



APRIL 3, 2025

Senate Transportation Committee

Tribal Transportation Relations: A New Approach

Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Shannon McCarthy, Communications Director
Sara Lucey, Northern Region Planning Manager
Judy Chapman, Deputy Director of Planning



ALASKA HAS UNIQUE COMMUNITIES



229 federally
recognized Tribes

148 incorporated
cities

19 organized
boroughs

100s unincorporated
communities

365 million acres of
land

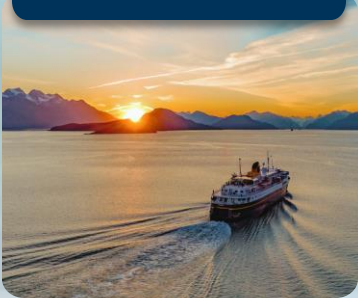


*The Summit Of Mt. Denali Reflects In Wonder Lake,
Denali National Park, Alaska. (Patrick J. Endres)*

ALASKA'S VISION

Strengthening Workforce and Partnerships to Shape Alaska's Transportation Future

COMMUNITY FOCUSED



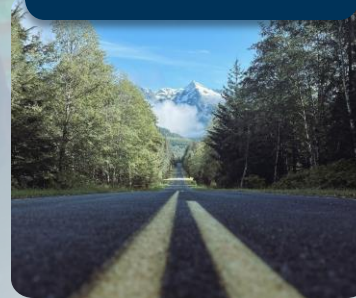
Moving forward through meaningful engagement, strong partnerships, workforce development, and community-driven infrastructure

PARTNERSHIP PLAYBOOK



Following successes through updating policy, toolkits, and training to strengthen Alaska's engagement framework

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT



Driving Alaska's future with workforce development, skills training, & employment integration opportunities

ALASKA'S FUTURE



Community-Led Projects: Shaping Alaska's long-term policy, sustainability, and strategic planning from community driven perspectives



MOVE TOWARD A TRIBAL TEAM

Alaska DOT&PF recognizes the deep cultural heritage and unique needs of Alaska Native peoples and organizations.

The DOT&PF Tribal Relations Team was established to:

- strengthen collaboration
- foster mutual respect
- build lasting relationships
- share collaboration tools internally and externally



WHY?

One Alaska: We all live in Alaska and want to see the best possible outcome for all communities, for all Alaskans.

We want to consult early and often: Invite Tribal leaders or elders to meet and discuss projects, plans, etc. so that we're meeting the community needs

Avoid a “one-size-fits-all” approach: We acknowledge the diversity among Alaska Native cultures.



CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

DOT Order 5301.1A: Formally sets the stage for DOT&PF consultation with Indian Tribes and Alaska Native corporations.

- All voices should be heard
- Early Involvement
- Specific Responsibilities
- Appropriate Styles of Communication
- Focus on Building Long-Term Relationships



