

King Island Native Community 2026-2031 Local Economic Development Plan



Boating to Ugiuvak. Photo by Kiminaq Agviaq

Prepared for:

The King Island Native
Community
King Island Native Corporation
The Bering Strait Development
Council

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Priority List

1. Continue to expand infrastructure and housing to community members
2. Develop a Tribal school
3. Provide access to King Island for tribal members
4. Hosting youth forums
5. Hire an activity coordinator to strengthen cultural activities
6. Hire a King Island Development Coordinator
7. Hire an executive director that works closely with the Chief and tribal council
8. Greater advertising for newsletters and meetings
9. Continue access to Woolley Improvements
10. Offer local transportation services to community members
11. Offer aid for homelessness and substance abuse

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Community Vision

The King Island Native Community envisions a strong, self-reliant coastal community where the wisdom of our Elders is passed on to our youth to support sustainable economic growth for our people while traditional knowledge guides the protection of our lands and marine environment.

Community Goals

- Hire appropriate staff in new positions to expand tribal capacity
- Improve quality of life for tribal members
- Strengthen cultural traditions within our community and fellow tribes within Nome
- Launch Tribally led education

Community Priorities

1. Continue to expand infrastructure and housing to community members
2. Develop a Tribal school
3. Provide access to King Island for tribal members
4. Host youth forums
5. Hire an Activity Coordinator to strengthen cultural activities
6. Hire a King Island Development Coordinator (grant writer)
7. Hire an Executive Director (also housing director) that works closely with the Chief and tribal council
8. Improve advertising for newsletters and meetings
9. Continue access improvements to Woolley Lagoon
10. Offer local transportation services to community members
11. Offer aid for homelessness and substance abuse

Purpose of the King Island Local Economic Development Plan (LEDP)

The LEDP is a critical step in the on-going development of the tribe and our efforts to improve Community conditions and the well-being of our members. This plan is structured to involve Community members and key decision makers to assist in the identification of the common vision, challenges to accomplish that vision, and strategies for dealing with those challenging roadblocks.

Planning Process and Public Involvement

Planning History and Accomplishments Since the last LEDP was completed in December of 2013

Infrastructure and Housing

As a long-standing LEDP priority, a significant accomplishment is completing the expansion of the King Island community hall in January of 2022. This is where the IRA council hosts our tribal meetings and activities for the community. There are several offices and rooms in the building that accommodate the tribal coordinator, tribal family coordinator, and transportation coordinator. The King Island community hall also houses a carving room that is open to the public and has several offices for rent.

Housing is another area that was identified as needed and is currently being addressed. In 2019, in partnership with the Bering Straits Regional Housing Authority, the tribe constructed two (2) three-bedroom, two-bathroom houses. In 2022, the King Island Native Community constructed three (3) separate duplexes; each duplex has two (2) one-bedroom, one-bathroom unit. In 2026, the King Island Native Community is finalizing construction on four (4) three-bedroom, two-bathroom and one (1) two-bedroom, two-bathroom homes; these homes should be completed in January and are designated for enrolled tribal citizens. The King Island Native Community is also renovating the old Corner Market into a triplex apartment rental, which will include two (2) three-bedroom, two-bathroom and one (1) two-bedroom, two-bathroom units; the triplex is slated for April 2026 completion.

As part of King Island Native Community's mission to expand transportation services as listed on prior LEDP's, the King Island Native Community purchased the old Outsider's shop in 2019. King Island Native Community's Transportation program owns several assets including a work truck, a heavy-duty trailer, forklift, and skid steer with attachments; the shop houses these items and other tribally owned materials.

Transportation

The King Island Transportation program has maintained the road to Woolley Lagoon, the location of King Island native allotments, Native corporation lands, and where seasonal hunting and fishing camps are located. The transportation program actively maintains the Woolley Lagoon road by refilling seasonal washouts that happen every spring. These aggressive washouts are a common problem because there is an excess of water in the spring from the snow and ice melting. Large upgrades were made to the road in 2021 to attempt to mitigate the spring washout problem. This included building up the road base to make it taller and adding more culverts to aid in expelling the excess spring melt. All the repairs to the road from the 2022 Typhoon Merbok were completed in 2024. In 2025, there were seasonal upgrades in summer that included resurfacing and other blade work.

