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# Unga Tribal Council Local Economic Development Plan

Presented to the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association



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# Location

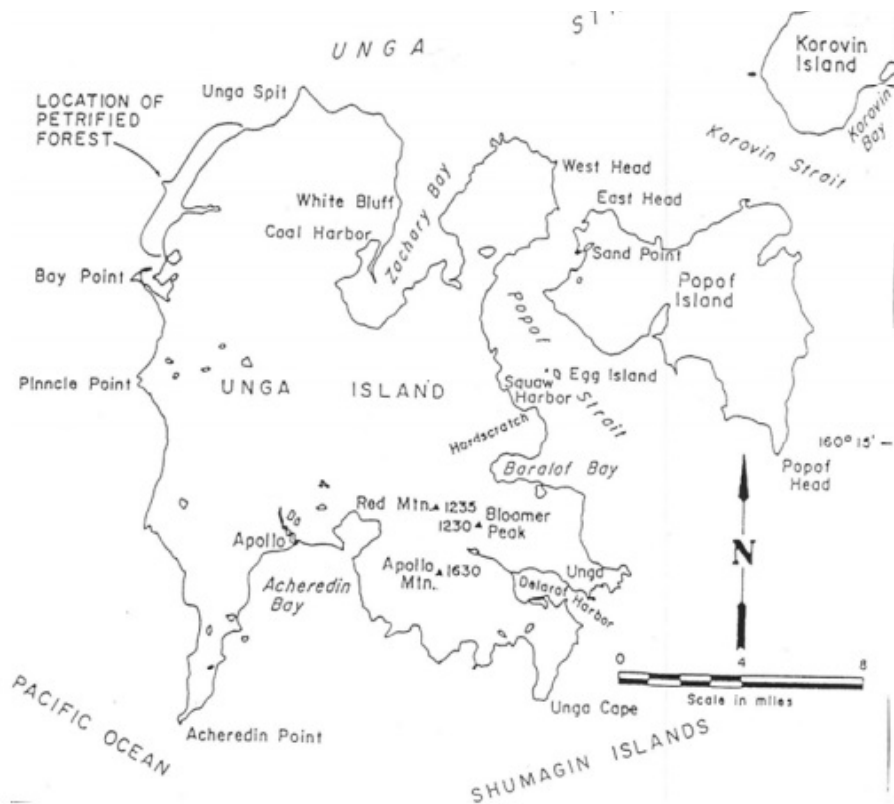


Figure 1: Map of Unga Island  
Source: Map of Unga Island from 2006 community plan, State of Alaska

Unga lies on the southeast coast of Unga Island, in the Shumagin Islands of the Aleutian Chain. It lies at approximately 55d 11m N Latitude, 160d 30m W Longitude. Unga is located in the Aleutian Islands Recording District.

## History and Culture

Unga was an Aleut village first reported as “Delarov” by an explorer of the same name for the Russia American Company in 1833, with a population of 116. Shortly thereafter, the spelling changed to “Ougnagok” in 1836 and “Ounga” in 1888, with the establishment of a post office. The spelling to Unga crystalized in 1894. The post office closed in 1958, and the local population mostly migrated to Sand Point on Popof Island, about two miles away over water.

## Infrastructure and Community Facilities Summary

The Unga Tribe historically resided in Unga, but the village is no longer occupied year round. Unga tribe members now primarily resided in Sand Point.

The village of Unga is currently almost wholly lacking in infrastructure. Unga is only accessible by boat or seaplane as there is no road access or airstrip. There are no stores or businesses, although a new structure was erected in 2002.

Village of Unga			
Asset	Present	Description/Condition	Ownership
Airstrip	No		
Marine Highway Service	No		
Community Hall	No		
Water/Sewer	No		
Electricity	No		
Fuel Storage	No		
Medical Services	No		
Dock/Harbor	No		
Public Safety	No		
Fire Protection	No		
Telephone and Internet	No		
Post Office	No		
School	No		

*Table 1: Infrastructure in the Village of Unga*  
*Source: State of Alaska Community Database Online*

Sand Point, the current primary location of the tribe, is a relatively well-developed rural Alaska city but still has many of the hardships associated with rural Alaska.