TRAINING FOR DOT&PF STAFF

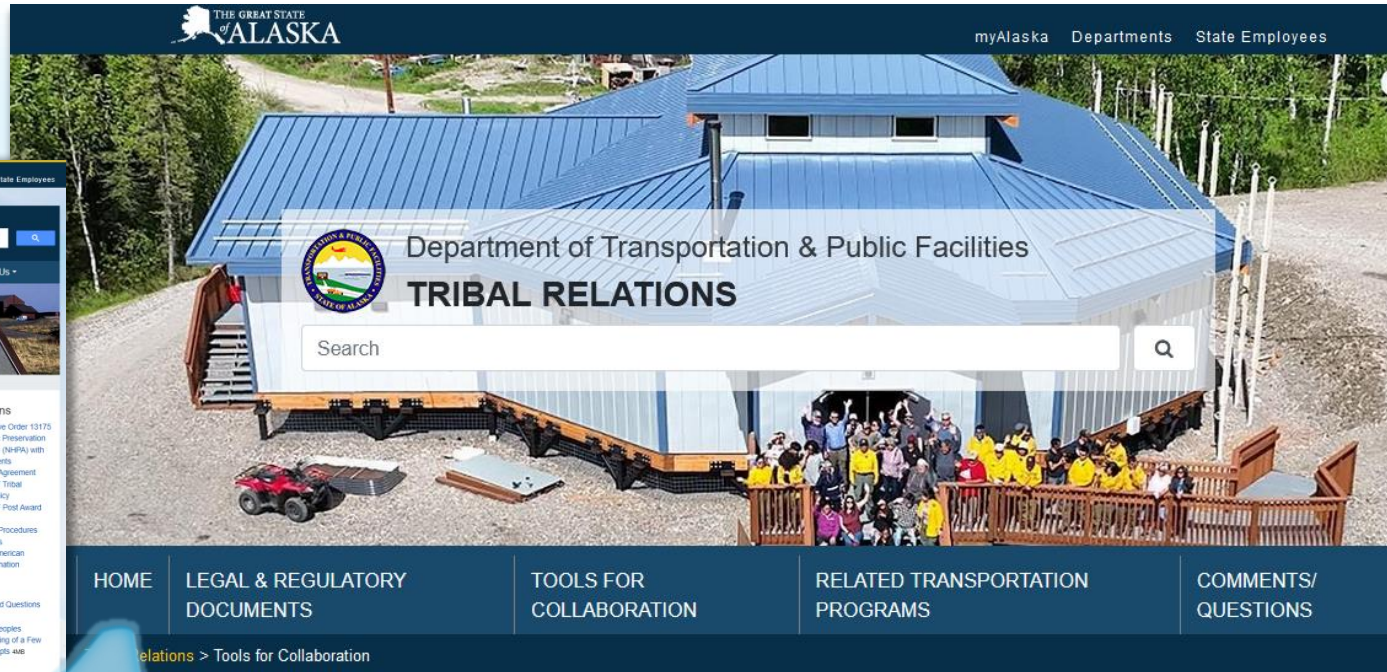
Background and Legal Framework Training

Cross Cultural Sensitivity Training

Tools and Best Practices for Staff



TOOLS FOR COLLABORATION



dot.alaska.gov/tribalrelations



TOOLS FOR TRIBES & DOT&PF COLLABORATION



- Memoranda of Understanding/Agreements (MOA/MOU's)
 - Project coordination
 - Right-of-way consultations
 - Joint planning and design
 - Maintenance partnerships
- Fund Transfers Pursuant 23 USC 202(a)(9)
- Workforce Development & Funding
- Regional Planning Organizations
- We are available!



CURRENT / ONGOING EFFORTS

Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/cip/stip

Statewide Functional Classification Update

dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/fclass

Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan

dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/areaplans



DOT&PF & TRIBAL COORDINATION CALLS

Goals

- Collaboration
- Establish relationships
- Tribal and DOT&PF updates on transportation items
- Mutual opportunity to relay issues and concerns
- Share upcoming funding opportunities
- Provide foundation for partnership

Mat-Su Meetings:

- Bi-monthly meetings online for one hour, with one meeting a year in-person
- Six tribal entities represented, usually 20-30 people in attendance including department staff
- Contact: Kristina Huling, kristina.huling@alaska.gov

Interior Meetings:

- Quarterly meetings online for one hour
- Various tribal entities represented, usually 15 people in attendance including department staff
- Contact: Sara Lucey, sara.lucey@alaska.gov



GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Discretionary Grants have brought many opportunities to the table

Success Stories:

- Elliott Highway Corridor Study
- Talkeetna Spur Culvert grants with Knik Tribe
- Glenn Highway Separated Pathway Study with Chickaloon



ALASKA FUNDING TRANSPORTATION OPPORTUNITIES HUB

The Hub provides Alaskan communities an opportunity to:

- Submit project ideas for consideration by DOT&PF and our partners
- Work with our planners to improve project ideas and project readiness and to apply for funding

Entities can Submit and Manage their own project concepts.

No Account? Let's Create One.

Click below to request an AKDOT Hub Community Account for your organization.

Request an AKDOT Hub Community Account



transportation-funding-opportunity-hub-akdot.hub.arcgis.com



TRIBAL TRANSPORTATION BRIDGE FACILITY PROGRAM

- Manley, Hot Springs Slough Bridge Replacement – Construction, FY2028
- The facility needs to be in the tribal inventory



202(a)(9) FUND TRANSFERS

- Tanana Dust Control (FY2016)
- Barrow Arctic Research Center Road (FY2017)
- Kiana Community Wide Roadway & Drainage (FY2023)
- Wales Community Road Improvements (FY2025)
- Wales to Tin City Road Reconstruction (FY2025)
- Craig to Klawock Bike and Pedestrian Path (FY2026)



