

INTRODUCTION & SUMMARY OF GOALS

Process to Prepare Koliganek's Comprehensive Plan

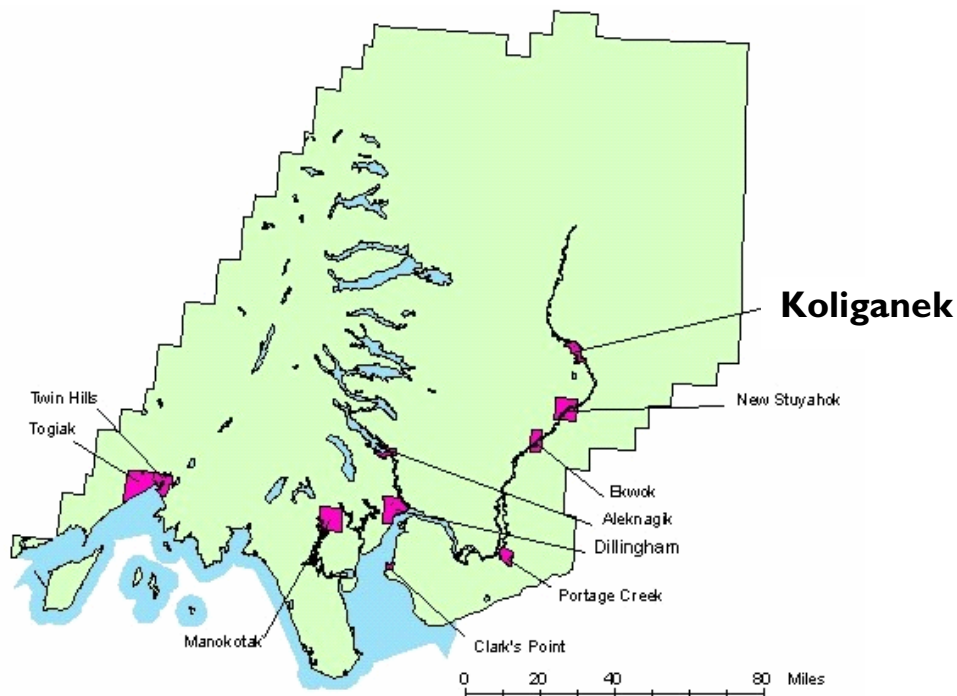
The Koliganek Comprehensive Plan, 2005, builds on multiple previous plans completed by the Koliganek community. Most directly, this plan draws from the Koliganek Community Strategic Plan, completed by a local planning team lead by Margie Nelson, who served as a VISTA volunteer from 2001 to 2003.

The following table summarizes the public meetings that contributed to preparing this comprehensive plan.

Date	Activity
March 8, 2005	Koliganek Planning Team Workshop (12 residents attended)
April 22-23, 2005	Koliganek Community Planning Workshop (41 residents attended)
Sept 12, 2005	Koliganek Planning Team Review meeting (5 residents attended)
November 2005	Koliganek Village Council adopts final Comprehensive Plan

Project Area

Figure 1. Location of Koliganek, Alaska



Source: Alaska Department of Labor And Workforce Development, Research and Analysis and US Census Bureau, 2000 Tigerline files.

Purpose of Plan

Villages, regional organizations and statewide entities all recognize the need for communities to clearly state their goals and visions for the future. Community planning is the process of coming together to agree on a future direction, and gathering momentum to carry it forward. A united community is like a river that starts out braided and dispersed, but gains power by funneling all its separate channels into one stream. A united community, regardless of size or location, can achieve its goals through building consensus and clearly pursuing a direction that all community members support. This is the key to self-sufficiency and self-governance.

Community goals can range from constructing facilities, such as housing or a community center, to expanding infrastructure, creating jobs, protecting subsistence areas and sustaining cultural traditions. By planning ahead, villages can act on new opportunities and be prepared for challenges associated with economic and demographic changes.



Support in State Statutes

In Alaska, comprehensive plans are mandated of all organized municipalities by Title 29 of the Alaska State Statutes. While Koliganek is part of the Unorganized Borough, and therefore not covered under this mandate, a comprehensive plan is nevertheless useful to help guide community development. The key elements of the state statute are extracted below:

State Statute Sec. 29.40.030. Comprehensive plan

- (a) The comprehensive plan is a compilation of policy statements, goals, standards, and maps for guiding the physical, social, and economic development, both private and public, of the first or second class borough, and may include, but is not limited to, the following:

Statements of policies, goals, and standards;

Land use plan;

Community facilities plan;

Transportation plan; and,

Recommendations for implementing a comprehensive plan.

- (b) With the recommendations of the planning commission, the assembly shall adopt by ordinance a comprehensive plan. The assembly shall, after receiving the recommendations of the planning commission, periodically undertake an overall review of the comprehensive plan and update the plan as necessary.

Requirements of Funding Organizations

In addition to Alaska State Statutes, funding agencies have become increasingly interested in community planning and many are now requiring that some type of community plan be in place in order to fund infrastructure and economic development projects. For example, the United States Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) requires a unique

planning process and document called a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to qualify for assistance under its economic adjustment, planning, and public works programs.

In addition, beginning with the Federal Fiscal Year 2005 funding cycle, the Denali Commission, which partners with other state and federal agencies and nonprofit agencies, will require a community to have a comprehensive community plan identifying community priority projects prior to funding considerations. This plan is intended to meet the criteria of both the Denali Commission and the EDA, and fulfill the planning requirement for those funding sources.