<b>City of Sand Point</b>			
<b>Asset</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Description/Condition</b>	<b>Ownership</b>
Airstrip	Yes	4,300ft paved	State
Marine Highway Service	Yes	Bi-Monthly between May & Oct	State
Community Hall	Yes	School facilities	City
Water/Sewer	Yes	Yes	City
Electricity	Yes	2.6MW total Capacity. Wind/Diesel hybrid system;	Private/Tribal
Fuel Storage	Yes	Limited capability, relies on Sales from Trident Fish plant	Tribal
Medical Services	Yes	Community Health Clinic	City
Dock/Harbor	Yes	25 acre, 4 docks, 134 slips	City
Public Safety	Yes	Police/Fire/EMS/Animal Control	City
Fire Protection	Yes	Ship and Land capabilities. Volunteer staff.	City
Telephone and Internet	Yes	Phone: 3G. TelAlaska, AT&T, GCI Internet: TelAlaska and Hughes Net private customers; GCI public customers. Sub Broadband speeds.	Private
Post Office	Yes		Federal
School	Yes	PK through 12	State

*Table 2: Infrastructure of Sand Point, Alaska  
Source: State of Alaska Community Database Online*

## Demographics and Economy

The following information is from the Census Bureau’s American FactFinder database. Due to the small population in these areas, the most current information for many of these indicators is 2016, and these represent the 5-year averages from the American Community Survey. If these areas had larger populations, then the Census Bureau would have presented a 1-year average. The year of 2010 was selected as a benchmark year because the data is as authoritative as the Census Bureau can produce as it comes during the decennial census.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
Population	976	1,248	28%
Tribal Members	381	598	57%
Housing Units	290	462	59%
Median Household Income	\$63,750	\$65,764	3%
Unemployment Rate	5.8%	5.4%	-7%

*Table 3: Demographic and Economic Indicators for Sand Point  
Source: American FactFinder*

The recent Alaskan depression affects Rural Alaska in complex ways. There is a net migration out of rural Alaska, but regional hubs are seeing a population increase. Sand Point is a regional hub, so it is experiencing immigration with a population increase of 28% from 2010 to 2016 in total population and a 57% increase in its tribal population. To respond to the increase in population, Sand Point has seen a boom in home building, with the number of housing units increasing by 59%.

## Community Development Quota (CDQ) Groups

Western Alaska groundfish fisheries are managed under several federal programs. The Community Development Quota program reserves 10% of the catch for groundfish, Pollock, and crab within a region to qualified Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANSCA) communities within 50 miles from shore. Unga is not one of the eligible CDQ communities.



Figure 2: Map of CDQ Communities in the Aleutian Islands  
Source: North Pacific Management Council

## Existing Community Projects

Sand Point is looking to relocate their landfill and locate a new groundwater source. Trident Seafoods operate the local fish processing plant, and they recently upgraded their generator farm.

# Existing Workforce Competencies

Local government, fish processing, and trade, transportation, and utilities dominate the local industry (which most likely includes warehousing the fish products).

Industry	Number of workers	Percent of total employed
Local Government	96	40%
Manufacturing	55	23%
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	28	12%
Educational and Health Services	24	10%
Leisure and Hospitality	16	7%
Construction	7	3%
Information	7	3%
Other	4	1.6%
Financial Activities	3	1.2%
State Government	2	0.8%
Natural Resources and Mining	1	0.4%
Professional and Business Services	1	0.4%

*Table 4: Workers by industry for Sand Point in 2016  
Source: Alaska Regional and Local Information*

Given the high levels of local government, fish manufacturing, and trade, transportation, and utilities, it is unsurprising to see the permanent residents are primarily employed in the related occupations of meat trimmers, office clerks, and related jobs.