Elder Engagement

One of the past priorities in the last King Island LEDP was encouraging elder engagement to strengthen the community bond between Elders and the rest of the community. The Tribal Family Coordinator helps in organizing activities for the Elders such as playing the full moon game. The Elders have guided the community and educate youth on traditions like the polar bear dance and celebration. There was a polar bear harvested by a King Island member on King Island corporation land for the first time in 38 years. Naturally it was a big deal for the community. Lastly, the most convenient contribution that the IRA council continues to make yearly, includes sponsoring tribal citizen fees at the Nome Recreation Center. This helps engage elders with other Community members; Elders enjoy watching basketball games and going to the sauna at the Nome Recreation Center.

Community Engagement and cultural activities

Community members organize Inupiaq Dance practice at the community hall. King Island dancing is a very important part of King Island Culture and carries with it the knowledge of our ancestors. The King Island tribe is widely recognized as one of the more elaborate and exquisite Alaskan Native dance groups by many groups of people in Alaska and the rest of the world. Keeping traditional singing, dancing, and drumming alive is one of the best ways to strengthen our community members engaged with the tribal government and with each other.

Encouraging post-secondary and trade schools

One of the services and contributions made by the King Island Native Community is encouraging tribal citizens to pursue higher education and trade skills. The IRA council provides multiple scholarships that support students pursuing higher education and trade school certificates. Larger, primary scholarships are provided by Kawerak to King Island Tribal Citizens; the KINC IRA provides a smaller, supplementary scholarship directly from the tribe.

Safety for subsistence users

As a safety measure, the King Island Native Community installed a shelter cabin on the Woolley Lagoon Road in 2018. This cabin serves as an emergency shelter for people in the area that are caught in inclement weather. The harsh climate in Western Alaska includes hurricane force winds, extreme cold, and blizzards that lower visibility. Having this emergency shelter is an emergency survival resource to keep tribal members safe while practicing traditional hunting and gathering on King Island Native Corporation land. The shelter cabin is available to use for all regional residents travelling in the area by snowmachine between communities. The King Island Native Community completed upgrades to the shelter cabin in 2024 and 2025.

Planning Committee and Staff Description

Heather Payenna, Chief emeritus of the King Island Native Community (IRA council) reached out to Kawerak Community Planning and Development staff in May of 2025. Since then, two

public meetings were held on 7/29/25 and 8/05/25. The final LEDP draft was approved and adopted during one of the King Island Native Community's tribal council meetings on April 30, 2026. These meetings were open to the King Island Native Community, King Island Native Corporation shareholders, and the KINC Elder Committee members. Kawerak CPD staff invite the King Island Native Community and Corporation to contact them at any time to update this living document.

Method for Plan Development

The planning organizations from King Island sought a strategic planning process based upon:

- Technology of Participation (ToP) methods developed by the *Hue Life*
- CoCreative *Facilitation and Collaborative Innovation*

The methods listed above are proven to aid the facilitation of public meetings, keeping participants on topic and kindly direct conversations to benefit the entire party. Most notably these methods are taught in classes that direct participants through actual meeting scenarios including engagement, conflict navigation, diversifying perspectives, building trust, and creating a space where participant's voices are heard.

Values and goals of the meetings

- Participation
- Respect and kindness
- Teamwork
- Creativity
- Action

It is expected that the Local Economic Development Plan should include the following:

- Community profile and assessment data
- Community vision, values and statement of goals
- Updated community priorities for community and economic development
- Top priority implementation strategies for guidance in community development projects

Comprehensive Development Status

A Comprehensive Economic Development strategy (CEDS) was updated and approved for the Bering Strait region communities by the Bering Strait Development Council in 2025. The document can be found at <https://kawerak.org/cultural-development/community-planning-and-development/>. The next CEDS update will be in 2030.

The last LEDP was completed for King Island in 2013. The last priority list was completed and signed in 2015. Many of the goals in those priority lists have turned into successful community development projects and some are still ongoing.

Our Community



Members of the King Island Dance group performing the last part of the wolf dance at the 2025 Kingikiut Dance Festival.

Location

King Island is located 40 miles west of Cape Prince of Wales and the community of Wales. Today, the majority of the King Island Tribe are located in Nome, Alaska, with some members residing in other parts of Alaska and a handful in the rest of the United States.

History and story of the community

King Island was historically occupied by Inupiat; we call ourselves “Ugiuvanmiut,” meaning the people of King Island. The Island is called Ugiuvak in Inupiaq, which roughly translates to, a

place for winter. Unbeknownst of the Island's name to Captain Cook in 1778, he gave the Island an English name, King Island, for his Lt. James King.

