting on May 29, 2025.

4.4 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

As a second-class city in the unorganized borough, the City of Elim has optional powers

under State law for planning, plat surveying, and land use within municipal boundaries. The City of Elim has assumed some of these powers. As the federally recognized governing body of the Tribal Members of Elim, Alaska, the Elim tribal council shares some of these responsibilities and powers.

Community and Economic Development Strategies (CEDS)[i], a regional economic development plan, was updated for the Bering Strait Region communities in 2025 by the Bering Straits Development Council. The next full update is scheduled for 2030 or 31. This document can be found at: Kawerak.org/cpd

5.0 OUR COMMUNITY

5.1 LOCATION

Elim is located on the northwest shore of Norton Bay on the Seward Peninsula, 96 miles east of Nome. It lies 460 miles northwest of Anchorage. Elim is in the Cape Nome Recording District. The area encompasses 2.4 sq. miles of land and 0.0 sq miles of water (State of Alaska[ii]). Elim has a subarctic climate with maritime influences. Norton Sound is ice-free generally between mid-June and mid-November. Summers are cool and moist; winters are cold and dry. Summer temperatures average between 46 to 62 °F; winter temperatures average -8 to 8 °F. Annual precipitation averages 19 inches, with about 80 inches of snow.

The community population in 2023 was 278.[iii]

5.2 HISTORY AND CULTURE

This settlement was formerly the Malemiut Inupiat Eskimo village of Neviarcurluq. The Native culture was well-developed and well-adapted to the environment. Each tribe possessed a well-defined subsistence harvest territory. The area became a federal reindeer reserve in 1911. In 1914, Rev. L.E. Ost founded a Covenant mission and school, called Elim Mission Roadhouse. The city was incorporated in 1970. When the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) was passed in 1971, Elim decided not to participate and instead opted for title to the 298,000 acres of land in the former Elim Reserve. The Iditarod Sled Dog Race passes through Elim each year. It is an Inupiat Eskimo village with a fishing and subsistence lifestyle. The sale and importation of alcohol is banned in the village.[iv]

5.2 GOVERNMENT, CORPORATIONS, AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

5.2.1. ELIM TRIBAL COUNCIL

Native Village of
Elim PO Box
39070
Elim, AK 99739
Phone: 907-890-3737 Fax: 907-890-3738

The Native Village of Elim is a non-profit organization and is a BIA-recognized tribal (IRA) council with governing authority over its tribal members. The Native Village of Elim did not participate in ANCSA and maintained full title to former reservation lands. The Native Village of Elim owns the Elim Native Store (an ANICA member), sets policies for its operation, and pays its overhead costs. It also owns the IRA/Post Office Building, Clinic Building, 2 property rentals, the NVE Shop, and the Boy's and Girl's Club building, which is being renovated.

Figure 3 Tribal coordinator Mara Daniels keeps things organized and on track in the IRA office.

The Elim tribal council organizes itself by nominating and voting at an annual meeting around the beginning of each year, when everyone is available. The terms of the council seats are staggered as follows:
Seats A and B: 3 year terms
Seats C and D: 3 year terms
Seats E, F, and G: 3 year terms

Figure 4 Tribal President Robert Keith, Morris Nakaruk, and Wayne Moses of the Native Village of Elim.

5.2.2. CITY OF ELIM

City of Elim PO Box 39009
Elim, AK 99739
Phone: 907-890-3441

The City of Elim was incorporated as a second-class city within the unorganized borough in 1970. It owns and operates the City Office building, old High School building, Library, Fire Hall, City Shop, Water Plant, a rental property, and an equipment rental business.

5.2.3. ELIM NATIVE CORPORATION

The Elim Native Corporation owns the Corporation Office building and a duplex rental.. Corporation businesses include property rentals, leases to the telephone companies for towers on their land, and leases to Bering Strait School District (BSSD), NSEDC, ADF&G, City of Elim, and ANICA. The new Rock Quarry development will bring new business.

5.2.4. REGIONAL CORPORATIONS

Elim is served by several regional and statewide corporations, non-profit organizations, governing entities, and private businesses, located throughout the State. The main regional entities include Kawerak, Inc., Bering Straits Regional Housing Authority, Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation, Norton Sound Regional Health Corporation. Main statewide entities include the Alaska Village Electric Cooperative, GCI Communications, Inc., Alaska Energy Authority, Alaska

Housing Finance Corporation, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, and RurAL CAP, among others.

5.3 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

5.3.1. HOUSING

Elim's housing is currently inadequate for its needs. Multi-generational extended families living in Homes make overcrowding common in Elim. To define overcrowding, the terms "extent of housing overcrowding" means the number of housing units with 1.01 or more persons per room (based on data compiled by the United States Bureau of the Census).[v]

According to a housing assessment by the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, the Census contains 14% of their homes listed as "overcrowded," and 13% of homes are listed as "severely overcrowded." As defined by Housing and Urban Development (HUD), "severely overcrowded" means more than 1.5 people per room.

Reports from the US Census website show the existing housing data for Elim:

Elim City, Alaska (2023 Census.Gov Data Extraction)					
	Total	*Married-couple family household*	*Male householder, no spouse present, family household*	*Female householder, no spouse present, family household*	*Nonfamily household*
Label	**Estimate**	**Estimate**	**Estimate**	**Estimate**	**Estimate**
HOUSEHOLDS					
Total households	66	25	11	12	18
Average household size	4.21	5.32	4.45	6.25	1.17
FAMILIES					
Total families	48	25	11	12	(X)
Average family size	5.08	5.28	4.09	5.58	(X)
AGE OF OWN CHILDREN					
Households with own children of the householder under 18 years	30	20	2	8	(X)
Under 6 years only	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	(X)
Under 6 years and 6 to 17 years	43.3%	55.0%	0.0%	25.0%	(X)
6 to 17 years	56.7%	45.0%	100.0%	75.0%	(X)
Total households	66	25	11	12	18
SELECTED HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE					
Households with one or more people under 18 years	63.6%	88.0%	72.7%	100.0%	0.0%
Households with one or more people 60 years and over	31.8%	40.0%	27.3%	33.3%	22.2%
Households with one or more people 65 years and over	21.2%	(X)	(X)	(X)	22.2%
Householder living alone	24.2%	(X)	(X)	(X)	88.9%
65 years and over	6.1%	(X)	(X)	(X)	22.2%
UNITS IN STRUCTURE					
1-unit structures	93.9%	92.0%	100.0%	100.0%	88.9%
2-or-more-unit structures	6.1%	8.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.1%

Mobile homes and all other types of units	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
HOUSING TENURE					
Owner-occupied housing units	81.8%	92.0%	100.0%	83.3%	55.6%
Renter-occupied housing units	18.2%	8.0%	0.0%	16.7%	44.4%

Please note that census data may be inaccurate due to not all homes being reported. Form more accurate information, request data from the City of Elim.

5.3.2. EDUCATION

The Bering Strait School District operates schools in 15 villages in the Bering Strait region. Current enrollment is approximately 1800 students in the entire district and is almost 100% Alaskan Native Inupiat, Yup'ik or Siberian Yup'ik. Although the number of students served is relatively small, the area served covers approximately 80,000 square miles. Most schools are accessible only by small aircraft.

Aniguiin School is one of fifteen facilities that belong to Bering Strait School District. For the 2023-2024 school year, Aniguiin School had 106 students enrolled and approximately 20 staff members to teach and run the facility. There is a half-size gymnasium for physical education, athletic events, and community activities.

Figure 5 School cheer squad photo accessed from the Bering Strait School District website, Elim Aniguiin School Page.

Other facilities for the children of Elim include the library and playground. A Head Start

building funded and staffed by Kawerak is open and operational. The University of Alaska Fairbanks provides courses and degree programs through distance learning by internet, and Kawerak offers a GED program for the region, as well as adult continuing education opportunities.

5.3.3. WATER AND SEWER

Water is derived from a well and is treated. Water and sewer systems that were built by public health services in 1974, along with housing provided by BIA and HUD, have provided residents with piped water and sewer, indoor water heaters and plumbing, and in-home washers and dryers for the past several decades. Many of these systems have had upgrades and improvements over the years, by the City of Elim, and through partnerships with the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium and Norton Sound Regional Health Corporation. New home additions in the community have led to added water and sewer connections, and some of the newest homes are still waiting for their arctic box connections to be completed.

The community has been actively involved with Norton Sound Health Corporation and the Community Utility Assistance Program, or CUAP, to improve their best practice scores. Best practice scores are a statewide measurement for how well utilities and communities are performing in their technical, managerial, and financial management of rural water and wastewater infrastructure. The scores are determined and certified by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, or ADEC, and the Rural Utility Business Advisory, or RUBA, program. As of Spring 2025, Elim has a total best practice score of 67,[vi] which is greatly improved from their previous score. They are aiming to raise their score to higher than 80 by the next assessment.

Elim is a participant in CUAP, or the (Community Utility Assistance Program). According to the CUAP strategic plan, “The purpose of the Community Utility Assistance Program is to support quality drinking water and dependable sewer services in Norton Sound region communities. The business plan 2022-2027 guides regional investment, cooperative management, and affordability of community water and sewer systems to the 15 regional communities.”(Norton Sound Health Corporation).[vii]

In partnership with the CUAP program, Elim is working on increasing best practice scores for water and sewer services, improving residential home connections (Arctic boxes) on the outside of homes, and keeping the water treatment plant functioning well. According to the City of Elim, a new community septic tank was installed, and is handling the current community needs.

Elim is also working with Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, or ANTHC, to identify and install a new water well for the community. A source outside of the flooding zone has been identified and the community will work on implementing this water well over the next few years.

ELIM: SMALL TREATED – PIPED SYSTEM - Water/Sewer Rates			
Customer Type	Rate	# of Customers	Collection Rate

Residential	$95.00/month	65 - 86	
Small Comm.	$95.00/month	5	2%
Large Comm.	$0.15/gallon 2k/month clinic	1	
School	$0.35/gallon	1	

5.3.4. LANDFILL

The landfill is permitted and inspected regularly. It was built in the 1970s and designed to be able to expand so it does not run out of space. Every spring and fall, the city does maintenance by digging pits and cleaning up if necessary. Since the last LEDP update, Elim has added a new containment area inside the landfill and expanded it to accommodate current community needs. The city has also purchased and installed two new burn units.

