

EXECUTIVE SUMMMARY

On March 26, 2002, the United Way of the Tanana Valley sponsored a Community Forum at the Westmark Hotel from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. United Way’s objective for the forum was to develop a list of solutions for five priority issues identified through the COMPASS II® project from the Community Needs Assessment and the Community Visioning Session. The priority issues are as follows: Affordable Medical/Dental Care, Family Violence, Infrastructure Planning, Job & Career Opportunities and Substance Abuse. The information compiled from the Community Visioning Session will assist COMPASS II committee members to develop a Community Action Plan.

Participants: There were 54 participants representing community members of the Fairbanks North Star Borough, 2 participated by fax or telephone. Of those that participated, 48 participants completed the survey. Information collected from the survey and U. S. Census data are as follows:

Respondents:

(Source: Community Forum Survey)

Sex:

Female	56.25%
Male	43.75%

Race:

Asian	2.08%
Black or African American	2.08%
Hispanic	0.00%
Multi-racial	0.00%
Native American	8.33%
Other	4.17%
White	83.33%

Age:

19 & under	6.25%
20 - 34	4.17%
35 - 54	77.08%
55 - 64	6.25%
65 - 74	6.25%
75 & up	0.00%

Location:

North Pole/Moose Creek	8.33%
Salcha	4.17%
Ester	8.33%
Two Rivers	0.00%
Fairbanks/College	79.17%

Fairbanks North Star Borough:

(Source: 2000 U. S. Census)

Sex:

Female	47.83%
Male	52.17%

Race:

Asian	2.40%
Black or African American	5.80%
Hispanic (ethnicity)	4.20%
Multi-racial	5.40%
Native American	6.90%
Other	1.70%
White	77.80%

Age:

19 & under	33.40%
20 - 34	25.30%
35 - 54	30.80%
55 - 64	6.00%
65 - 74	2.90%
75 & up	1.70%

Location:

North Pole/Moose Creek	2.55%
Salcha	1.03%
Ester	2.03%
Two Rivers	0.58%
Fairbanks/College	50.25%

EXECUTIVE SUMMMARY

Highlights: Participants frequently recommended the following actions to address priority issues identified:

- **Affordable Medical/Dental Care** (68 responses): Explore reasons for higher cost, pool insurance plans, promote good health, expand professional pool and expand existing low cost programs.
- **Family Violence** (82 responses): Provide faith based support and counseling, expand family activities, prevent through public awareness, expand and improve existing programs and provide treatment options.
- **Infrastructure Planning** (79 responses): Develop an infrastructure plan to include community coordination, recreational activities, transportation, fiscal and land.
- **Job & Career Opportunities** (77 responses): Engage businesses, improve economy, establish job banks and expand job training, expand programs within the School District and University and enhance youth opportunities.
- **Substance Abuse** (101 responses): Expand activities, provide more education on substance abuse, improve law enforcement, create a local campaign for public awareness, increase and specify tax to address substance abuse and improve, expand, and enhance treatment.

AFFORDABLE MEDICAL/DENTAL CARE

Cost & Rates

- Look at doctor reimbursement in our community - do we make it easy for doctors and dentists to help look for solutions to this issue
- Work with those paying off debt
- Regulate prices
- Deal with insurance that drives costs, charges
- Cap on liabilities
- Disallowing advertising of pharmaceuticals - that just increase the cost - was illegal 3 years ago to advertise drugs
- Federal government help with cost
- Mental Health cost
- Better understanding of why health care costs more in the FNSB
- Increase Medicaid payments for dental care
- Increase reimbursement rates
- Barter

Insurance

- More information on malpractice suits, relationship to insurance
- Expand Public Health Insurance
- More dental insurance coverage
- Young adults' access (have jobs without insurance, low paying jobs) to all care
- Raise age of kids' eligibility for parents' plan (Cobra) with an option to buy into parents' plan once cut off age is reached
- Small businesses should pool together to provide/buy health insurance for their employees
- Statewide insurance cooperative - insurances must recognize holistic medicine
- Encourage HB315 Health insurance access to state health care system.
- Pooled insurance plans for small businesses and non profits
- Support for HB allowing buy into state plan for small businesses/non-profits
- School District has plan with TVC
- What about Borough doing one for residents (School District has plan with TVC)