The village was occupied during the winter by approximately 200 Inupiat, who achieved fame as hunters, ivory carvers and dancers; they

lived in walrus-skin dwellings lashed to the face of a cliff. The Ugiuvaṅmiut subsisted on walrus, seal, birds, berries, and plants and continue to do so today. The island had a natural cold storage cave (Qaitquq) that was used for long-term food storage. Every summer, the entire population would travel to the mainland by qayaq and umiaq. Ugiuvak ancestors would stay on the mainland for a few months to hunt and fish for caribou, salmon, and to gather berries and greens.

In 1929, a Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) school and a Catholic church were built. The Ugiuvaṅmiut customarily camped near Nome each summer to sell their intricate ivory carvings. In 1937, Lt. Commander R.C. Sarratt reported that the village was comprised of 190 residents, 45 houses, a Catholic church, and a school with electric lights, heat, and running water. That year, 200 walruses and 2,000 seals were harvested by Ugiuvaṅmiut. During this time, the United States Coast Guard Cutter Northland was transporting Ugiuvaṅmiut to Nome where they set up camp at the edge of Nome.

The decline of King Island's population is attributed to several factors, mainly due to the forced relocation from King Island to Nome in 1958 when the BIA closed the school. Children were forcibly removed from their parents' arms to attend school in Nome. Other factors that contributed to population decline included healthcare challenges and multiple legislative acts by the US Government. There were increased cases of tuberculosis, which forced those who were sick being sent to a sanitarium on the mainland. The introduction of the Indian Relocation Act of 1956 provided post-eight grade education at Indian boarding schools on mainland. In 1960, 49 residents were counted by the U.S. Census and that year the church was closed. By 1966, there were no longer Ugiuvaṅmiut living on the island.



A view of King Island from the Southwest. Taken August 2025 by Gabriel Smith.

King Islanders had been settling in Nome every summer on the East End of town, which we called Qigutaq. There was no electricity, running water, or waste services at the site and attempts were made to request federal assistance to establish a new village at Cape Woolley for the relocated King Islanders. World War II Quonset huts and abandoned Gold Rush buildings were used as shared homes by the Ugiuvaṃmiut at Qigutaq.

As a result of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, King Island Native Corporation was established and received title to land around Cape Woolley and Woolley Lagoon as well as all of King Island.

Today, most of the King Island Native Community resides in Nome, with other community members living in surrounding communities, cities across Alaska and in parts of the lower 48 associated with boarding schools.

Community Infrastructure

Housing

The King Island Native Community has a total of six rental units. This includes three duplexes. All these units are currently being rented out to King Island Native Community members. There are plans to continue expanding the tribe's infrastructure by completing an additional five single family homes. To do this, in 2021, the King Island Native Community purchased five ½ acre undeveloped lots on the east end of Nome on 6th Avenue. This housing project is ongoing and moving along great. When these units are finished, there will be an open application period exclusively for our King Island tribal members to apply for these housing units. Currently, the first of these new homes will be completed in early 2026.

Healthcare

The Norton Sound Health Corporation serves the entire Bering Strait Region, which includes Nome, and KINC members who reside in Nome and the surrounding communities. This hospital hosts a full dental, vision and radiology clinics, emergency room, behavior health, acute care and more.

Energy

King Island Native Community members who reside in Nome all collectively use electricity provided by Nome Joint Utility Services (NJUS). NJUS actively participates in the Alaska Energy Authority's power cost equalization (PCE) program. The effective residential rate per kilowatt-hour is \$0.24 with PCE in Nome, from the 2024 Power Cost Equalization Program Statistical Report (Alaska Energy Authority).

The King Island tribal members who live in Nome are also subject to the cost of home heating fuel. Most Nome residents, King Island members included, use boilers, furnaces and toyo stoves to heat their homes. All of which consume home heating oil. Heating oil in Nome is sold by both

Crowley and Bonanza. The cost is \$6.42/gallon from Crowley on December 12, 2025. When you bundle home heating fuel with an automotive gas card for use at their gas station, you can save \$0.25 a gallon for both products. Bonanza sells home heating fuel at \$6.66 per gallon.