REFUSE/LANDFILL SYSTEM	
Refuse Collector:	Individuals
Landfill Operator:	City
DEC Landfill Permit:	Yes
Type of Landfill:	Class III, Permit SW3A023-20

The Elim GAP, or Indian General Assistance Program, is an EPA-funded program that supports at least one position for the community – an Environmental Coordinator. Currently, the Elim GAP Environmental Coordinator and Environmental Assistant are hired by the Tribe and works to organize community clean-up events, collect and ship out hazardous materials and recyclables, and other environmental-related programs chosen as priorities by the community. Elim GAP focuses its priorities on recycling/backhaul to reduce the amount of potentially harmful materials entering the landfill and the overall carbon footprint of the community. Recyclables include but are not limited to; electronic waste (e-waste), white goods, fluorescents, LEDs, lead-acid and household batteries, plastic bottles, and aluminum cans. Used engine and transmission oils are collected and burned by the GAP staff utilizing the City's used oil burner and collection tanks, with plans to install an oil burner for the Tribe. Reducing the amount of waste entering the landfill makes it safer for the environment and the residents of Elim.

5.3.5. ELECTRICITY

The Alaska Village Electric Cooperative, Inc. (AVEC) is the electricity provider in Elim. The power plant is located west of town, along with the tank farm.

Establishing alternative energy generation is a major goal for Elim, and the community is actively looking at lower-cost energy options such as solar, batteries, waste heat recovery, and geothermal potential from their nearby hot springs.

Elim would like to see the main transmission power lines relocated from the Front Street to the New Road due to potential damage from future storms.

ELECTRICAL STATS	
Electric Utility Name:	AVEC
Utility Operator:	REA Co-op
Power Source:	Diesel
FY2024 Rate:	$0.2923 per KWH (1st 700 KWH)
Power Cost Equalization Subsidy:	$0.2163 per KWH
FY2024 Total kWh Generated:	1,284,955
FY2024 Power Cost Equalization (PCE) Rate:	$0.2923 per KWH
FY2024 Average Effective Residential Rate:	$0.2163 per KWH

Source from the Alaska Energy Authority, PCE Report.[viii]

5.3.6. BULK FUEL

The purchase, delivery, storage, and use of bulk fuel is the lifeline of the community. Diesel fuel powers the local power plant, heavy equipment, and provides heating oil for homes. Gasoline is essential for local transportation around the community, out to fishing camps and new subdivisions, and to provide transportation for residents to engage in seasonal subsistence activities. As of the summer of 2025, gasoline prices and diesel prices in the local community were set at $5.75 per gallon.

The main bulk fuel tank farms in the community are managed by the electrical utility AVEC, the Elim Native Store, the school district, and the City of Elim. Currently, the city of Elim is working on improving the fuel headers at the shoreline where the fuel barge will connect to refill the tanks for the season. The new boat harbor project will improve this infrastructure and better allow the fuel barges to safely fill the community fuel tanks. The fuel is transported from the shoreline via ground-lay hose alongside the road up to the tank farm. The ground-lay hoses are inspected regularly by the city.

COMMUNITY BULK FUEL STORAGE CAPACITY			
OWNER	# OF TANKS	CAPACITY (DIESEL)	CAPACITY (GASOLINE)
Alaska DOT/Airport	1	3,000	
Alaska National Guard	3	4,500	
AVEC	6	156,000	
Bering Strait School District	5	47,000	
City of Elim	2	27,000	3,000
Elim Native Store	5	70,000	73,000

Source: Bulk Fuel Inventory Facilities, State of Alaska[ix]

5.3.7. TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

Elim is not accessible by any road system and is isolated from any village and community hubs. Aircraft is the only mode of transportation to Elim that can be used throughout the year. Boats and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) provide access in the summer and winter travel is possible with snowmachine and ATVs. The community has a system of roads within its own town site, most of which were constructed by the City of Elim, the Alaska Department of

Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF), and the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC). The village is surrounded by a network of unimproved subsistence and economic routes that lead to cabins, hot springs, seasonal camps, and subsistence areas.

Air passenger and freight service is provided by Bering Air and Ryan Air. Freight barges arrive during the summer carrying a year's worth of supplies. All construction materials must be shipped via plane or barge. Improvements in the past decade made the state-owned airport one of the best and most modern in the region, offering a 3,401 foot by 60-foot gravel runway. There is no dock in the village, so supplies must be lightered to shore by a company operating from Nome. Plans are underway to develop a harbor with a dock, and an access road is also under consideration.

There are approximately 282.4 miles of existing and proposed roads within Elim's inventory boundary. The existing roadways within the city limits are owned by the City of Elim. ADOT&PF owns the roadways that lead to the airport. The proposed roadways outside the village may cross federal, state, or private lands. In accordance with 25 CFR Part 170.443, all new roadways will be open to the public once they have been built. The Elim IRA Council, under 25 CFR Part 170, is considered a public authority and intends to own and maintain public access for any proposed roadways that are constructed.

From Elim's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the following goals for upgrading and expanding transportation infrastructure were identified in a 2007 strategic plan, many of which have been started, or completed, in the past decade. These include:

- Placement on the community streets within the City of Elim the appropriate dust control additive on existing surface material (a total estimate of $5 million).
- Construct community streets as local roads within the City of Elim listed as updated inventory in Section 4.1 with the appropriate surface material and dust control additive
- Constructing proposed subsistence and economic routes
- Construct a rural local road to Quak for access to the proposed boat harbor No construction started yet
- Construct a natural deep-water port / subsistence boat harbor Ongoing
- Construction of a community boat harbor and barge landing: Ongoing
- Construct a local road to the hot springs for geothermal development/cultural use Geothermal not feasible
- Construct the rural local road, Firebreak Road, to provide protection from wildfires and utilize firewood gathering areas Abandoned
- Rehabilitate the rural local road Beach Road located near the tank farm, improvements include resurfacing, raising the grade and drainage Tumet resurfaced road during building of asphalt roads, 2018/19
- Construct a minor arterial road to Cape Darby for possible rock material source mining and deep water port capabilities, approximately 30 miles in length
- Erosion control along the minor arterial Moses Point Road Some protection barriers placed after Merbok
- Provide erosion protection for the minor arterial Beachfront Road

• Provide route staking, shelter cabins, and navigational upgrades to inventory routes to improve safety during winter travel, prevent disorientation, and aid in rescue operations
• Repair the 6-mile section of Iditarod Trail between Elim and Walla Walla Minor repairs done over the years

5.3.8. COMMUNICATIONS

FastWyre (previously TelAlaska / Mukluk Telephone Company) provides phone service within the state and region with long distance service. Most Elim residents have cell phones, and a majority of homes have internet access. GCI is the main cell service provider, with a repeater tower located not far from the community.

Starlink satellite internet service is available and is used widely throughout the community.

VHF radio is also used to communicate person-to-person, and to make public announcements.

Communications Providers	
In-State Phone:	FastWyre (form. Mukluk Telephone/TelAlaska)
Long Distance:	GCI, FastWyre/AT&T
Internet Service Provider:	GCI, TelAlaska, Starlink, Tribal Library
TV Stations:	ARCS (Satellite)
Radio Stations:	KICY-FM; KNOM-AM; KTUU-AM
Postal Mail:	United States Postal Service, FedEx, UPS (Ryan Air)
Air Carrier Deliveries:	Bering Air, Ryan Air

5.3.9. HEALTH CARE

Elim is classified as an isolated village. It is found in EMS Region 5A in the Norton Sound Region. The community clinic is operated by Norton Sound Health Corporation and employs five health workers in Elim to provide basic healthcare assessments and dispense prescriptions to current patients. The health aides also act as First Responders to emergency situations in Elim, and critical cases can be sent to Nome or Anchorage via med-evac. A Behavioral Health Services clinician visits Elim from Nome every month for a few days. Medical specialists visit Elim regularly and stay in the clinic bunkhouse. An optometrist, dentist, physical therapist, and audiologist also visit Elim on a regular basis to provide services.

Multiple patients leave Elim for medical purposes every month. Once or twice a year, regional medevac response capacity is overwhelmed when multiple villages experience emergencies to warrant an air evacuation to Nome or Anchorage for more advanced medical care.

Clinic information provided by NSHC, as of 3/2025 is as follows:

Elim-Yukuniaraq	CHA: 890-3311	Sonja Simpson, CHP-C	**Clinic Travel Clerks:**
Yungcarvik Clinic	CTC: 890-2253	Beverly Nakarak, CHP-C	Crystal Ivanoff
Box 69	Fax: 890-2280	Desiree Davison, CHA III-C	VACANT-Relief
Elim, AK 99739	Speed dial: 1502	Cheryl Swanson, CHA IV-C	
Population: 366		VACANT	**Business Hours: M-F**
OME PCC: Dr. MacKenzie Rapp		Kristina Tracy, NP	8am-12pm, 1pm-5pm
Clinic Manager/Supervisor Instructor: Jill Campbell. Cell: 985-2417, office: 985-5015. Shortel-7655			

5.3.10. MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS AND HEAVY EQUIPMENT PROPERTY

The City of Elim owns and operates the City Office building, old High School (vacant, needs work), Library, Fire Hall, City Shop, Water Plant, and a rental property. The city has a variety of heavy equipment assets including 2 loaders.

5.3.11. TRIBAL BUILDINGS & HEAVY EQUIPMENT

The Native Village of Elim owns the Elim Native Store (an ANICA member), sets policies for its operation, and pays its overhead costs. It also owns the IRA/Post Office Building, Clinic Building, the Kutuugan House, a trailer-home, and the Boy's & Girl's Club building which is currently in the process of being updated. The Kutuugan house and trailer-home are rental properties.

The Tribe also owns a variety of heavy equipment including an excavator, 2 dozers, sawmill, 2 dump trucks, backhoe, farm tractor, truck, 2 skid steers, snowmobile, and all-terrain vehicles.