<b>Occupation</b>	<b># of workers</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	19	16%
Office Clerks, General	13	11%
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	11	9%
Cashiers	8	7%
Bartenders	8	7%
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	7	6%
Maintenance Workers, Machinery maritime occupation	7	6%
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers oil and gas occupation	6	5%
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand oil and gas occupation	6	5%
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	6	5%
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	6	5%
Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants	5	4%
Teachers and Instructors, All Other	5	4%
Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service	5	4%
Cutting and Slicing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	5	4%

*Table 5: Occupation of Workers in Sand Point in 2016  
Source: Alaska Regional and Local Information*

## **Local Government/Community Stakeholders**

### **Community Organizations**

- Tribal Governments (*Qagan Tayagungin, Pauloff Harbor, and Unga Tribes*)
- ANCSA Village Corporations (*Shumagin, Sanak, and Unga Village Corporations*)
- ANCSA Regional Corporation (*Aleut Corporation*)
- Regional Non-Profit Native Corporations (*Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Eastern Aleutian Tribes*)
- Regional Municipal Government (*Aleutians East Borough*)
- Denali Commission, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (*ANTHC*)
- Seafood Industry (*Commercial fishermen, Aleutian Seafoods, Trident Seafoods, Peter Pan Seafoods, and other processors*).

## Borough Government

The Aleutians East Borough is responsible for regional taxation, education, planning, and land use regulation. The borough seat of the Aleutians Islands is Sand Point, on Popof Island in the Shumagin Islands group.

## Municipality/Village

The Unga tribe resides in Sand Point, which has a mayor, city council, and city administrator.

## Native and Village Corporations

- **Tribal Governments (*Qagan Tayagungin, Pauloff Harbor, and Unga Tribes*):** Tribal governments have the status as federally recognized tribes. They have responsibility for specific local health and social service programs and have access to sources of federal funding.
- **ANCSA Village Corporations (*Shumagin, Sanak, and Unga Village Corporations*):** Village corporations are the major surface landowners in Sand Point and the entire Popof Island, and many residents are shareholders in these corporations.
- **ANCSA Regional Corporation (*Aleut Corporation*):** Regional corporations are the major subsurface landowner in the area, and are a major partner in land and economic development.

## Existing Community Plans

Under Alaska Statute 29, certain municipal governments must exercise their planning powers and adopt comprehensive plans. Sand Point did so and finalized a Comprehensive Community Development Plan (CDDP) in January 2018, conducted by AECOM. AECOM facilitated community meetings between stakeholders, determined community priorities and updated the 2004 CDDP issues and needs, as well as addressed statewide and regional plans affecting the Sand Point area.

Providing for a diverse economy that strengthens commercial fishing opportunities for residents, and utilizing increased aviation and marine transportation capacities and community partners; creating educational and recreational opportunities for youth and adults; maintaining an appreciation of local history and culture; and a safe and healthy community that values its local environment.<sup>1</sup>

### Existing plans and initiatives

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<sup>1</sup> AECOM. "City of Sand Point: Comprehensive Community Development Plan." (January 2018). Accessed 3/21/2018 from [https://www.sandpointak.com/uploads/2/7/6/7/27677223/february\\_13\\_2018\\_city\\_of\\_sand\\_point\\_council\\_meeting.pdf](https://www.sandpointak.com/uploads/2/7/6/7/27677223/february_13_2018_city_of_sand_point_council_meeting.pdf)

- 2016-2019 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), 2017
- Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2015-2019, 2016
- Communities of the Aleutians East Borough Multi-Jurisdictional Multi-Hazards Mitigation Plan, 2010
- Wastewater System Improvement Plan, 2004
- Sand Point Harbor Land Use Plan, 2003
- Sand Point Economic Strategy Plan, 2002
- Aleutians East Borough Transportation Improvement Plan, 2001