Communications

King Island Native Community members and Nome residents all have the option to use TelAlaska, AT&T or GCI for phone/cellphone coverage. GCI and Starlink are the most popular choices for internet service providers. Other communications methods include Garmin inReaches and satellite phones while people are out in the countryside. The City of Nome has a United States Postal Service office in downtown Nome. There are three local radio stations, a cable TV company, and satellite TV is available. The cost of phone, internet, and TV often exceeds ¼ of a family's income.

Transportation

Nome is the hub community for the Bering Strait region, having two state-maintained airports. The Nome airport has a 6000x150 foot runway with a 5,500x 150-foot crosswind runway. This airport has passenger terminals for Alaska Airlines, Bering Air and Pathfinder Aviation. Other outfits that are purely cargo airlines include Northern Air Cargo, Lynden Air Cargo, Everts Air and Ryan Air. Bering Air is the regional carrier that provides the bulk of the in-region passenger, freight and bypass mail services. Jet A fuel is the most common aviation fuel that is consumed by our local commercial air services. Crowley sold it at the price of \$8.21 per gallon on December 12, 2025.

City field or Munz field has a single gravel runway that is 1900x 100 foot. This airport serves the local private pilots and supports the bulk of the region's general aviation community. 100 Low Lead aviation fuel is sold by Crowley at \$11.18 per gallon, giving us an indicator on what it costs to operate a small single pilot aircraft in our region.

The Nome road system includes the roads in city limits and three different roads that are open seasonally. The Bob Blodget highway is 70 miles long and ends in Teller. This road is cherished by the King Island Tribe because the access road to Woolley Lagoon is on this highway. The Nome-Taylor Highway is 80ish miles long and ends on the north side of the Kougarok River. Lastly, there is the Nome-Council Highway that serves as a travel route for residents of White Mountain and Golovin. In the summer when the road is open and rivers are clear of ice both of these communities are accessible by a combination of highway vehicle and jet boat. Automotive gasoline is provided by two gas stations. Crowley Fuels sells regular unleaded 87 octane fuel at \$6.29 per gallon. Bonanza Express sells regular unleaded 87 octane gasoline at \$6.30 per gallon. These prices were collected in December of 2025.

The Port of Nome is the forefront of Arctic marine shipping lanes. Since 2012, marine traffic in the Bering Strait has more than doubled. The port of Nome serves 60 communities spanning from the Yukon River Delta up to Utqiagvik. Common goods that come through the Port of

Nome include rock and gravel, construction materials and petroleum products. The port also supports over 450 commercial fishermen that deliver their catch to the Norton Sound Seafood Products plant.

Within the next decade, the community of Nome can expect to see the first phase of the deep-water port expansion project completed. At the end of the project, the Port of Nome will see a brand-new eastern breakwater with its own causeway and small docking station, and an extended western causeway that will be able to dock with multiple deep draft vessels at any given time. There have been plans for this to happen for some time, and the world is waiting for this to come together. For more information, visit: <https://www.nomealaska.org/port-nome/page/noaa-nmfs-approved-ihp>.

Local organizations

King Island Native Community

PO Box 682

Nome, AK 99762

Phone: (907)-443-2209

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The King Island Native Community is a federally recognized tribe via the Indian Reorganization Act and has an operating tribal council with seven active members. The Purpose of the King Island Native Community is to better the quality of life for our tribal citizens. Currently, the King Island Native Community holds assets including housing units for tribal citizens, a transportation warehouse and vehicles that maintains access to Woolley Lagoon and the surrounding Corporation lands.

King Island Native Corporation

706 East 4th Ave

Nome, Ak 99762

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Anchorage, AK 99520

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Sylvester Ayek demonstrating the traditional method of tightening walrus stomach to drum frames in Wales, AK.

The King Island Native Corporation (KINCorp) is recognized as a distinct village corporation under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). The Corporation has an operating governing board consisting of seven elected shareholders and conducts itself as a community organization based in Nome, Alaska; the Corporation also houses an office in Anchorage, Alaska. The King Island Native Corporation has 215 original shareholders and owns several businesses.

