

The meeting opened with introductions by Chief Michael Stickman. Greg Joyce talked about the planning process and the need for community involvement.

Ellen Campfield Nelson described the main categories that a comprehensive plan covers.

Community members were asked to give input on the things they value about their community. Responses are summarized below:

Vision and values of community

- Subsistence lifestyle (it is getting harder, but I would miss hunting fishing food gathering if I moved to the city – fish, moose, berries – really important)
- Being close to family – families work together to form the lifestyle we have – we fish together, we hunt together – if you did those things by yourself it would be really hard, families working together makes it easier and fun
- Child security – you don't have to worry about your kids running around – Nulato is small enough that you can keep track of your kids – safe environment
- Ride bikes, baseball, basketball, kickball, marbles
- Tribal government is responsive – we know where to go if we are in need of help
- Not fast paced/no traffic
- Fishing
- Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association – have teleconferences and give out good information – if there is new information it gets posted around town, good management and information in regards to fishing – communication is really good up and down the Yukon River
- People are concerned about how much fish is coming up and down the river, people don't have meat supplies like they used to – people are worried about subsistence – gas prices are making subsistence really difficult, if we don't have that, store bought meat is really expensive
- Cultural gatherings and events
 - Stick dance
 - Music
 - Mask dance – New Year's
 - Potlatch in September, May, New Year's
- Elders and traditional knowledge – don't have to go to the library, you just have to ask the elders – if you go out to the woods or to Kaiyuh Flats, I would get lost cause I don't know that area so well – but elders can tell you anything you want to know – anything you want to do in Nulato an elder can tell you and it doesn't cost you anything but time
 - About celebrations

- About language
- About land and water
- About hunting and fishing
- Lakes and sloughs in the Kaiyuh Flats – all have Indian names and John knows all of them
- Most ladies and some guys take part in native arts and crafts – beadwork, skin sewing sleds, furs, quilting, fish nets, crocheting
- Nets, ice hooks under the ice – fishing techniques are being lost because they are not being passed down – knowing where to walk, knowing the thickness of ice
- People used to make their own nets, fish traps, that does not really happen anymore
- Scenery – live in the most beautiful place on the Yukon River
- Loss of subsistence = loss of culture – value subsistence above everything else – need to see this continue – elders see that they are not able to get the meat and fish that they used to – this is very important to them

Mapping exercise

Community members broke into three groups and mapped areas of significance in Nulato and the surrounding area.

Topic Specific Discussions

Community members broke into groups to give their input on draft plan goals that have been generated based on discussions with planning team members. The following topics were represented: Land Use, Housing & Environment; Economic Development; Community Wellness, Culture and Education; Public Services & Facilities; Leadership and Governance. Due to time constraint, Leadership and Governance was not considered during the community workshop but during the Planning Team meeting which took place the following day, May 31st, 2007.

LAND USE, HOUSING & ENVIRONMENT

- Most important is access to subsistence resources
- Air is very dusty – would like the roads paved or something to address this
- “bring IRHA back” – condemn substandard housing, build new housing (there is a shortage) as well as new school, new community hall, new city offices; there are a few lots in the existing subdivision (if surveyed, could lease to individuals); some land, but not surveyed into lots; going to start work to extend water and sewer in 2009. 14 new lots in that area. There will be room to grow in the new subdivision. Many of the original log cabins downtown are unlivable; City ordinance to demolish, and a safety hazard. If I owned a lot downtown, I’d build on it. HUD homeowners own property and house. Applying for HUD for renovation might circumvent IRHA. Include information from AHFC on grants and loans. Conventional housing loans are not viable because the City owns the land. Would City convey land to Tribe or individuals? Denser houses in the subdivision could be a fire hazard. Average lot size is a little less than an acre.