## **Identification of Barriers to Community and Economic Development**

- The region's economy is tied tightly to the fishing industry. The barriers to economic development are shortening fishing seasons, the types of fish being caught are changing and the rise of farmed seafood internationally, and an aging fishing fleet put the existing economic base of Sand Point at risk. Management of fish stocks, revitalizing the fleet and seeking efficiencies in fishing and food manufacturing is essential to ensuring the economic base of Sand Point.
- Natural hazards and isolation provide a constant barrier to economic development. Weather-related hazards, such as cyclonic storms, can make transportation by land and air unreliable and unsafe. Volcanic and seismic activity pose a probable risk of property damage. The remote location and lack of agricultural land cause a high cost of living for all supplies, and food specifically.
- High dependence on government employment; many nearby villages turned into ghost towns when the village school or post office closed. If the state or federal government decreased the number of positions in Sand Point or in nearby villages, it would lead to increased outmigration of the borough in general. Sand Point, as a regional hub, may either see net out-migration or see its ability to provide services stretched thin as its population increases. Monitoring the state and federal staffing at Sand Point and nearby villages will assist Sand Point in adapting to a fluid circumstance.
- The lack of physical infrastructure limits Sand Point's ability to host eco-tourism. The Alaska Marine Highway System ferry does stop at Sand Point, but not long enough to facilitate long visitor stays, and this limits the hospitality industry in Sand Point. Iterative improvements in hospitality infrastructure outreach to the outside travel industry, and increased service by the Alaska Marine Highway System or commercial cruise companies can mitigate this barrier.

# SWOT Analysis



Figure 3: SWOT Analysis

## Goals

**GOAL A:** Diversify the economy of Sand Point

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Develop new fisheries and fish products
- Develop, market, and produce value-added products
- Expand commercial quarrying operations to provide products regionally
- Expand and develop tourism opportunities
- Support development of Sand Point as a logistics center supporting economic activities in the Aleutians East Borough
- Support Sand Point as a regional center for fish processing

**GOAL B:** Create employment opportunities and maintain the population of the community

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Utilize new airport and harbor capacities by seeking new markets for Sand Point seafood products
- Increase opportunities for value-added fish processing

**GOAL C:** Maintain community infrastructure and services to support economic development

*OBJECTIVES:*

- Support development of Sand Point as a support center for oil and gas exploration
- Support Sand Point’s development as a regional logistical hub for responding to natural, technological, or economic emergencies

**GOAL D:** Build a partnership between residents, fishermen, government, tribes, corporations, and businesses

*OBJECTIVES:*

- Become less dependent on fisheries
- Attract services that have been lost back to the community
- Stabilize the local economy to keep people in the community long-term
- Pursue port and harbor improvement projects
- Evaluate office space and housing availability
- Assist development of marine support services by providing waterfront lands, utility services, and boat repair facilities
- Implement the recommendations of the Wastewater System Improvement Plan
- Identify training funds and programs for Sand Point workforce, including school vocational programs, and develop a program to increase workforce training and education
- Support small business training for local entrepreneurs
- Support development of web-based services and businesses
- Evaluate the feasibility of developing a local arts and crafts cooperative

## **Fisheries**

**GOAL A:** Revitalize commercial fisheries in Sand Point

*OBJECTIVES:*

- Change the community/processor and fishermen/processor relationship
- Evaluate developing local mariculture
- Pursue harbor improvement funding to benefit local and regional fishermen
- Ensure that areas are identified in the harbor area to serve fishing related needs and activities, including additional fish processing capability
- Ensure that utility service is available in the harbor area to support fishing activities
- Utilize the increased capacity of the airport and harbor to provide greater volumes of processed seafood more rapidly to markets.

## **Tourism**

**GOAL A:** Expand the tourism industry in Sand Point to create additional economic development opportunities

*OBJECTIVES:*

- Provide areas and utility service in the harbor area to support the development of the charter boat market and industry
- Support increasing and improving visitor accommodations
- Promote local and regional tourist resources and opportunities
- Create and maintain a website for the City of Sand Point
- Encourage practices at the fish meal plant that reduce odors from meal processing (impacts on economic development, i.e., tourism)

**Land Use**

**GOAL A:** Ensure that adequate lands exist in appropriate locations to meet various land use needs of the community in response to anticipated populations and economic needs

*OBJECTIVES:*

- Direct appropriate public facilities to the community core area
- Prepare a plan for upgrade and expansion of community water and sewer systems (SAND POINT CCDP, 8 SEPTEMBER, 2004)

**GOAL B:** Minimize public costs associated with land development

*OBJECTIVES:*

- Encourage development within areas of scattered and sparse development and where there are a large number of vacant lots with road and utility connections
- Continue and coordinate use of programs available to cooperative partners, such as the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Indian Roads program