Native Village of Council

P.O. Box 2050
Nome, Alaska 99762
Phone: (907)-44307649
Fax: (907)-443-5965
Email: tc.cou@kawerak.org

Nome Eskimo Community

PO Box 1090
Nome, Ak 99762
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Fax: (907)-443-3539

Native Village of Solomon

P.O. Box 2053
Nome, AK 99762
Phone: (907)-443-4985
Fax: (907)-443-5189
tc.sol@kawerak.org

Sitnasuaq Native Corporation

PO Box 905
Nome, Ak 99762
Phone: (907)-227-5639
Fax: (907)-443-6437

Municipal Government

City of Nome
PO Box 281, 102 Division Street
Nome, Ak 99762
Phone: (907)-443-6663

Regional Organizations

- Regional non-profit: Kawerak Inc.
- Regional for-profit: Bering Straits Native Corporation
- Regional CDQ organization: Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation
- Regional Health Organization: Norton Sound Health Corporation
- Regional Housing Authority: Bering Straits Regional Housing Authority
- Bering Sea Women's Group
- Nome Community Center
- Boy's and Girl's Club

Local based state and federal agencies

The National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the Alaska Department of Transportation are the most prominent state and federal agencies located in Nome. Between all of them, they host many employment opportunities for the region and local Nome residents.

Public safety

The Nome Police Department

Alaska State Troopers

Nome Volunteer Fire Department (also does search and rescue)

Education

The school on King Island was built by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in 1929. The school was effectively closed in 1958 due to the fear of debris falling in and around the building. This forced families with young children to relocate to Nome to attend the local elementary school or nearby boarding schools. The Indian Relocation Act of 1956 forced many families to relocate to Nome or other cities around the State of Alaska as post 8th grade education was required but not provided on King Island.

With the majority of the KINC members residing in Nome today, children attend the Nome Public Schools (NPS) district. NPS has a campus designated in Nome for kindergarten through grade five, and a larger campus that includes the Nome-Beltz High School serving grades 9-12, Nome-Beltz Middle School serving grades 6-8, and a charter school that serves grades 5-8. The combined Middle and High school has a 293 students and a 76% graduation rate of 4th year seniors.

The Anvil City Science Academy is a charter school in Nome, Alaska. It is located right next to the NPS middle and high school. The Science academy is a tuition-free public, parent-run, charter school that hosts students in grades five through eight.

The Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program (ANSEP) started in 1995 as a scholarship program for university students. Since, the program has evolved into a sequential education model that serves kindergarten through PhD level university students. ANSEP is deeply rooted in Alaska Native Values and keeps Alaska Native Culture at its core. ANSEP opened an acceleration academy in Nome during the 2025-2026 school year. Every student in Alaska has this program available to them, including students in Nome, Alaska.

The Northwestern Alaska Career and Technical Center (NACTEC) was developed by the Bering Strait School district and Nome Public Schools as a joint venture Regional Training Center in Nome, Alaska. NACTEC introduces high school and middle school students to resources and

skills for independent living success leading to employment opportunities and the pursuit of post-secondary education.

The University of Alaska Fairbanks has a satellite campus in Nome, Alaska called the UAF Northwest Campus. This campus offers academic degree programs, specialized skills training, personalized advising and other resources to support the people and communities of Western Alaska. Beyond this, there are and have been students of all ages from high school students seeking dual credit courses to working or retired adults, from many communities in Western Alaska that have had great success at the UAF northwest Campus seeking lifelong learning.

Kawerak Education, Employment and Supportive Services (EESS) offers a variety of services to the people in the Bering Strait region. Their programs include higher education and vocational training scholarships, short term regional training, adult and youth employment services, direct employment services, Head Start and Childcare, welfare assistance, vocational rehabilitation, GED diploma attainment, and internships among others. These opportunities are all available to King Island tribal citizens who reside within the region that Kawerak serves.

The Norton Sound Health Corporation offers a few post-secondary programs. Most notable are the scholarships and training programs from the Tribal Training and Development department. Tribal Training and Development manages all of the scholarship opportunities that NSHC provides to support the vision of supporting and developing the region's youth to pursue higher education and health care careers to ensure there is future tribal leadership.

Population

The King Island Native Community has a total of 735 members. The King Island Native Corporation has a total of 215 shareholders. The majority of tribal citizens reside in Nome. There are dispersed amounts that live all around Alaska along with a few in other states correlating with BIA relocation programs which recruited tribal citizens from the 1940s-1970s.

The 2023 US census data reports that there are an estimated 3,668 people that reside in Nome, Alaska. Of these, 1,904 were Alaska Native and 488 were both white and Alaska Native. The remainder of the population is comprised mostly of white ethnicity.

Community Economy

Many King Island tribal citizens reside in Nome, Alaska, therefore the tribe is integrated into the services of the Nome economy. Within Nome, there is a very diverse blend of goods and services that are available. There are seven different air carriers that offer either passenger flights or cargo services or both, two grocery stores, two gas stations, a local construction supply company, multiple cell phone providers, two hardware stores, and many local businesses that provide the city of Nome all the goods and services that make life prosperous.

