

St. Paul Island (CEDS): Emerging Strategies for 2023 Update

DRAFT – Updated May 2, 2023; modifications from April feedback in red font

Inputs

Interviews	Literature review	2017 CEDS	Additional research	Partner feedback	Tribal strategic planning
29 interviews	Visitor Study, SWAMC CEDS, Statewide CEDS, etc.	Strategies not yet implemented	Best practices, market research (ongoing)	Recommended edits from partners	Emerging departmental priorities

See list of acronyms at the end of the document.

Goal I: Fisheries. Support, Protect, and Create New Fisheries Opportunities.

1. Diversify fisheries.

Potential Actions

- Develop Mariculture Center, potentially by repurposing the Trident plant (TDX, TGSPI, CBSFA, SeaGrant, SWAMC, Trident).
- Establish urchin hatchery and/or fishery (TDX or TGSPI).
- Establish kelp farm/operations (TDX or TGSPI).
- Establish blue king crab hatchery (TDX or TGSPI).
- Establish a salmon enhancement operation/hatchery (TGSPI).
- Explore opportunities for processing other species (CBSFA).

Other Considerations

- Leverage Build Back Better Mariculture and other existing and/or emerging mariculture funding opportunities.
- How best to leverage fisheries disaster funding?

2. Develop value added fisheries that build from current fisheries.

Potential Actions

- Explore viability of halibut processing and facilitate fresh or frozen exports (CBSFA or TDX).
- Develop value added products (e.g., chitin) and arts and crafts from natural materials (TDX).

Other Considerations

- Leverage Build Back Better Mariculture and other existing and/or emerging mariculture funding opportunities.
- How best to leverage fisheries disaster funding?

3. Support residents in pursuing entrepreneurial fishing endeavors.

Potential Actions

- Encourage St. Paul fishermen to develop guided maritime businesses including whale or wildlife watching tours, guided fishing, or eco tours. (CBSFA).
- Provide St. Paul fishermen with business management and diversification resources (CBSFA, Sea Grant, TGSPI).
- Explore vessel repair business incubator program.
- Create a marine trades vocational program that prepares interested high school (and **post-secondary**) students for job opportunities in marine trades (vessel repair, construction, and maintenance marine vocational tech programs) (PSD, TGSPI).

Other Considerations

- Leverage Build Back Better Mariculture and other existing and/or emerging mariculture funding opportunities.
- How best to leverage fisheries disaster funding?
- Sea Grant’s FishBiz initiative has resources for supporting fishermen with business management and diversification.

Goal 2: Research. Develop St. Paul Island Facilities and Workforce into a Leading Climate Change and Coastal Resilience Research Center.

4. Grow the community's role in resource management.

Potential Actions

- a. Secure Pribilof Island Marine Island Ecosystem (PRIME) designation (TGSPi).
- b. Increase local management of northern fur seals (TGSPi).
- c. Develop a Subsistence Sea Lion Hunting Management Plan (TGPSI).
- d. Transition ownership of NOAA facilities to local ownership and management (TDX).

Other Considerations

See also Goal 5 for recommendation to establish a Bering Sea Research Center.

5. Support the health of keystone St. Paul Island species.

Potential Actions

- a. Develop a squid or salmon hatchery for fur seal recovery project (TGSPi).
- b. Develop a native plant garden (TGSPi).
- c. Continue to research and manage St. Paul's reindeer population, including establishing a local slaughter and meat processing program and a partnership program in Palmer (TGSPi). *See related food security strategy in Goal 4.*

Other Considerations

Goal 3: Tourism. Grow St. Paul Island into a Culturally & Ecologically Unique Tourism Destination. *Note: see more detailed recommendations in the St. Paul Island Visitor Development Study.*

6. Expand marketing and grow relationships with other regional tourism partners.

Potential Actions

- a. Promote multi-destination tours in partnership with Unalaska and St. George (TDX).
- b. Increase information and resources (lodging, transportation) for independent travelers and Alaskans who want to visit St. Paul without signing up for a tour package (TDX).
- c. Participate in joint marketing efforts to attract cruise ships (TDX).

Other Considerations

- Key implementation partners include the Unalaska Visitor’s Center, the Alaska Travel Industry Association, SWAMC.

7. Increase the range and quality of recreation and tourism activities for visitors.

Potential Actions

- a. Partner with Museum of Aleutians and federal agencies for an on-island museum or visiting exhibits (TGSPI, TDX).
- b. Explore market for reindeer trophy or specialty (e.g., disabled veteran) hunts. (TGSPI).
- c. Develop “wellness tourism” opportunities like a retreat center, yoga, biking, surfing, and hiking (TDX).
- d. Create a cabin/yurt system along St. Paul’s north shore (TDX).
- e. Increase opportunities for visitors to access existing recreation and fitness programs and community events (TGSPI).