Prevention

- More emphasis on preventive health care
- Emphasis on prevention
- Promoting good health, start young
- Preventive care for uninsured
- Encourage preventive/wellness
- Health screening in schools to include families
- Denali Kid Care - good - need more options similar to it
- Active participation in keeping Denali Kid Care at current levels or greater
- Keep Denali Kid Care

Professionals

- Train
- If University of Alaska cannot carry a medical program, coordinate with an institution to send our students with all medical technology classes
- Raise incentives for doctors to return to Alaska
- Eliminate restriction on doctors getting licenses
- Recruit more practitioners to increase access and decrease cost (Board control the number)
- Find out about high cost of dental care, do dentists not want competition?
- More dentists
- United Way send announcements to dental schools to come to Alaska
- Hold medical & dental conferences in Fairbanks

AFFORDABLE MEDICAL/DENTAL CARE

- Increase competition/selection

Service

- Nationwide health care
- Prescription Assistance programs (income guidelines)
- Affordable health care for everyone
- Continue to expand access to a minimal level of care (medical, mental health & dental)
- Promote pro bono work by the Dental Commission and give tax incentives in return
- Increase access to affordable medical/dental care
- Many physicians closed to Medicaid
- Drug co-op (needs pharmacy license)
- Keep pressure of US Senators & Representatives to assist with National focus
- Socialized medicinal
- Competition for out-patient surgical center to providers
- Establish another clinic like Urgent Care
- Expand the services of the Interior Neighborhood Health Clinic (offers affordable care)

Other

- State licenses for Massage Therapy
- Market analysis of what is available and eligible
- Tort reform
- We have enormous resources - fortunate - top end procedures good (they do not raise prices)
- Change priority issue to medical/mental health/dental care
- Start at local level to do away with ads
- Affects all residents insured or not
- Feeling of helplessness
- Local control like welfare to work - what will work for us
- Encourage holistic medicine practice

FAMILY VIOLENCE

Faith Based & Counseling Support

- Lack of counselors currently, could be housed within existing organizations
- Lack of affordable counseling
- Communication, cooperation and coordination with church groups
- Samaritan Counseling Center (faith based)
- Include religious community in prevention, BUILD stronger families (marriage encounters, affordable/accessible to all)
- Churches need to get involved
- Churches take more active role such as LOVE Inc. method
- Churches have groups - increase awareness/clearinghouse for other groups
- More social workers within schools

Family Support

- Target activities during peak S.A.D. season
- The new community center should include arts, reading, computers as well as athletics/fitness
- Explore use of Carlson Center during unbooked time
- Program consideration, breaks for single family such as home equality
- Non-denominational weekend getaways for families
- Family dynamics education
- Reduce family stress, higher wage and less hours
- Bonus points for family time
- Inform families of what is available in our community -use role models (Curtis ads mentioned)
- Local campaign on family time
- More communication on family activities; paper is only part of publicity
- Family Friendly policies with employers
- Address military isolation
- Address isolation for relocated - create extended Alaskan Family
- Family friendly work norm (identify influences and role models)
- Consideration for families with no children, different needs
- Community for single adults/families without children or grown children
- Coordinate with military
- Promote positive aspects of family interaction
- Family recreation opportunities
- Affordable family participatory activities
- Messages that advertise local support for families
- Classes for parents conflict resolution

Prevention & Public Awareness

- Comprehensive, confidential Employee Assistance Programs in every local business
- Education of educators to identify signs of abuse/violence; no enforcement of mandated reporter
- Improve education in general to improve socio-economic base
- Proactive emphasis on prevention
- Prevention of institutional memory loss
- Educational programs for Juniors/Seniors in high school on how to make it as a nonviolent family
- Peer mediation in schools as prevention to create non-violent adults
- Have school talk about Family violence
- Get to root cause
- Get into solution attitude instead of problem attitude
- Building assets
- Education to prevent violence, public school curriculum
- Educate social skills, respect, conflict resolution
- Identify what causes stress in our community
- LDS type messages produced locally

FAMILY VIOLENCE

- Education requirement for FYS, law enforcement, judges, physicians
- Education
- Need Master's in Social Work (MSW) program at UAF
- Partnership with businesses to broadcast positive messages
- Family Violence awareness needs to be a community priority