Aside from the many businesses, Nome's economic diversity is heavily influenced by mining and natural resources, commercial fisheries, tribal governments, health and social services,

tourism, and most importantly foundational subsistence activities. With this, there are many different forms of employment that can be found in Nome and there is no shortage of finding some type of employment. The largest employer in Nome is the Norton Sound Health Corporation, with 700+ employees.

Environmental Scan

Cemeteries and Historical sites

King Island Tribal citizens still travel to King Island every year during the springtime in May or June to harvest marine mammals in traditional ways and share with community members.

Woolley Lagoon and Cape Woolley have long been known as a natural landing site for the King Island tribe as they traveled to Nome for the summer months to hunt, fish, and trade with the people that reside in Nome. Today there are many seasonal campsites still being used at Woolley Lagoon to practice traditional hunting and fishing.



Tribal members Bobby (right) and Gabriel (left) with their Pilgrim River Red Salmon.

Climate

Nome is located on the southern coast of the Seward Peninsula by the Bering Sea and has a subarctic maritime climate. This means long, cold winters and short, cool summers, with both

seasons heavily influenced by ocean conditions. Winters generally span from October through May and have an average temperature ranging between -5 to 15 degrees Fahrenheit, while being heavily influenced by windchill. Summer lasts from June to August and has an average temperature of 45 to 60 degrees Fahrenheit. Nome experiences persistent and strong winds throughout the year. Precipitation includes about 15 inches of rain per year and 60 inches of snowfall per year.

King Island experiences a harsh subarctic climate with significant maritime and continental influences. Persistent fog, rain and wind torment the island during summer, fall and spring. During the winter, blistering cold temperatures as low as -30 degrees Fahrenheit combined with 60mph wind keep the sea ice frozen, even as the oceans currents cause cracks and open leads form in the ice.

Wildlife

The King Islanders were quickly recognized as skilled and knowledgeable hunters by the early maritime travelers. In the year 1937 over 200 walrus and 2000 seals were harvested around the island community. Hunting traditions are still alive today, with many King Island hunters participating in our traditional spring hunts. They still harvest seals, walrus, migratory waterfowl and polar bears.

The wildlife that seek refuge on and around King Island include bearded, spotted, ringed and ribbon seals, pacific walrus, polar bear, beluga, humpback and grey whales, arctic fox, many species and colonies of auklets, murre, kittiwakes, horned and tufted puffins, and cormorants. The fish and crab that inhabit the Bering Sea around the island include salmon swimming through the area, pacific cod, blue cod, halibut, red and blue king crab.

Soil and Topography

King Island is an intrusive pluton comprised of biotite-hornblende quartz monzonite that belongs to the York Terrane basement rocks under the Northern Bering Sea seabed. It was formed by a sublayer of magma in the late Cretaceous period that cooled very slowly below the earth's surface and is between 85 to 112 million years old. The Diomedes and Sledge islands are also in relatively close proximity to King Island and exhibit the same geologic features.

Because King Island is comprised of mainly one large outcrop of solid granite, there is no permafrost on the island and a limited number of plant species that inhabit the island. The handful of sedges and grasses on the island are, however, plentiful. These include salmon berries, small willows less than a foot tall, Eskimo potatoes, grasses and a few sedges.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths of the King Island Native Community

- Diverse career paths among tribal members
- Determined people
- Respect for Elders
- Knowledge of family tree
- Pride in traditions
- Sharing harvests
- Active tribal council and members
- Strong ties with other local tribes
- More preservation of the King Island dialect of Inupiaq
- We still have tribal members who were raised on King Island
- We remain a resilient tribe after the forced relocation to Nome
- We have built a new community Hall for our tribal gatherings

Weaknesses

- Small staff within tribe
- Corporation doesn't have many assets
- Some Corporation members do not live in Nome
- Fewer tribal members still speak our native language with our dialect, Ugiuvaṅmiutun

Challenges

- Housing projects are costly and take lots of time
- The tribe does not have our own development coordinator or grant writer
- Cost of living in Nome is high
- Nome's remote location makes new construction expensive with materials shipping costs
- KINC lands are remote and costly to travel to, even by highway vehicle
- Limited communication with tribal members living out of the Nome area