**GOAL C:** Improve and maintain the appearance of the community

*OBJECTIVES:*

- Encourage good quality construction within the City of Sand Point planning area
- Demolish and remove buildings that have deteriorated to a dangerous or hazardous condition
- Develop a standardized system of informational signage. Informational signage should include such things as the location of various facilities; recommendations for disposal of solid waste materials; and general information about allowed uses within the area
- Coordinate all current efforts to continue a community cleanup program
- Outdoor storage of materials hazardous to health and safety should be regulated

**GOAL D:** Protect the natural environment in land use development

*OBJECTIVES – Ground and Surface Water:*

- Ensure that all development includes adequate sanitary wastewater disposal facilities by promoting the proper installation and maintenance of on-site wastewater treatment systems
- Enforce standards and regulations for installation of wastewater disposal systems
- Utilize measures to minimize offsite drainage and siltation during construction activities, particularly near a municipal water supply and anadromous fish streams
- Develop a water quality monitoring program as land use development increases

*OBJECTIVES* – Shoreline and Nearshore Habitat:

- Anticipate state and federal permitting requirements and design shoreline development to minimize habitat damage

**Residential**

**GOAL A:** Encourage the development of low-cost housing for elders and young families

*OBJECTIVES:*

- Work with regional and local Alaska Native organizations to locate, fund, and develop low-cost housing

**Commercial**

**GOAL A:** Ensure areas for commercial land use are adequate to meet anticipated needs

*OBJECTIVES:*

- Encourage most commercial development to locate and remain within the community core area
- Regulate temporary/seasonal commercial activity within the planning area. Regulations should address such things as allowed duration and location of permitted activity

**GOAL B:** Encourage the development of additional regional transportation for trade and recreational purposes

*OBJECTIVES:*

- Encourage airport and airfield enhancements that support larger carriers, improving volume and timeliness of goods to regional or national markets

**Harbor**

**GOAL A:** Incorporate goals from the Sand Point Harbor Land Use Plan.

*OBJECTIVES:*

- Incorporate objectives from the Sand Point Harbor Land Use Plan

**Public Lands**

**GOAL A:** Encourage management of City and tribal lands in support of community goals

*OBJECTIVES:*

- Identify key lands within the planning area that should be reserved for important community purposes including public access, airport expansion, water supply, and bulk fuel facilities

**Public Facilities**

**GOAL A:** Provide an adequate level of service in the areas of public safety, cultural facilities, government administration, education, recreation, and utilities to meet public needs

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Pursue setting up a community center within existing space
- Construct a new library, separate from the public school, and with adequate parking. Include it in the City's Capital Improvement Program
- Establishment of a museum should be considered when there is adequate historical documentation
- Evaluate ways to protect documented historical sites for the benefit of residents and visitors
- Reconvene committee to discuss new cemetery location • Include all road-accessible properties in the fire service area
- Develop and implement a numbering system for Sand Point houses and businesses
- Support fire service needs (obtain equipment and gear) as set out in the Capital Improvement Program
- Support fire service training programs
- Encourage the development of elder care and childcare programs in the new clinic
- Support emergency medical services training programs
- Construct a logistical support facility for staging regional emergency response

**GOAL B:** Protect the natural environment through the use of public facilities and services

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Upgrade community water, wastewater, and landfill facilities to minimize adverse impacts on the environment
- Continue efforts in the harbor area to encourage proper waste and waste oil disposal, and practices to minimize fuel and sewage spills

**Education**

**GOAL A:** Increase opportunities for local employment

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Encourage local hiring programs
- Support school facility improvements as needed
- Assess current vocational training programs in the schools, secondary education opportunities, and anticipate potential employment and training requirements that could arise from increased economic activity such as: harbor management, airport management, supply management, shipping, accounting, commercial banking, telecommunications, hospitality industry, web services, oil and gas operations, and mining operations

**GOAL B:** Address the nutritional needs of students

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Develop and maintain a school breakfast program, and maintain and expand the school lunch program (through opportunities for low-income children)