REGIONAL PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS



Local Control & Collaboration

Communities shape their own transportation priorities

Improved Access to Funding

Better positioned to apply for federal and state grants

More Equitable Planning

Ensures rural and tribal voices are included in statewide planning

Stronger Regional Partnerships

Encourages collaboration between neighboring communities

Tailored Solutions

Plans reflect Alaska's unique geography, climate, and access needs

THRIVING COMMUNITIES PROGRAM – REGIONAL CAPACITY BUILDER

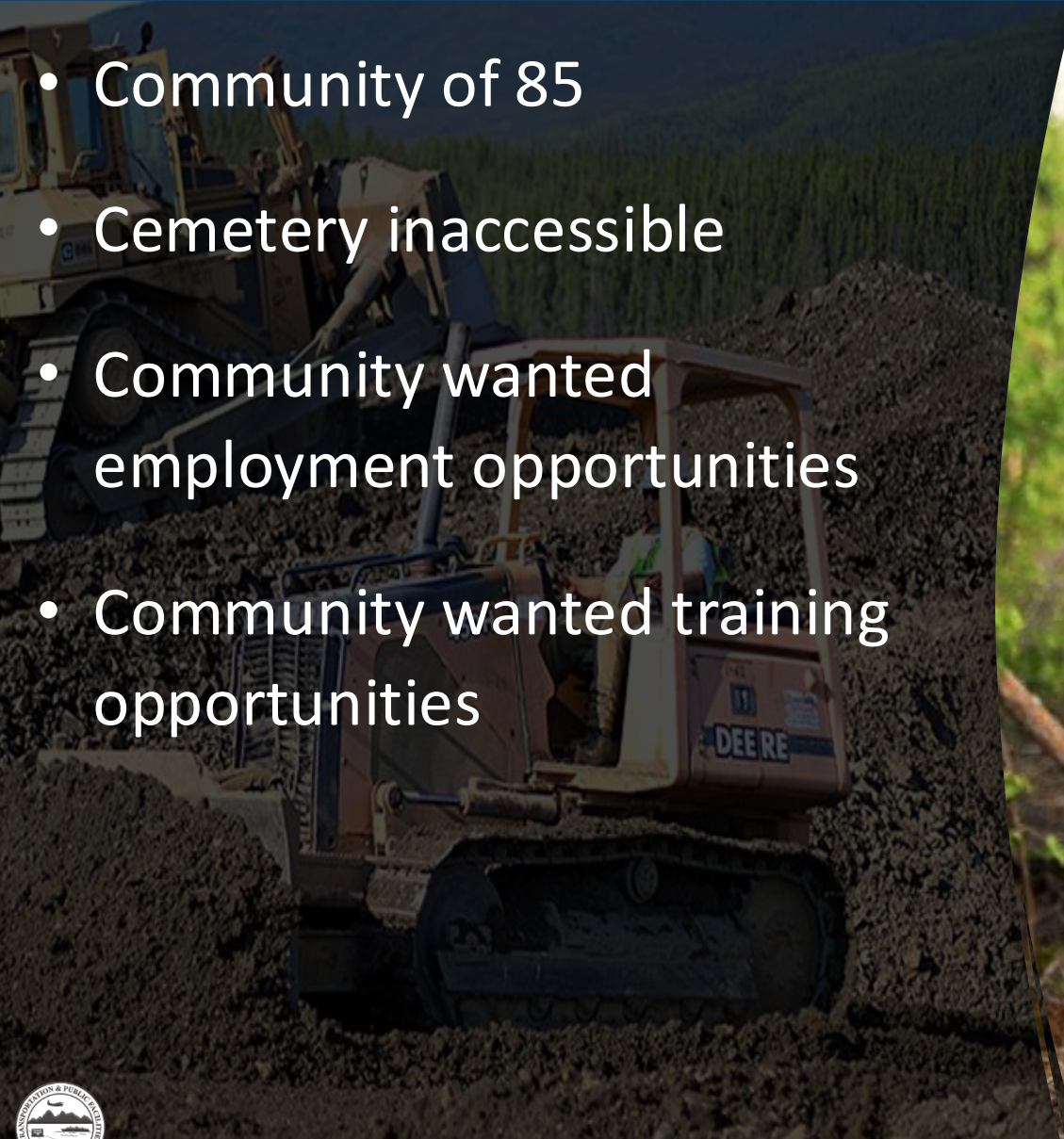
- Project to provide assistance to 18 disadvantaged communities and regions in Alaska
- No capital component, but planning/design assistance is eligible
- Some of the grant to be distributed directly to sub-recipients
- Partnering with Alaska Municipal League to deliver this project