Other Considerations

8. Improve community infrastructure that supports tourism.

Potential Actions

- a. Prepare a business plan for a new hotel (TDX).
- b. Collaborate around remote road maintenance (City, TDX).
- c. Improve access, signage, and wayfinding to wildlife viewing sites and cultural and historical sites (City, TGSPI, TDX).
- d. Improve air transportation – *see specific action ideas in Goal 4.*

Other Considerations

- NOAA and the USFWS may also be able to support wayfinding and infrastructure improvements.

9. Increase local employment and participation in the tourism economy.

Potential Actions

- a. Provide small business support to residents interested in developing on-island services for visitors, e.g., eco-tours, arts and crafts, and transportation services, accommodations, and boating tours (TDX, TGSPI).
- b. Offer workforce programs focused on reindeer and duck hunt guiding; bird guiding; hospitality (TDX, TGSPI).
- c. Identify barriers to local employment in tourism, including training needs, housing, etc.

Other Considerations

- Alaska Small Business Development Center and the Bering Sea Learning Center could be implementation partners.
- APICDA small business grants.

10. Improve data tracking regarding visitation.

Potential Actions

- a. Expand data collection on visitor demographics, interests, and types of activities (TDX).
- b. Track the number of boats that visit St. Paul’s small boat harbor (City, TGSPI).

Other Considerations

Goal 4: Strong Community Foundation. Strengthen Infrastructure and Improve Quality of Life to Create a Healthy Foundation for Residents and Businesses to Thrive and Stay.

I 1. Support prospective entrepreneurs with launching and growing local businesses.

Potential Actions

- a. Support entrepreneurs with business planning, creating small business spaces, financial/accounting courses, and supportive technical assistance. (City, TGSPI)
- b. Develop agreements to help small business owners who want to provide services directly to residents; for example, using City utility service credits for non-paying customers. (City)
- c. Establish small business incentive programs, such as lowering the sales tax rate for newly established local businesses (City).

See also fisheries-specific small business recommendations under Goal 1 and tourism specific small business recommendations under Goal 3.

Other Considerations

- Alaska Small Business Development Center, Bering Sea Learning Center, APICDA could be implementation partners.

I 2. Continue to increase collaboration between Island partners.

Potential Actions

- a. Coordinate quarterly meetings between City, Tribe, TDX, and CBSFA to better collaborate on shared priorities (All).
- b. Expand community partnership around emergency planning, response, and mitigation efforts to reduce vulnerabilities to hazards and increase response capabilities (City, TGSPI).
- c. Consider privatizing municipal services that could be operated by a privately-owned business (e.g., mechanic services) (City).
- d. Improve leadership transition planning (All).

Other Considerations

I 3. Increase availability of affordable and quality housing.

Potential Actions

- a. Increase availability of affordable homes through renovation and new construction (AHA, TDX, TGSPI, CBSFA).
- b. Increase access to land for housing and businesses (TDX).
- c. Develop a small home improvement and construction supply area in the store (TGSPI).
- d. Conduct clean-up activities (including rehabilitating or demolishing dilapidated structures) and implement recycling programs to reduce waste on St. Paul Island (City, TGSPI).
- e. Establish home maintenance and improvement training programs so residents can become certified to meet community housing needs, such as heating and electrical services, basic home repair (door and window installation, flooring, roofing, siding), and other needed skills (PSD, TGSPI).
- f. Conduct home efficiency upgrades for older homes in the community.

Other Considerations

14. Develop and maintain a highly skilled, employment-ready workforce that supports and enhances the economic health and quality of life on St. Paul Island.

Potential Actions

- a. Expand culturally and community-relevant Bering Sea Campus offerings and increase awareness of availability of field courses, vocational training, and career case management (PSD, TGSPI).
- b. Improve engagement with St. Paul students attending Mount Edgecumbe and Galena Interior Learning Academy (TGSPI).
- c. Increase collaboration and alignment between organizations providing educational training and resources (PSD, TGSPI, CBSFA, TDX Foundation, Ilisagvik College).
- d. Expand early childhood development programs (APIA, TGSPI, CBSFA).
- e. Develop a 'train the future teacher' program and onboard youth into education careers and opportunities (PSD, TGSPI).
- f. Establish St. Paul as a satellite campus of Ilisagvik College (TGSPI).
- g. Develop a college and career readiness (CCR) program to support residents with building life skills and achieving general education requirements (TGSPI, PSD).
- h. Increase internships, youth hiring programs, and mentorship options throughout the community (All, especially PSD).
- i. Better identify the employment gap and workforce needs/challenges of St. Paul employers (certifications, compensation, skills, retention, etc.) (All).

See also Goals 1, 2, and 3 for sector-specific workforce development recommendations.

Other Considerations

- Some Alaska communities have designed programs to stay connected with their local students attending Mount Edgecumbe.
- Collaborate with Youth Tribal Council on implementation of education and workforce development priorities.
- TGSPI could submit a plan to the Department of Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs 477 Program to support implementation of many of these recommendations.