5.3.12. PUBLIC SAFETY

The Elim Volunteer Fire Department is active. Firefighting support is provided by the City of Elim and the Nome Volunteer Fire Department. The EVFD has a storage and office building adjacent to the City of Elim's heavy equipment storage yard.

There is no Village Public Safety Officer or VPO currently.

5.3.13. LIBRARIES AND MUSEUMS, CULTURAL BUILDINGS, AND SOCIAL EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

The City of Elim operates the Ernest Nylin Memorial Library 10 hours per week, and is open on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays.

Ernest Nylin Memorial
Library 101 Hillside St.
Elim, AK 99739
Phone: 907-890-3501

Annual Community Social Events:

- Beach picnics sponsored by the Native Village of Elim
- Citywide clean up, organized by the Native Village of Elim IGAP Program and City of Elim
- 4th of July picnic at Moses Point sponsored by the City of Elim and Native Village of Elim
- Whaling feasts
- Easter Egg Hunt sponsored by the City of Elim and Native Village of Elim
- Christmas and Thanksgiving feasts at the school, sponsored alternately by the City of Elim and Native Village of Elim

5.4 LAND STATUS

Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) Land Status Elim Native Corporation

12(a) Land Entitlement	0 acres[1]
12(b) Land Entitlement	0 acres[2]
Other Land Entitlements	297,982.0 acres, 19(b); Former Reserve + *50K *+50,000 acres, H.R. 3090, report 106-452
14(c)(3) Status:	Not Required[3]
14(c)(3) Comments:	No 14(c) obligation; surface and subsurface rights of former reserve conveyed to village corporation
14(c)(3) Agreement Signed:	N/A
Map of Boundaries Done:	N/A
Municipal Land Trust:	No
Appropriate Village Entity:	N/A[4]

5.4.1. CONTAMINATED SITES

Elim works with Kawerak's Brownfields, or Tribal Response Program, to coordinate contaminated site clean-ups within the community. As of 2025, the community was working in partnership with Kawerak and ChemTrack to complete Phase II testing at the City old shop site. The site was originally owned by the Department of Transportation and was used as a landfill; the residents of Elim also utilized the landfill during this time. The DOT then deeded the site to the City of Elim, which continued to operate it as a landfill. At some point, a large shop was constructed to house city equipment and a boneyard for obsolete equipment and storage of used oil and fuel storage. Site is approximately 3 acres. To learn more about the clean-up project, visit Kawerak's Brownfields website. https://kawerak.org/natural-

resources/brownfield-program/

There is also a clean-up project in progress for the old AVEC site.

5.5 POPULATION

The following population data is from the U.S. Census American FactFinder database, 2023 American Community Survey. Elim has 278 residents, with a young population. The median age in the community is 20.9 years.[x]

Total population	**278**
Under 5 years	7.2%
5 to 17 years	33.5%
18 to 24 years	16.2%
25 to 44 years	18.7%
45 to 54 years	9.4%
55 to 64 years	9.7%
65 to 74 years	5.0%
75 years and over	0.4%
Median age (years)	**20.9**
Male	60.1%
Female	39.9%

Please note, data from the census may not be accurate.

5.5 EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMY

The Elim economy is based on subsistence hunting and fishing, trapping, and Native arts and crafts. Cash employment is limited to fishing, timber hauling for firewood/ home heat, the city, clinic, store, the Tribe, and school. Unemployment is high, leading many families to rely on federal and state assistance. Many hold commercial and/or subsistence fishing permits. Residents rely on birds, fish, seal, walrus, beluga whale, reindeer, caribou, moose, harvested greens, berries, and roots, and home gardens. The sale or importation of alcohol is banned.

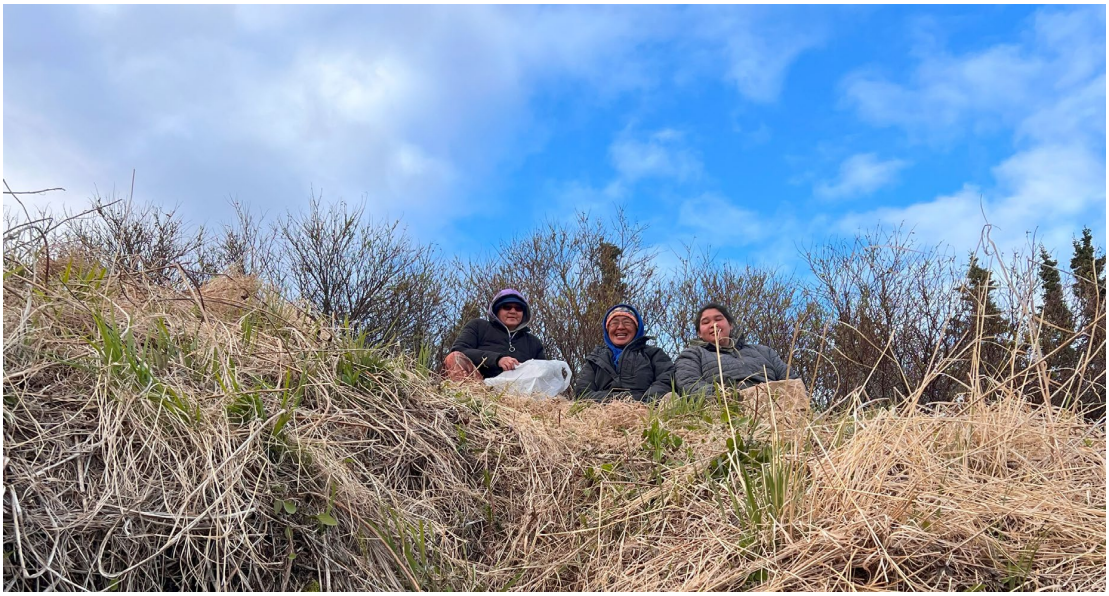


Figure 6 Paula Nakarak, Carla Ivanoff and Tia Nakarak collect surra (spring willow leaves) and fiddlehead ferns along the coastline of Elim.

Residents maintain a subsistence lifestyle. Important staple foods include whale, walrus, seal, reindeer, caribou, moose, clam, crab, salmon, and other fish. Eggs and berries are also gathered, and seal oil is used for storing greens, roots, and meat as well as being a nutritional staple in the Native diet.

Many residents sell artwork crafted from the subsistence resources. Ivory tusks and teeth are used by the local artists who carve the ivory into figurines, sculptures, tools, and jewelry. Seal, wolf, beaver, and wolverine skins are used to make hats, mittens, parkas, and slippers.

5.5.1. BUSINESS LICENSES

The following records reflect current business licenses on file with the Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development, Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing. These licenses may not represent actual business activity.

License#	Business Name	Owner Name	City
2184665	AK-DAJA	Arthur Amaktoolik	ELIM
1055129	CITY OF ELIM	CITY OF ELIM	ELIM
1077330	ELIM NATIVE CORPORATION	ELIM NATIVE CORPORATION	Elim
152888	ELIM NATIVE STORE	IRA COUNCIL	ELIM

Source: State of Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development website.[xi]

6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL

6.1 SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY

The primary vegetation in the Nome region is Arctic tundra. Arctic tundra is located in the northern hemisphere, encircling the north-pole and extending south to the coniferous forests of the taiga. Soil forms slowly. A layer of permanently frozen subsoil, consisting mostly of gravel and finer material, called permafrost exists. When water saturates the upper surface, bogs and ponds may form, providing moisture for plants. There are no deep root systems in the vegetation of the arctic tundra; however, there are still a wide variety of plants that resist the cold climate.

6.2 VEGETATION

Vegetation on the Seward Peninsula is principally tundra, with alpine dryas-lichen tundra and barrens at high elevations and moist sedge-tussock tundra at lower elevations. Patches of low-growing ericaceous and willow-birch shrubs occur on better-drained areas. Vegetation follows similar patterns consisting primarily of moist (mesic) tundra. Dwarf birch, low willows, blueberry, crowberry, bearberry, Labrador tea, cotton-grass, and sedges are common. Other grasses, forbs, mosses and lichens make up the vegetative communities of the region. Occasional patches of alders and shrub willow grow in sheltered areas.

Residents harvest a variety of plants from the land, including:

Figure 7 Surra is collected in a paper bag.

Greens	Wild Celery	Blackberries	Wild Potatoes
Stinkweed	Blueberries	Ayyu (Labrador tea)	Fireweed
Salmonberries	Massu (Roots)	Rhubarb	Rosehips
Beach Greens	Wild Raspberries	Tukiiyuqs	Currants
Chiutnaqs	Quaqchoonaqs	Cranberries	Sourdock

Pond Roots (Gaboody)	Wild Onions	Fiddlehead ferns	Sura (willow leaves)

6.3 CLIMATE

Elim has a subarctic climate with maritime influences. Norton Sound is ice-free generally between mid-June and mid-November. Summers are cool and moist; winters are cold and dry. Summer temperatures average between 46 to 62 °F; winter temperatures average -8 to 8 °F. Annual precipitation averages 19 inches, with about 80 inches of snow.

In September 2022, Elim was affected by the remnants of Typhoon Merbok. The storm eroded sections of the beach, affected subsistence fish camps and boats, eroded the coastal road to Moses Point, and left mounds of marine debris along the shores of the community.

The 2024 west coast storm struck Elim with heavy winds and high waters. The front street was severely washed out, damaging the sewer outfall line and septic systems, prompting emergency response. The Elim-Moses Point Road was washed out in several places, and debris scattered much of the road.

Western Alaska's average temperature has increased almost 5 degrees F in the last fifty years. As the Arctic and sub-Arctic climate continues to warm at a rate of 3-4 times the global average, the climate around Elim is expected to continue to warm. This will likely lead to continued ecological changes and shifts in plant and animal ranges. Berry plants may be affected, and the overall environment is likely to become more boreal. The growing season (short definition) is expected to extend greatly over the next decade, and the average temperature is expected to continue to rise. Elim is expected to experience reduced snowfall and later freeze up in the fall, and an increase in wetter, heavier snow in the spring.