City	Qualifying Vulnerability
Aleknagik	Social, Transportation Cost, Traffic Safety
Bristol Bay Borough (-)	Health
Chevak	Social, Transportation Access, Traffic Safety
Chignik Lagoon	Social, Transportation Cost
Copper Valley (+)	Extreme Weather, Transportation Insecurity, Access, Cost, and Safety
Cordova	Transportation Access
Deltana (+)	Climate, Disaster Loss, Social, Transportation Insecurity and Access
Eklutna (*)	Climate, Disaster Loss
Fort Yukon	Social, Transportation Insecurity, Cost and Safety
Gustavus	Disaster Loss, Social, Transportation Insecurity, Access, Cost, and Safety
Iliamna (*)	Social, Transportation Cost
Lake & Pen Borough (+)	Social, Transportation Cost
Manokotak (*)	Social, Transportation Cost
Metlakatla (*)	Social, Transportation Insecurity, Access, and Cost
Nunapitchuk	Social, Transportation Cost
Petersburg	Social, Transportation Insecurity, Access, and Safety
Wrangell	Extreme Weather, Health, Social, Transportation Insecurity, Access, Cost, and Safety



HIGHLIGHT: HUGHES SUNNYLAND PROJECT

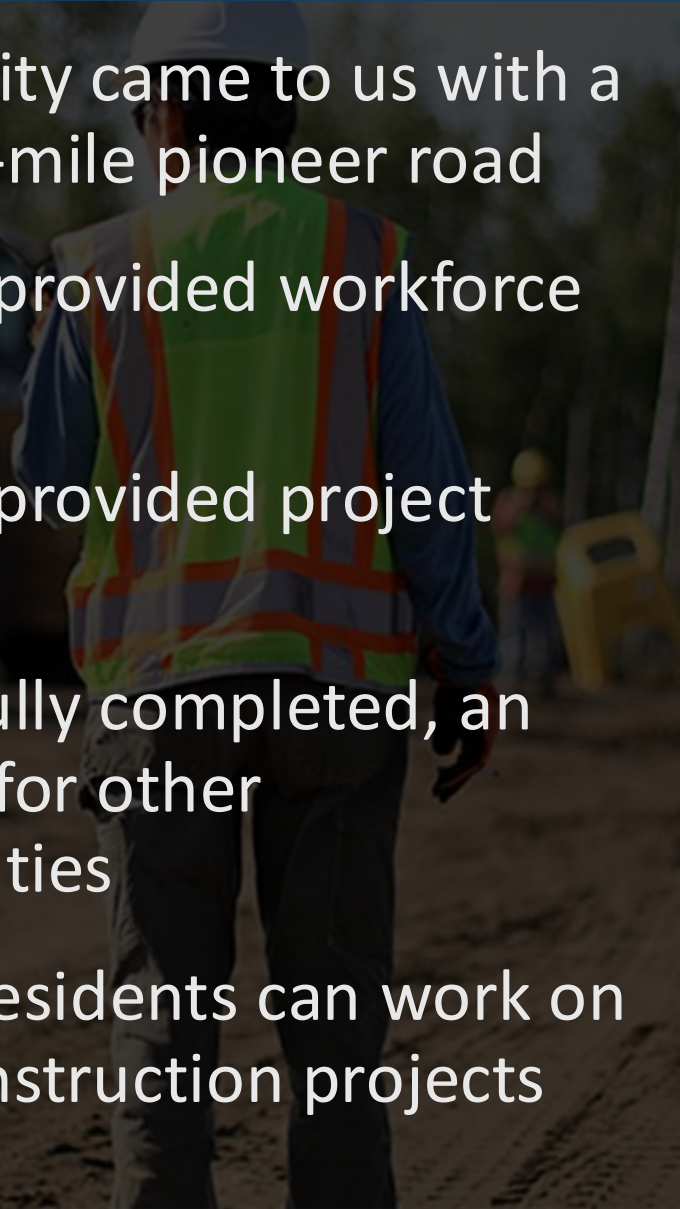
- Community of 85
- Cemetery inaccessible
- Community wanted employment opportunities
- Community wanted training opportunities



HIGHLIGHT: HUGHES SUNNYLAND PROJECT



- Community came to us with a plan: 2.4-mile pioneer road
- DOT&PF provided workforce training
- DOT&PF provided project oversight
- Successfully completed, an example for other communities
- Trained residents can work on other construction projects



DOT&PF TRIBAL TEAM



Email the DOT&PF Tribal Team:
dot.tribal.team@alaska.gov

- Shannon McCarthy, Communications
- Sara Lucey, Planning Manager
- Henry Cole, Materials
- Erik Hilsinger, Environmental
- Danielle Tessen, Communications
- DOT&PF Area Planners

DOT&PF Tribal Relations Website: dot.alaska.gov/tribalrelations



THANK YOU

Shannon McCarthy, Communications Director
Sara Lucey, Northern Region Planning Manager
Judy Chapman, Deputy Director of Planning

Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
DOT.Commissioner@alaska.gov