Planning Efforts in Bristol Bay

Bristol Bay regional organizations have recently increased their capacity to assist villages with completing community plans. The Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation (BBEDC) has developed a grant program to assist member villages with planning efforts.

Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA) developed a Community Development Inventory and a *Community and Economic Development Planning Guidebook* to assist village planning efforts, through a grant from the US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration. The Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference (SWAMC) has developed a web-based inventory of community development priorities and planning efforts. In addition, both BBNA and SWAMC have completed regional plans that complement this village plan, which are available through the State of Alaska website:



- BBNA Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, 2004 at: http://www.dced.state.ak.us/dca/oedp/pubs/SWAMC_CEDS03.pdf
- Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference (SWAMC) Economic Development Strategy, 2003 - 2008, updated 2004 at: http://www.dced.state.ak.us/dca/oedp/pubs/SWAMC_CEDS03.pdf

Summary of Goals and Priority Actions

Goals

Land Use, Housing & Environment

1. Protect and maintain healthy water quality and subsistence resources in surrounding environment.
2. Ensure all residents have access to clean water.
3. Maintain a clean environment in and around the village by addressing solid waste disposal and educating the community.
4. Maintain a compact land use pattern to keep the cost of providing community services to a minimum.
5. Ensure quality housing is available to all residents.

Community Wellness, Culture & Education

1. Prepare students for success, by offering an excellent education for both college-bound and vocational-technical students.
2. Provide bilingual and bicultural education at every grade level.
3. Strengthen the relationship between the community and the school, and involve local people at local, regional and state levels of decision-making.
4. Improve primary and behavioral health care for all residents.
5. Maintain a safe and healthy village for all residents.
6. Provide healthy activities for youth.
7. Preserve Native traditions and promote local culture to the outside world.

Public Facilities & Transportation

1. Provide and maintain quality community services and facilities.
2. Decrease cost of living (decrease fuel & utility costs).
3. Improve transportation links within village and with other communities.

Economy

1. Increase job and business opportunities for local residents.
2. Become independent by building local capacity and training local residents.
3. Develop cultural tourism and arts & crafts marketing.

Leadership

1. Strengthen existing leadership roles and skills in fulfilling organizational responsibilities; project management training; and community relations building.
2. Establish opportunities and incentives to motivate local youth to take on leadership roles; widely acknowledge their achievements in the village.
3. Improve ability to obtain funding for successful community projects.

Priority Actions

The following priority actions were ranked during the April 2005 Koliganek Community Planning Workshop. These actions are ranked in order of importance.

Land Use, Housing & Environment

Oppose mining development to protect environment and subsistence.
Keep Native allotments in local control and support the Nushagak-Mulchatna Land Trust.
Extend water and sewer system and maintain and upgrade existing system.
Continue Recycling Program and other environmental programs.
Protect traditional hunting grounds and educate about Native Land boundaries.
Continue to support solid waste operator and good landfill management.

Community Wellness, Culture & Education

Hire a substitute VPSO.
Teach arts and crafts in school.
Start a Boys and Girls Cub.
Start Yup'ik language program for all ages.
Teach gun safety.
Increase access to the school gym.
Replace school with new building on same site.
Teach CPR and water safety.
Family Counselors and Family Service workers needed in Koliganek.

Public Facilities & Transportation

Expand post office and secure own zip code.
Improve use of alternate energy sources (hydropower, wind generation, etc.) to reduce cost of living.
Replace existing school.
Equip teen center to use as a recreation, health and fitness center.
Upgrade power plant (in progress).
Upgrade pump house and extend water/sewer system.

Economy

Improve opportunities for local hire.
Train and employ Koliganek residents to work as heavy equipment operators and construction jobs.
Identify and develop new job and business opportunities such as firewood collection and delivery, electrician and linemen, power plant technician, substitute VPSO, and others.
Develop Koliganek's tourism industry to improve business and job opportunities to diversify the economy.

Leadership

Create incentives for youth to return to the village, such as a student loan forgiveness program.
Establish a student exchange program or humanities forum program.
Get assistance from regional organizations for securing funding for projects.
Educate community about leadership: qualities of a good leader, how to promote leadership, positive word of the day, education about the process to bring a project to completion.
Encourage youth to run meetings; to learn rules of order and meeting facilitation.

VISION & VALUES

Values

Land and Environment

- Protecting our natural resources, land and environment.
- Clean, drinkable water year-round, for all residents.
- Good access to hunting, fishing, and subsistence foods.
- Peaceful location, beautiful scenery, and open spaces, with no other villages upriver from us.

People

- Children
 - Good education.
 - Teach children traditional ways and values.
 - Parents and children working together.
 - Preserving our Native language.
- Elders and what you can learn from them.
- Enjoying steam-baths, camping-cabins and snow machine riding.
- Living close to family.
- Ability to build a strong economy.
- A healthy and safe community.
- Helpful and caring people and friendly neighbors.
- Promote good relationships between the school, other communities, and regional entities.



Community Concerns

- Cost of living is too high with fuel, gas, oil prices continuing to rise.
- Lack of jobs.
- Environmental threats from potential mining development upriver.
- Loss of Yup'ik language, younger generations don't know language fluently.
- Electric power generation is not consistent.
- Need to extend water & sewer system to replace individual wells.
- Koliganek does not have its own zip code and the post office facilities are too small.