As the Arctic warms, summers are likely to become warmer and wetter, with annual precipitation in the summer expected to increase rapidly. While averages are generally expected to increase, seasonal weather patterns are also expected to become more variable overall. This can mean more seasonal variation and less year-to-year consistency. More frequent droughts or deluges may introduce additional stressors to both Elim's community infrastructure and natural environment, including subsistence species.

Due to increasing temperatures, the wildfire risk has increased significantly over the past few years and is projected to become at a greater risk each year.

Elim is projected to experience more erosion and negative impacts from fall storms as the fall shore ice forms later in the year.

6.4 WILDLIFE

Major wildlife on land in the area includes moose, caribou, and domesticated reindeer. Sea mammals include harbor and bearded seals, walrus, and belugas. Over the past several decades seal numbers have declined.

Migratory birds are numerous. During springtime, migratory birds stop over on their way further north. Endangered species that pass through the area are emperor geese, whose numbers the Elim locals claim are slowly increasing. One threatened species common to the area is the speckled belly goose. Local salmon runs include pinks, chums, and kings.

Community members hunt and fish for a variety of animals from the land, sea, and rivers, including:

Moose	King Salmon	White Fish	Wolverine
Caribou	Fall Dog Salmon	Burbot	Lynx
Musk Oxen	Chum Salmon	Smelts	Wolf
Beluga	Pink Salmon	Tomcods	Marten
Cranes	Silver Salmon	Arctic Char	Mink
Ptarmigan	Grayling	Dolly Varden	Muskrats
Sprigs	Rainbow Trout	Lingcod	Land Otter
Seals	Herring	Skip Jack	Fox
Rabbits	Spruce Hens	Cranes	Geese

6.5. SEISMIC, FLOOD, AND WETLANDS

Elim has a low risk of seismic activity and there is no record of damage in Elim from earthquakes or tsunamis. Residents report that windstorms during the fall generally cause the most damage.

Alaska's wetlands occupy 43.3 % of its 403,247,700 acres. This contrasts with the contiguous US where they occupy only 5.2 % of the land surface. Wetlands in Alaska include bogs, fens, wet and moist tundra, ponds, forests, mud flats, fresh and salt marshes. Most regions in Alaska have a land surface with extensive areas of wetlands. Expanses of moist and wet tundra underlain by permafrost occur in the northern and western regions. Some of the Nation's most extensive complexes of salt marshes and mud flats occur along the coasts of the Bering Sea.

7.0 OPPORTUNITIES AND BARRIERS TO DEVELOPMENT

7.1 COMMUNITY STRENGTHS & DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

7.1.1. COMMUNITY STRENGTHS

- The Native Village of Elim is becoming more successful in submitting grant applications that get funded in support of community projects and programs
- Elim has access to ample timber that can be processed with the newly purchased sawmill; and using the timber could be one way to lower new construction costs
- Elim has achieved progress in their boat harbor and rock quarry projects, and are ready to move through the various feasibility stages before implementing these projects
- Hot springs in the area might be used for power generation or to create a tourist attraction

7.1.2. DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- With development of the quarry project, a road to the mine site is needed
- There's a need and desire for a cultural center, and/or teen center to be created in Elim
- With all the timber around the community, and increasing temperature trends, there's a need for a fire break to be built to protect it from wildfires. Grants are available and being pursued to create fuel breaks.

7.1.3. TRENDS

- Continuing concern for the environment and a need to push recycling, to protect the land but also to help manage solid waste at the landfill – the more that can be recycled or burned, the longer the current landfill can remain open
- An increase in computer technology being built into infrastructure and heavy equipment, which makes their repairs more difficult (if not impossible) and more costly for the community to maintain

- Like other rural towns, Elim does not have visible homelessness, but homes are becoming overcrowding due to a lack of new or repaired homes and growing families
- More incidents of extreme weather occurring

7.2 DEVELOPMENT BARRIERS, THREATS, AND AREAS OF CONCERN

7.2.1. DEVELOPMENT BARRIERS

- High cost of construction materials makes it hard for people to build new homes, which has led to overcrowding in the community
- Grant deadlines are becoming shorter due to the fact that most applications are available and can be completed online, but Elim doesn't have consistent internet access, which puts them at a disadvantage
- The State of Alaska's economy continues to lag, due to changes in global petroleum production and distribution issues, and during this economic recession state funding on rural projects has really dried up
- The community of Elim needs more people skilled in accounting procedures and bookkeeping, the lack of qualified workers has an impact on how city and tribal business is done, and has a negative impact on potential grant funding, due to past errors in fund management at the local level
- Costs are rising everywhere – food, fuel, and power generation are all getting more expensive in Elim and other rural Alaska communities, but salaries and wages are not increasing to keep up

7.2.2. DEVELOPMENT THREATS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

- Need for strong leaders at the local level
- Need to develop grant writers and grant managers locally, to be able to get more fundingfor needed projects, programs, and services in the community
- Environmental issues with spilled fuel is a cause of concern for the community
- The FAA is working this year on cleaning up the Moses Point site, but there are some other contaminated sites in the community that still need to be cleaned

8.0 COMMUNITY VALUES

Elim's community planning participants discussed the following question and documented its ideas:
"What are the values we, as a community, feel are important to our way of life?"
The participants agreed that Elim's cultural, traditional, and environmental values are all bridged together by resilience ("resilient") and the Yup'ik and Inupiaq languages, which are both used by residents.

Elim's Core Values

Cultural Values

- Cultural values
- Traditional values
- Spiritual values
- Traditional knowledge/ways passed on and learned from our parents and grandparents
- Addressing domestic violence
- Sharing
- History and storytelling
- Working together to accomplish a goal

Traditional Values

- Educating our Children (college)
- Respect our Children's views, ideas, and comments
- Values – Children are our future
- Respect Elders and Others
- Elder Wisdom and Knowledge about land and sea
- Listen when Elders speak
- Trust Elders' knowledge
- Community Unity in Discipline
- Respect Elders' Wisdom
- Listen to the Children's needs
- Discipline your Children

Environmental Values

- Values – Natural Resources – Fish and Game, Minerals, Wood, Rock
- Protect our Land, Water, and Animals
- Keep our Water Quality
- Land – Surface and Subsurface
- Respect for our Environment
- Values – Clean Water
- Reduce and Reuse
- Respect the Land and Environment
- Keeping Our Land Clean

Self-Discipline

- Yes means yes. No means no.

- Stand on your word
- Honor your handshake.
- Follow what is written according to our policies, procedures, and ordinances

Independence

- Being isolated from the Outside World
- Being Independent from other corporations

8.1 APPLYING VALUES TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

When we develop and plan important projects or programs, what are the things we must remember?

Figure 8 Elim community from the air.

We will:

- Define goals and objectives with outside facilitators and consultants
- Develop a feasibility study timeline and assign responsibilities to projects within timeline:
  - Assess risk to environment
  - Assess benefits to community
- Combine efforts with tri-party meetings, resolutions, and other forms of active support
- Identify funding sources & plan for economic sustainability

9.0 DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

There were **13 TOP PRIORITIES** identified by the Elim LEDP Planning Committee and approved via joint resolution by the City of Elim, Elim Native Corporation, and Native Village of Elim, to improve the economic development for the community.

JOINTLY APPROVED TOP PRIORITIES FOR THE COMMUNITY OF ELIM FOR 2025-2030

1. **Housing**
2. **Opposition of Uranium Exploration & Mining**
3. **Protecting Language and Culture**
4. **Protecting Subsistence Resources**
5. **New Water Source**
6. **Water & Sewer**
7. **Erosion mitigation & adaptation**
8. **Rock Quarry**
9. **Boat Harbor**
10. **Upgrade & New Community Facilities**
11. **Timber Development**
12. **Boy's & Girl's Club**
13. **Affordable Energy**

To provide a thorough understanding of each project, the following information is given for each priority:

1. Description & Benefits
2. Needs
3. Benefits
4. Potential Barriers
5. Implementation Plan

9.1 HOUSING

DESCRIPTION & Benefits:

Elim faces critical housing challenges that directly impact the health and well-being of residents. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS), approximately 30% of occupied housing units in Elim are considered overcrowded—defined as having more than one person per room—compared to the national average of about 3%. In addition, over 45% of homes in the community were built before 1980 and

need major repairs or upgrades to meet current safety, energy efficiency, and weatherization standards. Many homes also lack basic infrastructure such as reliable heating systems, insulation, or adequate plumbing. The limited availability of new housing stock, coupled with a growing population and multigenerational households, places a strain on the existing housing supply. These conditions highlight the urgent need for both the rehabilitation of existing homes and the construction of new, energy-efficient housing to ensure safe, healthy, and sustainable living environments for Elim residents.

Improving housing in the community of Elim will provide a wide range of long-term social, economic, and health benefits. Safe, energy-efficient homes will significantly reduce health risks associated with overcrowding, poor indoor air quality, and structural deficiencies—especially for children, Elders, and individuals with chronic conditions. Modernized housing will lower household energy costs, increase comfort during extreme weather, and reduce the financial burden on families. Expanding the housing stock will also ease overcrowding, promote family stability, and support population growth by allowing residents to remain in the community. In addition, improved housing can attract and retain essential workers—such as teachers, healthcare providers, and public safety personnel—who are critical to the well-being and sustainability of the community. Housing development projects will also create local employment opportunities and support workforce development, contributing to Elim's economic resilience and self-sufficiency. Overall, investment in housing is an investment in community health, opportunity, and long-term viability.

NEEDS:

- **Overcrowding:** Approximately 30% of homes are overcrowded, with multiple generations often sharing small living spaces.
- **Aging Housing Stock:** Over 45% of homes were built before 1980 and require significant upgrades or replacement.
- **Need for Major Repairs:** Many existing homes suffer from structural issues, inadequate insulation, outdated electrical and plumbing systems, and failing heating systems.
- **Limited New Housing:** There is a lack of available housing units to accommodate population growth and reduce overcrowding.
- **Energy Inefficiency:** Older homes often lack proper insulation and energy-efficient systems, leading to high energy costs and unsafe indoor environments.
- **Health and Safety Risks:** Poor housing conditions contribute to health issues such as respiratory problems, mold exposure, and unsafe living conditions.
- **Insufficient Infrastructure:** Some homes lack modern infrastructure, including reliable water, sewer, and ventilation systems.
- **Support for Local Workforce Housing:** There is a need for housing that can support essential workers, including teachers, health aids, and public safety personnel

POTENTIAL BARRIERS:

- **High Construction Costs:** The remote location of Elim significantly increases the cost of materials, shipping, and labor, making construction projects expensive and complex

to manage.