Opportunities for the tribe

- There are plenty of upcoming employment opportunities for tribal members within the community of Nome
- More housing projects are coming after the current projects are completed
- Opportunity for the tribe to increase ground transportation to our elders without vehicles
- The tribe currently does not have a grant writer
- If the STEC bill is passed the opportunity for our tribal school would begin
 - This would increase the amount of Inupiaq speakers in our tribe
- If we are able to grow the capacity of our tribe, more unseen opportunities would become possibilities

Threats

- Changing weather patterns for subsistence hunters
- Lower quality ice conditions for subsistence activities
- Larger fall storms can wash away cabins at Woolley Lagoon
- Loss of Elders and their knowledge of our language, places, carving practices, and hunting skill
- Grant funding cycles are becoming harder to squeeze into our long term goals and timelines

Development Priorities and Implementation Strategy

Continuing to expand infrastructure and housing to community members

The King Island Native Community believes in expanding infrastructure to benefit all our members. When it comes to housing, KINC plans on keeping our current rental duplex apartments for the young adults of the tribe that cannot commit or are not ready for a house. Future expansion includes new land development to construct more single-family homes. The construction of new single-family homes and exclusively giving community members finance options for them to one day purchase these homes would aid in the housing shortage of Nome, giving community members viable options to purchase new homes and give elders an option to move into a newly constructed home.

Development Implementation

1. Continue development of raw land to allow for more new construction projects
2. Finish the current construction on the five planned single family homes
3. Devise an application for these new homes to be fairly dispersed to tribal members for rent or purchase
4. Keep revenue from this project flowing into more construction projects

Develop and start a Tribal School

KINC and the Village of Solomon strongly desire there to be a tribal school for our youth members. Leaders from both tribes have reached out to Alaskan Legislature to start the process of getting proper approval to start this pilot tribal school program.

Development Implementation

1. Continue speaking with legislature about starting the pilot tribal school in Nome
2. Develop a tribal education board
3. Determine location and facilities for the school

4. Create curriculum, seek funding and resources
5. Apply for all necessary approval from local, state and federal agencies
6. Hire staff, launch school

Provide Access to King Island for Tribal Members

For many tribal members, King Island remains a place few of us will be able to travel to. To truly appreciate our culture, we need to see where our elders and ancestors once thrived. The Island's beauty is in its rugged terrain and harsh climate.

Development Implementation

1. Determine if members want seasonal transportation by boat or helicopter

Hosting Youth Forums and Culture Camp

Youth engagement within the King Island Native Community is strongly desired by all of our members. Getting the next generation started in as many traditions as possible is key for passing on the torch of heritage. By hosting youth camps at Woolley Lagoon, the KINC will actively engage our own youth and potentially other youth groups with traditional harvests of berries, fish, moose, reindeer, seals, walrus and grizzly bears. To go along with traditional harvests, youth will also have the chance to learn safe boating and ATV practices, outdoor and survival skills, firearm safety, and of course being good custodians of the land and waters they are on. At the same time, continue to introduce more community members with different career paths to get them thinking about their own future. To complete the proper youth forum, these youth must also be able to travel to youth tribal conferences and share their new knowledge and skills they've been given, along with their own perspectives on how to be a contributing member of the tribe.

Development Implementation

1. Appointing a person to organize these youth forums
2. Have the tribal council and program organizer construct a manuscript composed of a clear purpose and goals for our youth forum
3. Forum involvement must be in a safe culturally grounded environment with an interactive format that promotes respect, equity, culture, traditions and representation across all age groups
4. Give participants a tangible outcome to promote relationships and networking with proper resources and support
5. Have celebration and reflection for all our accomplishments
6. Host the youth culture camp along the way to give participants more perspectives on tribal leadership and roles to play within our communities

Hire an Activity Coordinator to strengthen cultural activities

The creation of this new position within the King Island Native Community will plan, oversee, and organize cultural, recreational and educational activities for the tribe. These activities can and will include traditional dance practices and performances, potlucks, birthday parties, other traditional gatherings and all events happening at the community hall. This position will play a key role in strengthening our cultural activities and preserving our traditional practices and promoting education of our traditional practices for the community.