**Parks and Recreation**

**GOAL A:** Expand recreation opportunities for residents and visitors



*OBJECTIVES* – General:

- Publicly owned recreational sites should be identified and analyzed to determine their best use

*OBJECTIVES* – Active Recreational Areas:

- Develop neighborhood playgrounds with community input. Playground facilities should be available and accessible for use during non-school hours

*OBJECTIVES* – Recreational Facilities and Activities:

- Conduct a thorough analysis of recreational needs, activities as well as facilities, in order to determine amounts and locations of lands to be dedicated for those uses
- Involve the private sector in the provision of recreational facilities and activities
- Develop a separate trails plan for the Sand Point planning area. The plan should inventory all existing trails and their use and identify existing and future demands for trail use; trail standards; signage; trailheads; and other facility needs
- Research right-of-way for all trails identified as needed. Existing rights-of-way should be documented
- Combine trailheads and waysides where feasible; provide facilities (portable toilets, rest areas, etc.) at popular trailheads

## **Utilities**

**GOAL A:** Ensure an adequate water supply for future economic and residential development

*OBJECTIVES* – Water Supply:

- Investigate options to expand the water supply
- Develop a strategy to replace old water distribution pipes and reduce leakage of treated water
- Pursue construction of a new water treatment plant

**GOAL B:** Incorporate goals from the 2004 Wastewater System Improvement Plan

*OBJECTIVES* – Sewer System:

- Incorporate objectives from the Wastewater System Improvement Plan

**GOAL C:** Develop efficient and alternative energy supply and distribution systems

*OBJECTIVES* – Electric System:

- Install underground power lines in new residential and commercial development
- Investigate feasibility of developing wind generation facilities

*OBJECTIVES* – Telephone:

- Encourage expansion of telephone service within the planning area
- Encourage buried telephone lines within the planning area
- Improve local internet services

*OBJECTIVES* – Solid Waste Disposal:

- Ensure that the new landfill is operated efficiently
- Implement Harbor Land Use Plan recommendations regarding solid waste collection at the harbor

*OBJECTIVES* – Post Office:

- Support expansion and improvements as needed

## **Transportation**

**GOAL A:** Enhance the safety and efficiency of the transportation system, integrating aviation and marine transportation

### **Road System**

**GOAL A:** Develop a safe and efficient road system within the planning area that enhances access to property; enhances access of goods and services between and among products and markets; generates economic opportunities for important destination points, and enhances emergency response and evacuation capability during natural disasters

#### *OBJECTIVES* – Improvement of Existing Road System

- Upgrade roads based on functional classification priorities
- Improve and maintain roads regularly to reduce maintenance costs
- Prioritize improvements for safety reasons, including addressing substandard curves, blind intersections, and acute angle intersections, fixed-source lighting to improve safety, particularly at primary intersections and along the main thoroughfare within the business district
- Construct separated, non-motorized and pedestrian trails along primary roadways
- Install road name signs on all roads within the planning area
- Examine the roadway network for any additionally required warning and regulatory signage
- Recommend that the harbor road realignment and rehabilitation projects be included in the STIP as a Sand Point priority

#### *OBJECTIVES* – Expansion of Road System:

- Expand the road system in a cooperative manner, using municipal/state funds, BIA Indian Roads funds, or by the private sector as a cost of private development
- Recommend that the harbor road projects be included in the STIP as a Sand Point priority, including road connections to the proposed new harbor

### **Air Transportation**

**GOAL A:** Ensure and enhance the future of air transportation in Sand Point by protecting and improving the existing airport and airfield surfaces, and by encouraging the development of Sand Point as a regional hub

#### *OBJECTIVES:*

- Expand the runway, improve taxiways and ramps, and upgrade navigational aids
- Protect and maintain approach zones in accordance with Federal Aviation Administration guidelines
- Control development near the airport approach zones

### **Regional Transportation**

**GOAL A:** Support regional development through marine and aviation transportation improvements within the community

#### *OBJECTIVES:*

- Encourage regional transportation links
- Explore opportunities for Sand Point to be a regional logistical hub for trade and supplies