- **Limited Local Workforce:** There may be a shortage of trained construction workers and contractors in the region, which can slow project timelines and increase reliance on outside labor.
- **Lack of Available Land or Infrastructure:** Suitable land for new housing may be limited, and some areas may lack essential infrastructure such as roads, water, sewer, and electricity connections.
- **Funding Limitations:** Accessing sufficient and sustained funding from federal, state, or private sources can be challenging, especially with the high up-front costs of rural development projects.
- **Permitting and Regulatory Hurdles:** Environmental regulations, land ownership issues, and lengthy permitting processes can delay or complicate housing development.
- **Climate and Weather Constraints:** Short construction seasons due to harsh weather conditions limit the time available for building and transporting materials each year.
- **Material and Supply Chain Delays:** Transportation and supply chain disruptions—common in rural Alaska—can delay delivery of essential materials and equipment.
- **Community Capacity and Planning:** Limited staffing or administrative capacity at the local level can make it difficult to manage large-scale housing initiatives, apply for grants, or coordinate with agencies and developers.

Addressing these barriers will require a coordinated approach involving community leadership, regional partners, technical experts, and committed funders.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

Implementing housing improvement and development work in a rural community like Elim requires a phased, community-led approach that includes planning, funding, and partnership coordination. Below is a basic description of how to carry out this type of work:

1. **Community Engagement & Needs Assessment**
   Begin by working with local leaders, residents, and organizations to assess current housing conditions, identify priorities (e.g., overcrowding, safety upgrades, new construction), and document community needs through surveys and data collection.
2. **Planning & Design**
   Develop a housing improvement and development plan that includes site selection, housing types, energy efficiency goals, and estimated costs. Include considerations for local building codes, climate resilience, and cultural appropriateness.

Figure 9 Residential home in Elim pictured in May 2025.

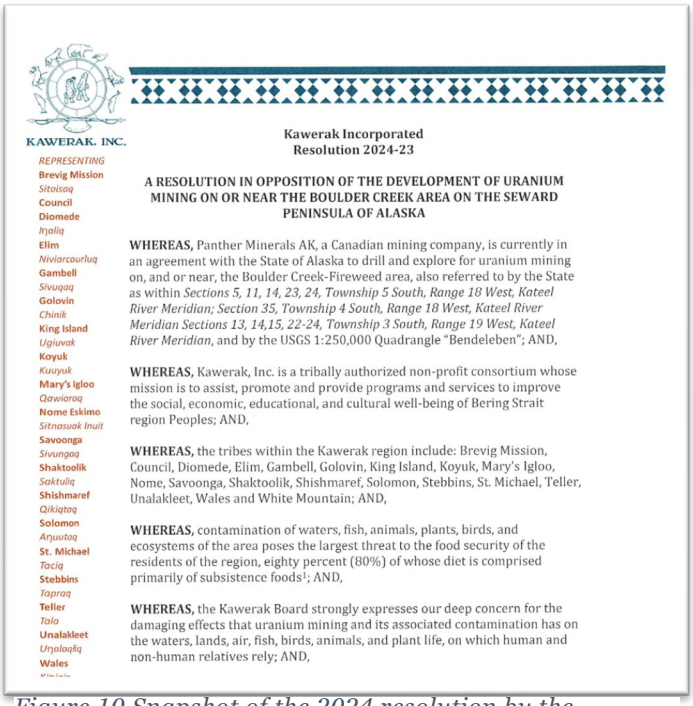
3. **Funding & Resource Identification** Identify and apply for funding from federal and state housing programs (e.g., HUD ICDBG, USDA Rural Development, Denali Commission), as well as private and philanthropic sources. Leverage partnerships with regional housing authorities and tribal organizations.

4. **Capacity Building & Workforce Development**
   Build local capacity by offering training and employment opportunities for residents in construction, maintenance, and project management. Partner with local organizations and training providers to increase workforce readiness.
5. **Infrastructure & Site Preparation**
   Ensure sites are equipped with essential infrastructure (water, sewer, electricity, roads) before construction begins. Coordinate with utility providers and public agencies to address any gaps.
6. **Construction & Rehabilitation**
   Launch phased construction or rehabilitation projects based on funding availability and priority needs. Use local labor where possible and incorporate energy-efficient, durable materials suitable for Arctic conditions.
7. **Monitoring & Quality Assurance**
   Monitor progress, ensure construction quality, and manage compliance with safety and building standards. Document lessons learned and maintained open communication with stakeholders.
8. **Ongoing Maintenance & Sustainability**
   Develop a long-term maintenance and operations plan for housing units, including homeowner education and support for repairs. Continue to seek funding for future housing phases.

9.2 OPPOSITION OF URANIUM EXPLORATION & MINING

DESCRIPTION & BENEFITS:

The community of Elim strongly opposes uranium exploration and mining on their lands and the surrounding region due to deep concerns about the long-term environmental, health, and cultural impacts of such activities. Uranium mining poses significant risks to the land, water, and subsistence resources that the people of Elim depend on for their way of life. The potential for radioactive contamination of groundwater, rivers, and traditional hunting and fishing areas threatens not only public health, but also the integrity of ancestral lands that have sustained the community for generations. The people of Elim hold a deep spiritual and cultural connection to the land, and any industrial activity that could cause irreversible damage to ecosystems, wildlife, and sacred places is seen as a direct threat to their identity, heritage, and sovereignty. Additionally, the long-term environmental liabilities and cleanup challenges associated with uranium extraction far outweigh any short-term economic benefits. Elim prioritizes sustainable land stewardship and supports development that protects the health of the environment, the community, and future generations.



KAWERAK, INC.

REPRESENTING
Brevig Mission
Sitaisaq
Council
Diomede
Inyaliq
Elim
Niviarcourluq
Gambell
Sivuqaq
Golovin
Chinik
King Island
Ugiuvak
Koyuk
Kuuyuk
Mary's Igloo
Qawiaraq
Nome Eskimo
Sitnasuak Inuit
Savoonga
Sivungaq
Shaktoolik
Saktuliq
Shishmaref
Qikiqtaq
Solomon
Aryuuteq
St. Michael
Taciq
Stebbins
Tapraq
Teller
Tala
Unalakleet
Unyaleqiq
Wales

Kawerak Incorporated
Resolution 2024-23

A RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF URANIUM MINING ON OR NEAR THE BOULDER CREEK AREA ON THE SEWARD PENINSULA OF ALASKA

WHEREAS, Panther Minerals AK, a Canadian mining company, is currently in an agreement with the State of Alaska to drill and explore for uranium mining on, and or near, the Boulder Creek-Fireweed area, also referred to by the State as within *Sections 5, 11, 14, 23, 24, Township 5 South, Range 18 West, Kateel River Meridian; Section 35, Township 4 South, Range 18 West, Kateel River Meridian Sections 13, 14,15, 22-24, Township 3 South, Range 19 West, Kateel River Meridian*, and by the USGS 1:250,000 Quadrangle "Bendeleben"; AND,

WHEREAS, Kawerak, Inc. is a tribally authorized non-profit consortium whose mission is to assist, promote and provide programs and services to improve the social, economic, educational, and cultural well-being of Bering Strait region Peoples; AND,

WHEREAS, the tribes within the Kawerak region include: Brevig Mission, Council, Diomede, Elim, Gambell, Golovin, King Island, Koyuk, Mary's Igloo, Nome, Savoonga, Shaktoolik, Shishmaref, Solomon, Stebbins, St. Michael, Teller, Unalakleet, Wales and White Mountain; AND,

WHEREAS, contamination of waters, fish, animals, plants, birds, and ecosystems of the area poses the largest threat to the food security of the residents of the region, eighty percent (80%) of whose diet is comprised primarily of subsistence foods[1]; AND,

WHEREAS, the Kawerak Board strongly expresses our deep concern for the damaging effects that uranium mining and its associated contamination has on the waters, lands, air, fish, birds, animals, and plant life, on which human and non-human relatives rely; AND,

Figure 10 Snapshot of the 2024 resolution by the Kawerak board to oppose uranium mining near Elim.

In the Fall of 2024, the Kawerak board of directors joined Elim in their opposition against uranium exploration and mining, passing a joint resolution to support the community's stance.

Keeping uranium mining out of the community of Elim protects the health, safety, and cultural integrity of the land and its people. It ensures clean water, unpolluted air, and thriving ecosystems that support traditional subsistence practices such as hunting, fishing, and gathering. These are foundations of Elim's cultural identity and are important to residents' food security. By preventing harmful industrial development, the community safeguards its ancestral lands for future generations, supports long-term community health, and maintains the spiritual and cultural connection to the land that has sustained them for thousands of years. This protective stance also promotes sustainable land stewardship and aligns with Elim's vision for a healthy, self-determined future.

NEEDS:
To support Elim's priority to prevent uranium exploration and mining, the community needs resources and tools to strengthen advocacy, protect their lands, and assert their sovereignty. Below is a list of key needs to help carry out this priority:

- **Legal Support and Land Protection Strategies**
  Assistance from legal experts to understand land rights, pursue protections (e.g., tribal resolutions, conservation easements), and challenge permitting processes or leasing

decisions.