- Hot water heater timers and access; really easy to put in the timer – just need a little electrical knowledge. On-demand hot-water heaters. The City put in bigger generators.
- Alternative energy – AVEC – why not put one power plant in this area to serve four villages. They are open to this idea.
- First year no one had a spring waterfowl hunt; really weird spring.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Explore possibility of coal extraction in Nulato Hills; is extraction more feasible now? Could BP be approached? Doyon? Would always do it if they could move it to a market. Also full of methane gas. Too far from market. Take a coal mine over a nuclear power plant any day.
- Implement both small- and large-scale alternative energy projects
 - o Hydroelectric power plant in Mukluk Slough
 - o Heat pump projects
 - o Wood burning
 - o Solar panels for individual homes
 - o On-demand hot water heaters
 - o Water turbines in the river
- Tourism jobs, particularly guiding, arts and craft sales, eco-tourism like river rafting, camping and backpacking trips in the Refuge? Happening in Kaltag, Galena. 10 non-residents required to have guides. Includes 5 guide areas on Koyukuk River. Permission from USF&W, but license from the state game board. Kaiyuh Flats – no one can guide there; I permit for fishing. Snow machine touring. Fixing up some of the old town buildings to make a river boat tours. Doyon and TCC have been talking about tourism all these years, but Richard Carroll's tour business in Ft. Yukon, 3,000 people go there every summer. 6-pax license – taking fish and food out of our people's mouth. Guiding is doable, but not necessarily desirable. Cross-country ski area might be better option to dovetail with local concerns.
- Local engineer
- More local carpenters. More effective local hire practices.
- Allow for remote employment like school district or TCC or Doyon employees to work in their home villages. Central office position doesn't have to be there. All the self-governance positions. Helps pay administrative overhead of TCC; needs to be a paradigm shift. TCC won't do itinerant technology and support. Why can't your hub community be in Galena?

COMMUNITY WELLNESS, CULTURE & EDUCATION

Language

- Community members concerned about this and future generations losing the ability to speak the Koyukon Athabascan language. Still have a large group of elders who speak the language together, but the younger elders are not speaking.

- A positive is that Tribal Council sponsors singing events where community members can practice singing together with the elders. This past winter in preparation for the Stick Dance there was a lot of singing.
- The school language program is another positive, but something that could be improved upon. Two elders come to the school each day. Kids learn how to introduce themselves in Koyukon Athabascan, also learn to express feelings, names for animals, types of weather. There is a feeling that kids don't really take a strong interest in the language, however. If kids could start instruction from a very young age, encouraged by their families, speaking Koyukon Athabascan would be a second nature type of thing. More concentrated instruction is needed such as an immersion program. More meaningful, experiential learning opportunities could also make a big difference

Local Culture and Traditional Ways of Life

- Subsistence is highly important
- Museum would be wonderful to have in community
- Community hall is very important to traditional activities locally
- We have strong, involved elder population. Elders are always right there, explaining things to us, helping us to understand what the rules are
- We have a strong connection between our Elders and youth and it is important to continue to encourage this connection
- Families travel to fish camps together each year – this has been a very important way of bringing families together and helping kids to learn the lifestyles of the past. Would like to encourage more people to bring their kids to camps for this experience.
- The Tribe hosts a week and a half culture camp each summer
- The Nulato Life Program (youth opportunity grant funded) provides positive activities for youth, including mentoring, teen rec center, subsistence activities

School Enrollment

- Currently, school enrollment is declining. Went from a 4 teacher system to 3 teachers. Estimate that 10 high school students attend schools in alternate locations: Galena, Nenana, Fairbanks. College bound curriculum is not available locally
- Would like better, more available internet connectivity and more personal computers in family residences so people/youth can take distance education, including college courses, via the internet.
- Teacher retention is another issue – definitely impacts the quality of education, are importing new teachers on a yearly or every two years basis
- Would like to improve technical infrastructure so that local students are better equipped to take classes through UA Interior Aleutians campus.
- TCC does have youth programs, but these are not well advertised, would be good to make better use of
- Vocational opportunities through TCC are also not made the best use of (research, provide more information on)
- In the past had a weekly wellness group who was always planning interesting activities – would like to re-establish

- Would like to establish local job opportunities for youth to prepare them for future employment