Programs

- Emergency child care facility/Crisis Nursery
- Identify and expand upon resources available for assistance with violence
- Ensure coordination between available resources
- Need for consistency throughout SYSTEM
- Get Department of Family and Youth Services (DFYS) out of crisis mode, lack of resources to address all cases (staffing)
- Services for borderline mental health issues
- Lack of resources for agencies to get out of crisis mode, need more to get into planning mode
- Physician/law enforcement/Social Services to work together
- More support to families
- Alternate choices
- Expansion of services for women in crisis
- Foster Families
- Another CARMEN House High Security Shelter, a transitional house
- Financial and legal assistance for individuals going through a divorce
- School district works with local businesses and vice versa

Treatment

- Home rule law/alcohol containment
- Substance abuse tied in
- Can't make healthy choices until someone is clean (both perpetrator and victim)
- Substance abuse tied in
- Alcohol/drug issue
- Mandated treatment for perpetuated violence as evidenced by hospital/police reports
- Family Center where help is provided by peer support where people are welcome at any time
- Have judges require treatment

Other

- Very difficult continuum of care to navigate
- Self defense classes
- Mandatory background checks on sexual offenders/ all people who work with children
- More child support enforcement/gender blind
- Family Court
- Better monitoring of R.O. situations
- Have great arts community promoted

INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

Community

- Neighborhood council
- Community vote for single projects
- Community sponsored Farmers Market, Agriculture development (organic, community gardens)
- Tabs on community resource section in phone book (special section)
- How to organize your community, booklets, PSAs to get word out
- Don't forget community/neighbors when faced with issues involving sharing resources
- Expand service district model to all neighborhoods, not just in outlying communities
- Insert into newspaper as a way to get it out to the community
- Systemic nature of community - such as Health & Human Service/non Health & Human Service need to work together on community issues
- Identify public responsibilities (health inspection of restaurants, pools, parks, waste, health) as opposed to private or business issues - infrastructure in place emergency vehicles/ambulance
- Plan/Communication between agencies in emergency/non-emergency situations (such as bio-terrorism/state, local government, military, university with community)
- Non profit local investment agency that community members could support
- United Way as a resource referral source
- Crisis Lines' resource book available to community as a whole
- Community repository to provide consistent electronic data (unemployment info, retention, environmental, crime, substance abuse, etc.)
- Increase awareness and community appreciation for historical foundations

Economy

- Borough planning - economic development and quality of life (balance both)
- Get rid of dividend
- Attract service businesses
- Long range fiscal plan

Government

- City & Borough have strategic plan
- What is city & what is borough
- Expand power of local government to ensure community priorities
- Government needs to accept (take) leadership role
- Government community planning MUST involve community
- Government needs to enable non-government entities (provide incentives)
- Renewable, reusable resources for the city such as municipal vehicles, equipments, school buses and other public transportation powered resources

Land

- Retention and preservation of unique commemorative historical sites in our interior's historic infrastructure and development (such as Centennial site) what does Fairbanks being the Centennial City for Alaska mean to our community
- Business compatible with neighbors
- Establish economic zones
- Better enforcement of planning regulations - especially in service areas
- 20 year plan - overlay of zoning has to include areas that are not even developed yet
- Better land use planning, infrastructure development
- Local input needed for Fox and Two Rivers, more parks, pocket parks
- New housing developments need children playgrounds
- Zoning - expand definition to include green spaces
- Implement comprehensive plan
- Make us a first class city with road powers
- Downtown needs to be a walking area not a drive thru

INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

Leisure

- Places for young people to go in winter
- Six Flags/Wave Pool
- Incentives for businesses that support or create youth activities
- Resource for people/kids to get equipment to participate in sports
- Community Center
- Funding for recreational plans (skate board park in North Pole for example)
- Multi-use trails, compatible and rules that govern them
- Downtown parks
- Encourage local investment recreational facilities - roller rinks
- More buildings for inside recreation during inclement weather
- Put more dollars into school gyms during construction
- Design gyms for multi use
- Promote local tourism with more activities
- Camps such as Youth, Clown, Make A Wish, Obese, Sports, Dance
- Action sports areas near medical clinics
- Catered and hospitable affordable secure activities
- Downtown project