- **Community Education and Outreach**
  Resources to educate residents, youth, and regional partners about the risks of uranium mining and the importance of protecting land and water. This includes materials, workshops, and public events.
- **Monitoring and Environmental Research**
  Support to conduct baseline environmental studies and ongoing monitoring to detect any changes or threats related to exploration activity, and to gather data for advocacy and legal use.
- **Policy Advocacy and Government Relations**
  Technical support to engage with federal and state agencies, submit public comments, and advocate for policy protections through legislative channels, such as land withdrawals or moratoriums.
- **Coalition Building and Regional Collaboration**
  Connections with other Tribes, organizations, and communities that oppose uranium development, to build a unified voice and share resources, strategies, and support.
- **Media and Communications Capacity**
  Tools and training to raise awareness at regional and national levels through press releases, social media, video storytelling, and documentation of community perspectives.
- **Funding and Grant Support**
  Access to funding to support legal work, advocacy, travel, environmental monitoring, and staff time dedicated to coordinating community efforts.
- **Cultural Documentation and Land Use Mapping**
  Projects to document traditional knowledge, subsistence use, and culturally significant areas to strengthen land claims and demonstrate the value of the land beyond resource extraction.
- **Local Leadership Development**
  Training and mentorship opportunities for community members, especially youth, to take leadership roles in land protection and advocacy efforts.

These needs, when addressed, will equip Elim to proactively defend their lands, assert their sovereignty, and ensure the long-term health and sustainability of their environment and culture.

POTENTIAL BARRIERS:

- **Limited control over surrounding lands**
- **Pressure from industry and government interests**
- **Lack of technical and legal expertise**
- **Funding constraints for advocacy and monitoring**
- **Regulatory and permitting challenges**
- **Low public awareness of the issue**
- **Conflicting interests from other stakeholders**

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

1. **Conduct Community Education and Outreach**
   Host community meetings, create educational materials, and engage youth to raise

awareness about the risks of uranium mining and the importance of protecting Elim's land and water.

2. **Build Strategic Partnerships**
   Collaborate with other Tribes, nonprofits, legal organizations, scientists, and advocacy groups that support Indigenous land protection and environmental justice.
3. **Engage in Policy and Regulatory Processes**
   Monitor proposed exploration and mining activities; submit public comments, attend hearings, and advocate for land withdrawals or protections through legislative or administrative channels.
4. **Pursue Legal and Technical Support**
   Seek legal assistance and technical expertise to review mining proposals, assess environmental risks, and explore protective mechanisms like conservation easements or tribal land protections.
5. **Document Cultural and Environmental Values**
   Create maps, gather traditional knowledge, and document subsistence use to demonstrate the cultural and ecological importance of the land.
6. **Secure Funding and Resources**
   Apply for grants to support legal costs, community organizing, environmental monitoring, and capacity-building efforts.

This implementation plan empowers Elim to lead a strong, community-driven effort to protect its lands, uphold its sovereignty, and ensure a healthy environment for future generations.

9.3 PROTECTING LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

DESCRIPTION & BENEFITS:

Protecting language and culture is a vital priority for the community of Elim because it is the foundation of identity, connection to the land, and intergenerational knowledge. The Iñupiaq language carries the community's values, stories, traditions, and ways of understanding the world—knowledge that cannot be fully expressed in English. As Elders pass away and fewer young people grow up fluent in their ancestral language, there is an urgent need to revitalize and strengthen cultural education. By protecting language and culture, Elim ensures that future generations remain rooted in their heritage, maintain a strong sense of belonging, and continue the practices that have sustained the community for thousands of years.

By investing in these efforts, Elim can strengthen the use of Iñupiaq language and traditions, reinforce community bonds, and pass on cultural knowledge to future generations.

NEEDS:

To protect and revitalize language and culture, the community of Elim needs to take a multi-

layered approach that involves education, community engagement, and long-term investment. Key actions include:

- **Language Immersion and Instruction**
  Develop and support language programs in schools, preschools, and community settings, including immersion classes, after-school programs, and language instruction for young children.
- **Elder Involvement and Knowledge Sharing**
  Create opportunities for fluent speakers and elders to teach and mentor younger generations through storytelling, cultural activities, and recorded interviews.
- **Cultural Education and Events**
  Organize community gatherings, workshops, and seasonal camps focused on traditional practices like hunting, sewing, fishing, dancing, and toolmaking.
- **Curriculum Development**
  Incorporate local dialect-based language and cultural content into school curricula, in partnership with educators and local cultural experts.
- **Documentation and Resource Development**
  Record, archive, and publish words, songs, oral histories, and teachings in written, audio, and video formats to preserve and share with future generations.
- **Youth Engagement and Leadership**
  Support youth programs that connect cultural learning with leadership, identity, and community pride.
- **Technology and Media Tools**
  Use digital tools like language apps, videos, and social media to promote learning and reach younger audiences.
- **Sustainable Funding and Partnerships**
  Apply for grants and partner with organizations that support Indigenous language and cultural revitalization to ensure long-term sustainability.

POTENTIAL BARRIERS:
There are several barriers to Elim's efforts to protect language and culture. One major challenge is the declining number of fluent Iñupiaq speakers, especially among youth, as language transmission was disrupted by historical trauma, boarding schools, and assimilation policies. Many elders who hold deep cultural knowledge are aging, and opportunities for consistent intergenerational teaching are limited. Additionally, there may be a lack of funding, resources, and trained language instructors to support long-term programs. Balancing cultural activities with busy school schedules and modern distractions can also make it difficult to engage younger generations. Without sustained investment and community-wide support, revitalization efforts risk losing momentum.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

1. **Elder-Led Language and Culture Programs**
   Establish regular community gatherings, storytelling circles, and cultural workshops where elders share language, traditions, and life skills with youth.

2. **Youth Engagement and School Partnerships**
   Partner with the local school to integrate Iñupiaq language and culture into the classroom and offer after-school or summer programs focused on traditional knowledge and language learning.
3. **Language Documentation and Resource Development**
   Record and archive conversations, songs, and teachings from fluent speakers to create learning materials such as books, audio recordings, and digital resources.
4. **Training and Capacity Building**
   Support community members in becoming language instructors or cultural educators through mentorship, certification programs, and professional development opportunities.
5. **Community Events and Cultural Camps**
   Host seasonal camps and events that immerse participants in traditional practices like subsistence activities, sewing, dancing, and Iñupiaq language use.
6. **Secure Funding and Partnerships**
   Apply for grants from tribal, state, and federal programs and build partnerships with language preservation organizations to support long-term sustainability.

9.4 PROTECTING SUBSISTENCE RESOURCES

DESCRIPTION & BENEFITS:
Protecting subsistence resources is critically important to the community of Elim because these resources are central to their food security, cultural identity, and way of life. Marine mammals, birds, salmon, and land mammals, as well as gathered plants, have sustained Elim's people for countless generations, providing not only nourishment but also deep spiritual and cultural significance. Hunting, fishing, and gathering are traditional practices that strengthen family and community bonds, support physical and mental well-being, and pass on valuable knowledge from elders to youth. These activities are closely tied to the seasons, the land, and the ocean, forming the foundation of Elim's relationship with the natural world. As climate change, industrial activity, and environmental threats increase, the community is determined to protect and manage these vital resources to ensure their availability for future generations.

Protecting subsistence resources provides vital benefits to the community of Elim, including food security, cultural preservation, and overall community health. It ensures that traditional foods like marine mammals, salmon, birds, and land mammals remain available for current and future generations, reducing dependence on expensive store-bought goods. Subsistence practices strengthen family and community bonds, support mental and physical well-being, and pass on cultural knowledge and values from elders to youth. By safeguarding these resources and ecosystems, Elim maintains its connection to the land and ocean, promotes self-sufficiency, and protects its identity as a resilient and culturally rooted Indigenous community.

NEEDS:
- **Environmental monitoring and research**

- **Local management and advocacy**
- **Protection from industrial development; harmful mining practices**
- **Youth education and cultural transmission**
- **Funding for harvest equipment and access**
- **Partnerships and policy support**

POTENTIAL BARRIERS:

- **Climate Change Impacts** – Lessening Sea ice, shifting migration patterns, and changing ecosystems threaten the availability and accessibility of subsistence species.
- **Industrial Development** – Activities like mining, shipping, and offshore oil exploration can disrupt habitats and increase pollution in subsistence areas.
- **Limited Tribal Authority** – State and federal agencies often control wildlife management, limiting local influence over decisions that affect traditional harvesting.
- **High Cost of Harvesting** – Rising fuel, equipment, and maintenance costs make it difficult for families to access traditional hunting and fishing grounds.
- **Loss of Traditional Knowledge** – Fewer opportunities for youth to learn from elders can lead to erosion of subsistence skills and cultural practices.
- **Regulatory Restrictions** – Complex and sometimes restrictive hunting and fishing regulations can conflict with traditional practices and limit access to resources.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

1. **Strengthen Tribal Management and Advocacy**
   Assert Tribal authority in resource management through resolutions, co-management agreements, and active participation in state and federal decision-making processes.
2. **Support Environmental Monitoring and Research**
   Partner with scientists, agencies, and local hunters to monitor species health, migration patterns, and climate impacts, using both traditional knowledge and modern tools.
3. **Protect Critical Habitat from Industrial Threats**
   Advocate against development projects—like mining or offshore drilling—that could harm important harvesting areas, and support protective land and marine policies.
4. **Invest in Youth Education and Cultural Programs**
   Create programs that teach subsistence skills, safety, and traditional knowledge through seasonal camps, school partnerships, and elder-led activities.
5. **Increase Access to Harvesting Resources**
   Seek funding to support boats, fuel, gear, and storage equipment so families can continue traditional harvesting safely and sustainably.
6. **Build Coalitions and Partnerships**
   Collaborate with other Tribal communities, conservation groups, and policy advocates to share knowledge, strengthen regional influence, and protect shared resources.

9.5 NEW WATER SOURCE

DESCRIPTION & BENEFITS:
Securing a new water source is a top priority for the community of Elim because the current community well is located within the watershed, creating a risk of contamination from nearby surface activities, runoff, and environmental changes. This situation poses a threat to the safety, reliability, and long-term sustainability of the village's drinking water supply. Clean, accessible water is essential for the health of residents, the functioning of local facilities, and the overall resilience of the community. As climate change and development pressures increase, the risk of water quality degradation grows, making it critical to identify and secure a safe, protected water source outside of the vulnerable watershed area. Investing in a new water source will help ensure that Elim has reliable, safe drinking water for years to come.