Health & Safety

- Do not feel that behavioral health support in village at present is sufficient, would like to establish local position, but are not able to fill it. An itinerant counselor comes once a month from Kaltag and another from the Ch'eghutsen Program comes once per week
- Three health aides in the community respond to myriad emergency situations. They are definitely stressed out and play many roles – being called in to work in domestic violence situation, accidents when people have been drinking, cases of abuse and neglect. Often, there are conflicts because aides are mandatory reporters but also have community/family ties to people that they might be required by law to report about. This was also an issue for the former VPSO – due to their jobs might suffer from guilt/community animosity. Caught between the system and their community.
- If the health aides are interested, would like to support them in getting continuing education.
- Tribe does have a safe house and does provide child protective services
- Would like to set up an emergency response team and volunteer fire department and Emergency Medical Service and perhaps have youth involved in the effort
- Village does have a fire truck, but operates only during warmer months; heated parking facility would extend utility of truck to winter months.
- Need another Code Red box located at another spot in village.
- Has been a couple of years since there was a VPSO located in community, desperately in need of law enforcement. The community likely has housing options for this position. Without law enforcement there is too much drinking and driving on the water and on the road system
- One of the reasons that people don't leave town and aren't able to maintain jobs in the long term – have to pass drug tests, have to remain sober to hold positions responsibly – way too much drug and alcohol abuse, especially amongst the young people. Would like to find ways to reduce drug and alcohol abuse. Nulato is known as a “party town.” Lots of drugs being sold, bootlegging, accidents traveling to ‘last chance’ liquor store up the river.

Water Safety

- Do need to increase awareness of water safety – drinking and boating and issue and also children left unattended by the waterfront

Park and Recreation

- Have talked about establishing a new park for the community – have a site identified as potential

PUBLIC SERVICES & TRANSPORTATION

Public Services

- Most critical need in the village is the closure of the open dump and the construction of a new engineered landfill
- Some community members are concerned that one landfill site alternative is too close to good berry picking areas; would prefer landfill be located at far end of current airstrip (beyond three mile limit)
- Village needs new school and a senior center
- Had recreational picnic area, but tables and benches were vandalized (burned); would like a new one
- Protecting village from fire is a big issue; city has fire truck, but it does not work in winter months due to outside storage. Also unreliable.
- Village has Project Code Red box, but equipment did not work adequately when city building burned.
- Village really needs a VPSO; no local law enforcement presence at all. Galen substation too far away and too understaffed.
- Need better access to training opportunities that TCC & Doyon sponsor and/or advertise.
- More wireless would enable people to do more from their homes – either work remote or take distance education courses or online college courses
- Regional boarding schools may result in increasingly lower enrollment in school

Transportation

- Controlling dust on village roads is a priority
- Funding the road to the new landfill site is critical
- People would like additional boat mooring for their personal boats
- Power poles need to be located further away from road; accidents happen, especially when people have been drinking
- There is already a well-established winter trail marking project in Nulato; this is done every year

SERVICE	PROVIDER	CURRENT FACILITIES	ISSUES/NOTES/NEEDS
Transportation & Infrastructure			
Airports	ADOT&PF	4000' long by 100' wide airstrip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recently improved; scheduled for resurfacing in summer 2007
Boat Landing	City of Nulato	dock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would like more space for moorings of personal watercraft; ideal would be space for about 60 boats.
Power	Alaska Village Electrical Cooperative	Generator plant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Power poles are located too close to road; likely to cause too many accidents with people hitting them
Water/Sewer	City of Nulato	New town is plumbed; school & church in old town site are plumbed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water & sewer will be extended to new homes in 2009.
Solid Waste	City of Nulato	Open dump	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Situation is very bad; new need engineered sanitary landfill immediately
Communications	Alaska Communications System (ACS) (local) AT&T (long distance) Internet: GCI	Good phone connections in homes, businesses & public offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need more wireless access in private residences
Bulk Fuel Tank Farm	City of Nulato	Tank farm w/ capacity of 90,000 gallons; school has own smaller tank farm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City tank farm needs to be relocated due to occasional flooding. Fuel shortages occur when river too low for barges to reach Nulato
Road & Maintenance Equipment	City of Nulato	Grader, dump truck, two loaders (WE NEED AN ACCURATE EQUIPMENTLIST)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need new grader & two more dump trucks