Development Implementation

1. Create job description and open the application period
2. Have tribal council or Chief of the tribe conduct interviews
3. Have the activity coordinator focus on activities that the rest of the community wants to participate in, including activities that engage all age levels and both genders
4. Organize potlucks after successful spring and fall hunts
5. Exercise continuous improvement by taking note of which events are the most popular and engaging, holding more of these events and branching out to start new traditions for the tribe

Hire a King Island Development Coordinator

If our King Island tribe had our own full-time development coordinator to chase grants and funding opportunities, development of our tribe would grow on a larger scale. This position would be able to help fund the many costly projects that the tribal council cannot afford to carry out overnight, like our housing and transportation initiatives.

Implementation Strategy

1. Find funding to start new position within existing budget or work with Kawerak Tribal Affairs to fund this position
2. Create job description and start hiring process with an open application period
3. Have the tribal council prioritize which types of funding to seek out first and which projects are a higher priority
4. Continue to provide a priority list to the development coordinator to maintain utmost efficiency

Hire a King Island Executive Director

With the tribes growing assets, the tribal council determined that we need a full-time executive director that will communicate closely with the tribal council, the Chief and the tribe as a whole to manage properties and rental units, run the housing program, and aide in writing newsletters for the tribe.

Development Implementation

1. Create the employment opportunity
2. Communicate this with the tribe to promote intertribal hiring for this position
3. Have the tribal council outline the directives for this position while prioritizing tasks given by tribal leadership

Greater Advertising for Newsletters and Meetings

The King Island Native Community is always proactive about outreach by putting up flyers on local bulletin boards, having local radio stations air advertisements, as well as using various forms of social media to notify its tribal citizens of upcoming events at the tribal hall. However, tribal members often wish there was a more regular newsletter put out by the tribal council about information and accomplishments the council has achieved.

Development Implementation

1. Designate one tribal council member to oversee a quarterly or monthly newsletter
2. Bestow this task to the tribal coordinator, executive director or the activity coordinator
3. Have the tribal council decide if they want a quarterly or monthly newsletter
4. Determine a deadline for advertising meetings and events so that members have the chance to plan for it

Continuing Maintaining access to Woolley Lagoon

The road to Woolley Lagoon is open seasonally but needs to be maintained often.

Maintaining access to King Island Tribal and corporation lands at Woolley Lagoon is largely a seasonal matter that must be resolved early in the spring season before the bulk of the runoff water has a chance to wash out the access road. This entails a crew of workers needing to thaw the ice in the culverts to allow the runoff water to flow through them, before the spring melting season.

Implementation

- Accommodate the King Island transportation budget to accommodate this work to be done every spring
- Hire and train re-occurring seasonal employees to operate the equipment for this task
- Continue to maintain the access road with proper equipment
- Provide tribal members with a new community boat to maintain access to the cabins on the beach across the lagoon

Offer Local Transportation Services for Tribal Members

Many of the elderly and a handful of lower income tribal members do not have their own form of ground transportation within Nome. Going to the grocery store can very easily be a 2-mile walk

for some tribal members. The tribal council recognizes this and aspires to provide some form of transportation to our tribal members in need.

Implementation Strategy

1. Determine if the tribe has funding to support giving elders without vehicles rides to and from grocery stores and the post office
2. Determine if a new vehicle is needed for this service to be provided
3. Look into incorporating this into the duties of any new position within the IRA council

Offer Aid for Homeless and Substance Abuse

The tribal communities in and around Nome, including the King Island Native Community have experienced high levels of historical trauma. As a result, we observe increased rates of substance abuse and misuse, along with a growing homeless population. The tribe recognizes these concerns and is collaborating with other local organizations to find solutions. The King Island Native Community offers limited assistance including:

1. The King Island Native Community offers an emergency assistance program that offers food assistance.
2. KINC can offer culturally based healing activities like peer-led talking circles.
3. KINC can promote long-term healing through culture camps, after school youth programs and elder-youth partnerships

Resources

<https://coastview.org/2024/12/12/king-island-bering-sea/#:~:text=A%20pluton%20forms%20a%20distinctive,Bering%20Sea%20to%20the%20south.>

<https://www.nomealaska.org/port-nome>

<https://www.beringstrait.biz/business/king-island-native-corporation/>

<https://data.census.gov/table/DECENNIALPL2020.P1?q=Nome+city,+Alaska+Populations+and+People>

<https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2023.S0101?q=Nome+city,+Alaska>

https://www.nomeschools.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=3697657&type=d&pREC_ID=2425458

<https://www.ansep.net/about/>

<https://www.uaf.edu/nwc/>

Power cost Equalization Program statistical Report FY2024, Alaska Energy Authority

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