Figure 11 The current community well sits in the water shed near the center of the town.

NEEDS: To secure a new and safe water source, the community of Elim will need the following:

- **Hydrological and Engineering Assessments**
  Professional studies to identify viable alternative water sources and assess their capacity, quality, and long-term sustainability.
- **Environmental and Cultural Impact Review**
  Evaluation of potential sites to ensure minimal environmental disturbance and respect for culturally significant areas.
- **Infrastructure Planning and Design**
  Development of engineering plans for new wells, treatment systems, and distribution infrastructure.
- **Permitting and Regulatory Compliance**
  Assistance navigating local, state, and federal permitting processes for water source development.
- **Funding and Financial Support**
  Access to grants and capital for studies, construction, and long-term operation and maintenance.
- **Community Engagement and Oversight**
  Involvement of residents, leadership, and technical advisors to guide decision-making and ensure community support.
- **Partnerships with Agencies and Experts**
  Collaboration with organizations such as ANTHC, the Indian Health Service, and the State of Alaska for technical assistance and funding coordination.

POTENTIAL BARRIERS:

- **High cost of studies, design, and construction**
- **Limited access to technical expertise**
- **Challenging terrain and remote location**
- **Lengthy permitting and regulatory processes**
- **Uncertain funding availability**
- **Potential environmental or cultural site conflicts**

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

- **Identify and test new water sources**
- **Develop engineering and design plans**
- **Conduct environmental reviews**
- **Apply for funding and grants**
- **Obtain permits and approvals**
- **Construct new well and related infrastructure, including piping**
- **Train local operators and plan for maintenance**

9.6 WATER & SEWER

Figure 12 The water treatment plan is located centrally in the community of Elim.

DESCRIPTION & BENEFITS:
Water and sewer infrastructure is a critical priority for the community of Elim because reliable systems are essential for protecting public health, supporting daily life, and enabling future development. Many existing systems are outdated, undersized, or in need of repair, leading to frequent service disruptions, potential contamination, and increased maintenance costs. Inadequate water and sewer services can contribute to the spread of disease, limit housing development, and affect the operation of schools, clinics, and other essential facilities. Upgrading and expanding this infrastructure is key to ensuring clean water, safe wastewater disposal, and a higher quality of life for all residents. It also lays the groundwork for long-term community resilience, growth, and sustainability.

NEEDS:

- **Replacement or upgrade of aging water and sewer lines**
- **Upgraded wastewater treatment facilities**
- **Wood boiler for water treatment plant to reduce fuel costs**

- **Funding for repairs, upgrades, and maintenance**
- **Engineering assessments and updated system designs**
- **Training and support for local water/sewer operators**
- **Improved service to homes currently lacking full connection**
- **Climate-resilient infrastructure to handle permafrost and extreme weather**

POTENTIAL BARRIERS:
Elim faces several barriers to upgrading its water and sewer systems. The community's remote location makes transporting materials and equipment costly and logistically challenging, while limited funding and competition for infrastructure grants can delay progress. Aging infrastructure and shifting permafrost create additional technical difficulties that require specialized engineering solutions. A shortage of trained local operators and staff can also hinder maintenance and long-term system management. Finally, lengthy permitting and regulatory processes may slow project timelines, making it difficult to address urgent needs in a timely manner.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:
To implement water and sewer improvements in Elim, the community can begin by conducting a comprehensive assessment of existing infrastructure with support from engineering partners and agencies like NSHC and ANTHC. Based on the findings, Elim can prioritize urgent repairs and develop a phased plan for upgrades, including updated system designs and cost estimates. The community should actively pursue funding through state and federal programs, while engaging residents and leadership in planning and decision-making. Partnering with technical experts, securing necessary permits, and investing in local workforce training will ensure that improvements are sustainable and responsive to local needs.

Figure 13 Sewer manholes are shown elevated from the eroding ground.

9.7 EROSION MITIGATION & ADAPTATION

DESCRIPTION & BENEFITS:
Erosion mitigation is a high priority for the community of Elim due to the increasing impacts of coastal erosion, permafrost thaw, and extreme weather events driven by climate change. Shoreline erosion threatens homes, public infrastructure, cultural sites, and subsistence access points, putting the safety and stability of the community at risk. As erosion accelerates, it becomes increasingly urgent to implement adaptation strategies that protect critical infrastructure and support long-term community resilience. These strategies may include shoreline stabilization, relocation of vulnerable facilities, strengthening natural buffers, and planning for land use changes. Adaptation is not only about preventing immediate damage, it is about preparing for future conditions in a way that maintains the

cultural integrity, safety, and sustainability of the community for generations to come.

NEEDS:

- **Erosion risk and vulnerability assessments**
- **Engineering and design of protective infrastructure (e.g., seawalls, berms)**
- **Monitoring of shoreline and permafrost changes**
- **Funding for construction, planning, and long-term adaptation**
- **Community engagement and climate adaptation planning support**
- **Partnerships with agencies and technical experts**

POTENTIAL BARRIERS:
Erosion mitigation in Elim faces several barriers, including high costs of construction and planning, limited access to specialized engineering expertise, and complex permitting processes. The remote location adds logistical challenges for transporting materials and equipment, while short construction seasons limit the window for completing work. In addition, securing consistent funding for long-term adaptation—rather than just emergency response—is difficult, and there may be limited local capacity to manage large-scale projects. These factors make it challenging to implement timely and effective solutions.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

1. **Conduct a local erosion and risk assessment** with technical partners.
2. **Engage the community** to prioritize sites and gather input on adaptation strategies.
3. **Develop engineering designs** for protective measures (seawalls, berms, etc.)
4. **Apply for funding** through FEMA, Denali Commission, BIA, State of Alaska, etc.
5. **Coordinate with agencies and experts** to plan, permit, and implement mitigation.
6. **Monitor erosion over time** and update plans as conditions change.
7. **Build local capacity** through training and participation in climate adaptation planning.

9.8 ROCK QUARRY

DESCRIPTION & BENEFITS:
Developing the local rock quarry is a priority economic development project because it offers a long-term, locally controlled source of revenue, materials, and employment. The quarry will produce gravel and rock essential for infrastructure projects such as roads, housing, erosion control, and airport improvements. In addition to supporting local development, the quarry brings commercial opportunities, including the extraction and marketing of high-quality granite and other stones for value-added products such as countertops, tiles, and decorative stonework. This creates potential for regional and even national sales, diversifying Elim's economy and generating sustainable income. The project also creates local jobs, builds workforce skills, and strengthens the community's economic independence, while supporting broader infrastructure and development goals.

NEEDS:
Since Elim is currently in the feasibility stage of developing its rock quarry, there are several key additional needs the community will need to address in order to move the project

forward:

- **Geotechnical and Geological Surveys**
  Detailed studies to confirm the quantity, quality, and market potential of the rock.
- **Environmental and Cultural Impact Assessments**
  Ensure the project will not negatively impact important ecological or cultural areas.
- **Land Use and Permitting Approvals**
  Support navigating local, state, and federal permitting processes.
- **Engineering and Site Development Planning**
  Technical plans for site layout, access roads, crushing and processing, storage.
- **Market Analysis and Business Planning**
  Identify potential buyers, pricing, and transportation; develop business model.
- **Startup Capital and Equipment**
  Heavy machinery, safety gear, and other operational equipment.
- **Workforce Development and Training**
  Training for quarry operations, equipment handling, and business management.
- **Health, Safety, and Regulatory Compliance**
  Worker safety, environmental compliance, and long-term operational oversight.

By meeting these needs, Elim can move from feasibility to development with a strong foundation for a sustainable, community-led economic enterprise.

POTENTIAL BARRIERS:

Potential barriers to the success of Elim's rock quarry project include uncertainty about the quality and quantity of the stone resource, high startup and equipment costs, and complex permitting and regulatory processes. Environmental or cultural concerns could also limit development or increase costs. The community may face challenges accessing markets due to transportation expenses and remote location, as well as workforce training needs. Securing sustained funding and managing risks through the long development timeline are additional hurdles that require careful planning and strong partnerships.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

- **Complete detailed geological and environmental studies**
- **Secure necessary permits and land use approvals**
- **Develop engineering and site development plans**
- **Conduct market analysis and finalize business plan**
- **Identify and apply for funding and investment**
- **Purchase or lease equipment and machinery**
- **Hire and train local workforce**
- **Begin site preparation and initial development activities**

9.9 BOAT HARBOR

DESCRIPTION & BENEFITS:

The development of a subsistence boat harbor is a key economic and community priority for Elim, as it will significantly improve the safety, efficiency, and accessibility of marine

transportation critical to daily life and local livelihoods. This harbor will provide a safer and more reliable location for offloading barge shipments, reducing delays and damage to goods caused by challenging landing conditions. Improved facilities will also enable easier and more efficient fuel deliveries, supporting household needs and local businesses. Importantly, the harbor will enhance access for subsistence hunters and fishers by offering secure docking and easier boat launching, which is vital for maintaining traditional food practices and cultural connections to the land and water. Overall, the harbor project supports economic growth, reduces costs, and strengthens the community's ability to sustainably manage and benefit from its natural resources.

NEEDS:

- Engineering and site assessments
- Environmental and cultural reviews
- Permitting and regulatory approvals
- Funding and financial support
- Construction materials and equipment
- Community engagement and planning
- Maintenance and operations planning
- Partnerships and technical assistance

POTENTIAL BARRIERS:

Key barriers to Elim's subsistence boat harbor project include high construction and maintenance costs, logistical challenges due to the community's remote location, and limited local technical expertise.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

- Review and incorporate USACE study findings with community input
- Conduct detailed engineering and environmental studies
- Complete environmental and cultural permitting processes
- Develop detailed design and construction plans
- Secure funding and financial commitments
- Coordinate with regulatory agencies for final approvals
- Plan and schedule construction activities
- Establish maintenance and operations framework

9.10 UPGRADED & NEW COMMUNITY FACILITIES

DESCRIPTION & BENEFITS:
The community of Elim has multiple pressing needs to upgrade and develop essential community facilities to better serve its residents. Key priorities include improvements to the IRA Tribal Office to support effective governance and administration, the renovation of the Boy's & Girl's Club to provide a safe, engaging space for youth activities and development, and the renovation and restoration of the old high school building to repurpose it for community use. Additionally, upgrades to city facilities are needed to enhance municipal services and

operations. Addressing these facility needs will strengthen community infrastructure, promote social well-being, and support Elim's long-term growth and resilience.