Transportation

- Public transportation / coordinated
- Transportation system that meets needs of all young, old, seniors
- Transportation
- Bus systems
- More timely & expanded bus service
- Fairbanks gets fair share from Strategic Transport Improvement Plan
- Develop railroad through Canada
- Airport expansion - foreign trade
- Expand the Van Tran and public transportation
- Parking that provides // near bus stops and terminals
- Debit card as a pass on public transportation

Other

- Funds for enforcement
- Identify priorities for Infrastructure planning
- Education infrastructure (birth to University)
- Protect plans from politics
- Noise ordinances
- Intellectual infrastructure
- Health care infrastructure
- Canning classes
- Citizen friendly Bar Assessing Office
- Integrate planning - multi use
- Planning

JOB & CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Business

- Change corporate culture
- Involve Fairbanks Chamber and small businesses
- Mega businesses need to invest in long term careers, internships, work study
- Legislation needs to protect small business in our community
- Encourage businesses to stay here
- Increase manufacturing
- Small business incubators
- Small businesses supporting oil industry
- Service infrastructure
- Encourage large businesses with higher GDP per capita
- Supported by smaller businesses
- Work incentives
- Educate businesses
- Encourage home grown industries

Economy

- Developing more in-state investors
- Balanced strong economic base
- Programs that encourage employment in local economy
- Local “value added” product
- Use research to develop our own destiny
- Get away from perception of needing government dollars, need to diversify income, job courses
- Encourage investment in our community
- Encourage reinvestment using current resources (permanent funds, community revolving funds)
- Raise wages
- Capital and labor, banks focus on development more
- It is good to partner government/business to leverage resources
- Have tax base to leverage partnerships
- Business & Government work together on community development (such as combine all the different committees)

Job Bank & Training

- Not jobs for the sake of jobs, but ones that are here
- Local job bank
- Central clearing house for jobs needed/wanted
- Job Shadow
- On the Job training
- Volunteering
- Incentives for businesses to provide jobs for individuals who have successfully completed rehabilitation/civic work that is tied into training
- Mentoring (Job) program
- Military advertise what jobs are available in the community
- School to work programs

University & Schools

- Strengthen UAF - State funding, allow them to develop as a Land Grant University, Educational Parks
- UAF Professors and students working with the public to develop Botanical/Birding Mining
- Distance Learning Internet College
- Develop Health Care Program at UAF
- UAF address education needs of community
- Master’s in Social Work (MSW) program at UAF
- High School/University/Business Partnership

JOB & CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

- Encourage University/Business Research Park (research transfer station, job shadow)
- Encourage University and labor halls to keep going
- Support UAF's programs to develop students to stay in our community then hire our own
- Process technology - more programs like that, something in the middle
- Community look into schools
- Increase Vocational Education
- Close cooperation with Hutchison for vocational tracking
- High Schools need to train students with work ethic, customer service, general employability skills and family management

Youth Opportunities

- School business partnership work better
- Better inform parents of opportunities
- Incentive programs that encourage students to stay local (but make sure jobs are here)
- Link businesses to youth through volunteerism
- In-service days and holidays include youth
- Youth job shadowing
- Have businesses create volunteer opportunities for kids that develop into job opportunities
- Take kids to work
- More opportunities for 12 - 15 year olds
- Youth internships
- Agricultural opportunities for youth
- Encourage our young people to stay
- Develop work ethics with young people
- Educate kids about the media business
- Encourage kids to take advantage of opportunities

Other

- Get rid of dividend
- Seasonal unemployment
- Change welfare rules to encourage people to work
- State/Local marketing of Alaska/Fairbanks as a good place to live/work
- Tell lower 48 we are not their park, it is our home
- Technology
- Cost of energy and reasonable cost of transportation
- Programs should be based on community needs
- Tie or Interaction with .. geoeconomic/geopolitical connection
- Education and training with workplace harassment (how to avoid and address if no resolution, exists in Fairbanks and is increasing)

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Activities

- More activities for youth/teens/adults
- Promote Boys & Girls Clubs
- Positive activities for youth such as ice rink, Boys & Girls Clubs, neighborhood activities, sports, theatre messages, neighborhood parks, pocket parks
- Alternative activities for teens not active in sports Community Center similar to SRC broader than Boys & Girls Clubs
- Attack boredom and depression