SERVICE	PROVIDER	CURRENT FACILITIES	ISSUES/NOTES/NEEDS
Services & Facilities			
Fire	Volunteers	Fire truck (operational only in summer months); Code Red portable fire station-in-a-box	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire truck cannot operate in winter; need heated storage facility. Need a second Code Red Project box at another location in village. Need more fire fighting training for volunteers and community members.
Police	State of Alaska (Galena AST post)	AST in Galena	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need VPSO; Galena AST post is closest law enforcement; only two troopers on duty at a time to respond to calls throughout Yukon and Koyukuk region; inadequate law enforcement
EMS	City of Nulato	Village health aides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need more personnel trained in emergency medical response to take load off of health aides.
Post Office	USPS	Have a fully operational post office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facility is relatively new and in good shape
Community Center	City of Nulato	City Community Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need new one; Tribe would like to have a tribal hall where alcohol is not allowed. A new community hall would remain under city control since alcohol is customarily allowed in the community hall
Village Council	Nulato Tribal Council	Tribal Council Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribal Council has office with sufficient space for staff up to 11 people.
City Council	City of Nulato	City Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City office building burned in 2006; present location is inadequate. Needs new building/location
Youth Center	City of Nulato	City Activity Center, City Adult Recreation Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In good shape; recently got grant to overhaul facility.

SERVICE	PROVIDER	CURRENT FACILITIES	ISSUES/NOTES/NEEDS
Health Clinic	Tanana Chiefs Conference & City	Nulato Health Clinic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New clinic built in 2005; has room for behavioral health; needs behavioral health aide. Currently has three health aides. TCC dentists come twice a year. Need itinerant eye doctor.
Senior Center	Tribe	Need one	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently do not have one; need one built. There is a senior lunch program in operation – serving up to 60 seniors; average # served in a day is around 20
Recreation Facilities	City of Nulato	Ball field; outdoor basketball courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to improve outdoor ball courts and need to improve ball field, or construct a new one. Need playground & picnic area near river. Last picnic area, someone burned the benches and table
Education			
Early Childhood	TCC	Early childhood educator & cook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have Headstart & Early Childhood programs; need playground
K-8 & High School	Yukon/Koyukuk School District	Andrew K. Demoski School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need new school
Vocational Training	none	Limited information provided by TCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need better information and coordination with TCC & Doyon about upcoming training and job opportunities; local voc ed program would also be desirable
College	UAF; distance ed		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need internet access in homes & more personal computers in families so people can attend internet-based college courses

LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

- Tribal Court meets on an as-need basis; only handling ICWA cases; have mini-grant for additional tribal court training and development.
- Tribal Council is the Tribal Court; Tribal Council meets on a regular basis and goes into executive session to conduct court; Tribal Council meets first Wednesday of every month.
- Regular meetings of two Councils – trying to do once a month.
- Gan'A-Yoo into 8-A government contracting; catering, road maintenance; tourism development? Historically have lost money by investing it in the villages. At some point you have to stop the bleeding. Have a non-compete clause with local shareholders. Possibility of buying out the individual business. Also could put together a joint eco-tourism venture.
- Huslia has a wildlife grant for tribe to help manage with USFWS. For last 4-5 years, USFWS has started occasionally coming to our Tribal Council meetings. Have been more actively seeking Tribes's opinion. Wildlife Refuge is very restricted:
 - Hunting times are not flexible; put in requests for special action, but the federal review process is very slow; once they set their seasons, they are not going to change it; federal subsistence board is made up of federal agencies (BLM, BIA, NPS, etc.)
 - Global warming
 - They immediately respond to violations, but not to community concerns
 - Would prefer federal management to state or other management; extra-territorial jurisdiction, but the state doesn't want to give up any control over its lands.
- Need to have map of the critical subsistence area.
- Final land selections by village corporations completed in the last year.

Community Workshop to review the draft in October. Can submit the draft if there are funding opportunities in the meantime.