NEEDS:

- Renovation and improvements to the IRA Tribal Office
- Renovation and improvements to the Boy's and Girl's Club.
- Restoration and adaptive reuse of the old high school building (community space)
- Upgrades and repairs to city facilities and infrastructure
- Funding and financial resources for design, construction, and maintenance
- Community engagement to ensure facilities meet local needs and priorities
- Skilled labor and contractors for construction and renovation work
- Planning and architectural services for design and compliance
- Accessibility improvements to meet ADA standards
- Long-term operations and maintenance planning

Figure 14 The old Elim high school building is pictured in summer 2025. The community wishes to restore the building as a community facility, cultural center, and gathering space.

POTENTIAL BARRIERS:

Barriers to completing community facility upgrades in Elim include limited funding availability and competition for grants, which can delay or scale back projects. The community's remote location increases costs and complicates the transport of materials and skilled labor. Additionally, aging infrastructure may present unforeseen challenges during renovation, requiring more time and resources.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

1. Conduct community assessment and prioritize projects with public input
2. Develop designs and cost estimates with local experts and technical partners
3. Identify and apply for funding from federal, state, and Tribal sources
4. Secure any permits and ensure regulatory compliance
5. Hire qualified contractors and skilled labor, prioritizing local workforce
6. Manage construction and renovation with regular oversight and communication
7. Develop a plan for ongoing operations & maintenance

Figure 15 The beaches of Elim are abundant with driftwood, and the spruce forest surrounds the community.

9.11 TIMBER DEVELOPMENT

DESCRIPTION & BENEFITS:

Timber development is a priority for the community of Elim because it offers a sustainable, locally sourced supply of construction materials that can reduce reliance on expensive imports. With abundant spruce forests and accessible beach driftwood, Elim has valuable natural resources to support housing, infrastructure projects, and community crafts. The recent purchase of a new sawmill positions the community to process timber efficiently, creating opportunities for local jobs, skills development, and economic growth. Developing timber resources supports self-sufficiency, while enabling cost-effective, building practices that strengthen Elim's resilience and long-term sustainability. In addition, utilizing local timber can help with wildfire mitigation – create a dual-use purpose for local economic development combine with wildfire mitigation.

NEEDS:

- Skilled training in sawmill operation and woodworking
- Forestry and sustainable forest management education
- Fire mitigation and fire break planning & training
- Safety training and access to proper gear
- Workforce development programs and apprenticeships
- Support from forestry experts and technical advisors
- Community involvement to integrate local knowledge

POTENTIAL BARRIERS:

Barriers to advancing timber development and training local workers include limited access to experienced trainers and forestry experts, high costs for specialized equipment and safety gear, and the need for ongoing funding to sustain training programs. Remote location challenges transportation of materials and instructors, while seasonal weather can limit training opportunities. Additionally, balancing training with other community responsibilities may slow progress. Ensuring strong community interest and participation is also essential but can be difficult to maintain over time.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

- Assess and maintain the new sawmill
- Launch training programs for local operators
- Develop a sustainable forest management plan
- Implement safety protocols and provide gear

- Begin small-scale timber processing
- Engage community and leadership support
- Explore markets for timber products
- Secure funding for operations and training; firebreak assistance
- Partner with forestry experts for technical assistance

9.12 Boy's and Girl's Club

DESCRIPTION OF PRIORITY:
Renovating the Boy's & Girl's Club in Elim's existing building is a vital community priority that addresses the need for safe, supportive spaces where youth can gather, learn, and grow. Renovating this facility will provide a dedicated place for teens to engage in recreational, educational, and cultural activities that promote positive development, social connection, and mental health. The project supports youth empowerment, helps reduce risky behaviors, and strengthens community ties by offering programs tailored to local needs and interests. Securing funding and completing renovations are essential steps to revitalize the building and ensure it becomes a vibrant, accessible hub that nurtures the next generation in Elim.

NEEDS:

- Funding for remaining building renovations and upgrades
- Electrical, plumbing, and HVAC improvements
- Interior design and furnishing for youth-friendly spaces
- Accessibility upgrades to meet ADA standards
- Safety and security systems installation
- Community input and youth engagement in planning
- Staffing and program development for teen activities
- Partnerships with local organizations and service providers
- Ongoing operations and maintenance funding; possible storefront for youth employment

POTENTIAL BARRIERS:
Although the Boy's & Girl's Club project in Elim is well underway, some potential barriers remain. These include securing sufficient and timely funding to complete renovations and furnish the space, possible delays in obtaining necessary permits or inspections, and challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified staff to run programs. Additionally, ongoing operational costs and maintenance funding will need to be sustained to keep the center vibrant and accessible. Finally, ensuring strong youth engagement and community support over the long term is essential to the center's success but can require continual effort.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

- Complete building renovations and upgrades
- Add furniture and interior facilities
- Install communications and internet infrastructure
- Finalize an operations plan to keep the facility running smoothly
- Develop operations and maintenance (O&M) plan to keep the building in good shape

9.13 AFFORDABLE ENERGY

Figure 16 The fuel pump in Elim displays a cost of $5.75 per gallon for unleaded fuel - May 2025.

DESCRIPTION & BENEFITS:
Affordable energy is a top priority for the community of Elim, which is actively exploring alternative renewable energy options such as solar power, battery storage, geothermal resources, and waste heat recovery projects to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and enhance sustainability. At the same time, the community aims to maintain affordable diesel and gasoline prices that balance accessibility for residents with the need to recover costs. Key fuel storage facilities—managed by the Elim Native Store, the City of Elim, and the Alaska Village Electric Cooperative—are critical to the community's energy infrastructure but require upgrades and improvements to ensure their long-term reliability and safety. Investing in these energy solutions and infrastructure enhancements will support Elim's goal of resilient, affordable, and sustainable energy for all residents.

NEEDS:

- Develop & integrate renewable energy sources (solar, geothermal, batteries, etc.)
- Implementation of waste heat recovery projects in the existing power plant
- Upgrades and improvements to bulk fuel storage facilities
- Ensuring safe and reliable fuel storage and handling
- Strategies to keep diesel and gasoline affordable while recovering costs
- Infrastructure improvements for energy distribution and management
- Local weatherization training and housing improvements to reduce energy use
- Funding and technical support for renewable energy projects and facility upgrades
- Community education and engagement on energy conservation and alternatives
- Partnerships with energy providers and technical experts
- Long-term maintenance and operation plans for energy systems and facilities

POTENTIAL BARRIERS:
Barriers to achieving affordable energy in Elim include the high upfront costs of renewable energy projects and infrastructure upgrades, limited access to technical expertise and skilled labor locally, and challenges related to the community's remote location that increase transportation and construction expenses. Maintaining and upgrading bulk fuel

storage facilities requires significant investment, and securing consistent funding can be difficult. Additionally, the community's energy costs are heavily reliant on the fluctuating prices of diesel and gasoline fuels, which can cause unpredictable expenses. Balancing fuel pricing to keep energy affordable for residents while ensuring cost recovery for providers is complex. Seasonal weather and harsh conditions also impact system reliability and increase maintenance needs.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

1. **Develop a comprehensive community energy plan** that evaluates current energy use, costs, and opportunities for renewable integration and efficiency improvements.
2. **Conduct or update feasibility studies** for renewable energy options such as solar, geothermal, battery storage, and waste heat recovery.
3. **Secure funding and technical assistance** from federal, state, and tribal programs to support renewable energy projects and bulk fuel facility upgrades.
4. **Upgrade and maintain bulk fuel storage infrastructure** to ensure safe, reliable, and efficient fuel handling and storage.
5. **Implement strategies to stabilize fuel pricing** that balance affordability for residents with cost recovery for providers.
6. **Engage the community** through education and outreach to promote energy conservation and support for renewable initiatives.
7. **Build partnerships** with energy experts, utilities, and regional organizations to access expertise and resources.
8. **Train local operators and staff** to manage and maintain new energy systems and infrastructure sustainably.
9. **Monitor and adapt** the energy plan regularly to respond to changing conditions, technological advances, and community needs.

This coordinated approach will help Elim move toward more affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy for the community's future.

10.0 CONCLUSION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In conclusion, the community of Elim has clearly identified a comprehensive set of priorities that reflect its commitment to strengthening the social, cultural, environmental, and economic well-being of its residents. From addressing critical needs in housing, water, and infrastructure to protecting language, culture, and subsistence resources, these priorities demonstrate a holistic approach to sustainable community development. The focus on renewable energy, erosion adaptation, and economic opportunities such as the rock quarry, timber development, and boat harbor projects further highlights Elim's dedication to resilience and self-sufficiency. By thoughtfully addressing each priority in the local economic development plan, Elim is laying a strong foundation for a prosperous future that honors its heritage while embracing innovation and growth. Continued collaboration, strategic planning, and community engagement will be essential to successfully implement this vision and ensure lasting benefits for generations to come.

Quyanna to the community of Elim for their participation and contribution to this plan.

Participants in the 5/15/25 community meeting included:
Oscar Takak (NVE), June Davis (ENC), Frederic Daniels (ENC), Joni Segock (IRA), Morris Nakarak (IRA/ENC), Robert Keith (IRA), Richard A. Kuzuguk (NSHC), Landis Bjorgen (NSHC), Paul Nagaruk (City of Elim), Ross Saccheus (City of Elim), Ruth Moses (City of Elim), Leigh Takak (City of Elim), Federick Murray (IRA), Robert M. Saccheus (ENC), Wayne Moses (ENC, NVE), Emily Murray (City of Elim), Desiree Davison (City of Elim), Ronald Daniels (NSEDC), Kristina Tracy
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