Education

- More education, especially about drinking while pregnant
- Better information/awareness of drug abuse by students, seniors
- Education for youth such as asset building, mentoring, officers in schools
- Work with school district
- Parent education
- Parenting test
- Need to educate healthcare profession (continuing education) such as University of Washington
- Conference for practitioners in Fairbanks
- Prevention programs in the schools - proactive approach (similar to tobacco campaign)
- Incentive programs to educate
- Prevention - education, community norms
- Education
- Good health series in school for understanding this problem (substance abuse)
- Reassess open campus at High School level

Law Enforcement

- Better enforcement of laws - methadone labs
- Better enforcement of licensed premises
- More resources for enforcement
- Better coordination between enforcement and treatment
- More sentencing options - Drug Court
- Increase better enforcement of DWI Laws
- Consistent sentencing of DWIs
- Police in the schools
- Enforce current laws
- Bring appropriate justice
- Increase police referral
- Incentive programs instead of punitive jail time
- Decrease access to substances - taxes help, hours stores are open, increase sting operations to catch illegal sales, close bars earlier, decrease number of liquor license numbers available
- Enforcement of underage usage of alcohol and cigarettes (some type of community monitoring)
- Enforcement of our current laws
- Enforcement
- Redefine acceptable drinking level

Public Awareness

- Community awareness of addiction
- Assembly/council members need to understand the problem
- Corporate culture promote
- Expand family prevention programs within hospital, non-profits, etc. to create positive self-esteem
- Provide a deal on entertainment or something of interest in order to get attention of group to provide prevention information (Incentive Programs)
- Community engagement

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- Build on sense of community
- Change community norms on alcohol
- Educate EVERYONE
- Neighborhood trained volunteers who could interact with their neighbors
- Better community network
- Media advocacy
- Education for whole community (not just incarceration)
- Make issue a higher priority within community
- Stamp out irresponsible messages regarding alcohol, tobacco, drugs (media, TV, radio ads)
- Newspaper articles emphasizing needs and the providers in our community who offers what and for whom
- Drunk driving is socially unacceptable
- Inform public on what district does for education on this subject
- More car crash visuals

Taxation

- Increase alcohol tax - dedicated tax
- Local tax
- Tax (paying for it in health insurance)
- Alcohol tax currently used for other purposes ear mark it for treatment programs (like tobacco dollars)
- Increase price, decrease access
- Alcohol tax - fund 24 hours/7 days a week drivers for FNA detox

Treatment

- Treatment on demand
- Monitoring the effectiveness of services
- Access to resources to help get people treatment
- Treat as illness
- Develop central resource place and follow up
- Readiness
- Residential treatment for young people
- Treat it as an illness, recognition of ongoing recover/treatment
- Regular medical check up program
- Hindered by cost, lack of insurance coverage
- Specific clinic (like cancer center) so patients aren't lost in regular system
- No continuity between programs, need to improve to assist with court ordered treatment (such as FCF and North Star)
- Better programs within jail
- Need for resources for treatment program
- Need more facilities to get rid of three-month wait list
- Substance abuse pervasive in child abuse family violence, need to deal with it before you can address secondary issues
- Hospital doesn't serve as a detox unit, one is needed
- Activity-based recovery programs, primarily for kids, possibly adults
- Steady funding source, allow sufficient time to prove its usefulness/measurable outcome (ongoing evaluation)
- Coordination of services to deal with multiple problems/issues
- Coordination between mental health and substance abuse agencies, recognize dual diagnoses
- Individuals who can facilitate a family member or assist someone in getting to treatment - an advocate for the family member in getting through the system
- Interaction between agencies in Fairbanks, schools could be a gathering place for agency information
- Public Health Nurse can offer mentor, house call
- More intermediate detox
- Too few treatment options - need timely, efficient, effective care, access (insurance)

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- Remove stigma of treatment
- Community Action Plan - Chronic Inebriate Program
- Drug Court – Programs similar to Nevada that seems to be positive, program utilize detox acupuncture which could readily be used in Fairbanks – cheap and easy

Other

- Faith community
- What does healthy community look like?
- Change the actions of the people who are abusing thru EDUCATION
- FNA's drivers staffing
- Focus on alcohol/drugs - NOT ethnicity (stereotyping - equal opportunity problem)
- Brain drain - to leave is the best idea
- Family time versus busy schedules, parent taxi to help each other (marginal fit elsewhere)
- Tolerance
- Focus on positive
- Address apathy
- Could hospital help pay for drivers (save money on low emergency room costs)