15. Advocate for increased frequency and reliability of transportation to and from the island.

Potential Actions

- a. Collaborate with air and water transportation providers and agencies to improve access to the community (City, TDX).
- b. Upgrade the Automatic Surface Observing System (ASOS) to improve weather monitoring capabilities at the airport.
- c. Expand fire and rescue response capabilities at the airport (?).
- d. Participate in regional efforts to improve transportation, including attending the annual Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference (SWAMC) Economic Summit (City).
- e. Participate in the negotiation process for the Essential Air Service subsidy to advocate for a fourth subsidized flight when the next contract is renewed (City, TGSPI, TDX, CBSFA).

See also – remote road recommendation in Goal 3.

Other Considerations

- The City was selected as a USDOT Thriving Communities Program, which will bring technical assistance funds.
- Implementation of these actions will involve collaboration with the Federal Aviation Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, and other state and federal agencies, along with local partners and transportation providers.

16. Increase access, affordability, and dependability of essential utilities.

Potential Actions

- a. Upgrade internet infrastructure to improve connectivity, speed, and reliability (City, TGSPI).
- b. Plan for utility upgrades for communitywide utilities reaching the end of their life (e.g., water, sewer) (City, CBSFA).
- c. Increase access to renewable energy and heating (City, TDX).

Other Considerations

- Implementation could take advantage of funding opportunities in federal infrastructure legislation.

17. Expand local food production and increase food security.

Potential Actions

- a. Complete business plan and feasibility study for reindeer butchering/processing facility (TGSPI).
- b. Design and implement a greenhouse and community gardening operation plan (City, TGSPI).
- c. Encourage responsible subsistence hunting practices (TGSPI).
- d. Continue to improve the reliability, quality, and affordability of goods at the Aleut Community Store (TGSPI).

Other Considerations

- Are there any contingencies that should be considered when barges can't make it in?
- Work with other Alaska Tribes that have successful greenhouse models.

18. Promote healthy lifestyles and offer resources to support wellness and healing.

Potential Actions

- a. Promote behavioral health programing (SCF, TGSPI).
- b. Expand recovery and treatment programs (SCF, TGSPI).
- c. Expand Elder supports, including improving elder care, senior housing, and a gathering place (APIA).
- d. Offer fun, healthy, year-round community activities (City, TGSPI).
- e. Address historical trauma through communitywide and individual trainings and programming (TGSPI).
- f. Attract mid-level medical professionals for the clinic and encourage residents to pursue careers in medicine. (SCF).
- g. Expand childcare availability, especially certified providers; consider Tribally-operated programs (APIA, TGSPI).
- h. Continue to support language and cultural education programs through Tanax̄ Unaaḡim Maqax̄singin (TGSPI).

Other Considerations

- Key implementation partners include Southcentral Foundation, RurAL CAP, and Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association.
- Some Alaska Tribes are successfully operating their own Head Start programs.
- Lack of permanent housing is a barrier to the clinic recruiting providers.
- Rehabilitating key facilities such as the E-Shop could support some of these actions.

19. Improve telecommunications infrastructure in the community to ensure reliable, affordable service.

Potential Actions

- a. Invest in improved landline and cell infrastructure investment (City, ACS, GCI).
- b. Expand broadband connectivity in the community.

Other Considerations

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Goal #5: Watchtower. Establish St. Paul as a gateway to the Arctic, with regional research capabilities and infrastructure to support improved understanding and response (economic, environmental, defense) in the increasingly strategic Arctic region.

21. Attract the Coast Guard to host a permanent base on St. Paul.

Potential Actions	Other Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Replace or renovate the airport hangar (TDX). 	

22. Develop a Bering Sea Research Center with designated staff, vessel, housing, and transportation for visiting researchers.

Potential Actions	Other Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Explore partnerships with and/or replicate models of Indigenous led research centers like the Barrow Arctic Research Center and Alutiiq Pride Marine Institute (TGSPI). b. Establish research goals; possible research areas could include climate resilience, ocean heat waves, harmful algae blooms, availability of prey, habitat degradation, marine mammal vitality, aquatic species recovery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could include collaboration with the Department of Defense, NOAA, National Science Foundation, Marine Mammal Commission, Arctic Universities

23. Expand research partnerships and research employment opportunities.

Potential Actions	Other Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Promote Indigenous Sentinels Network expansion (TGSPI). b. Investigate and develop research partnerships with higher education institutions and state, federal, and international organizations (TGSPI). c. Pursue small pilot drone contracts with agencies for research (TGSPI). d. Lead on climate change research on the region (e.g., water temperatures, ice coverage, underwater mapping, species distributions, etc.) (TGSPI). e. Explore research and business opportunities around plastic marine debris recovery, recycling, and processing (TGSPI). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish guidelines and protocols for researching with communities.

List of Acronyms

AHA	Aleutian Housing Authority
APIA	Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association
APICDA	Aleutian Pribilof Island Community Development Association
CBSFA	Central Bering Sea Fishermen’s Association
NOAA	National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
PSD	Pribilof School District
SCF	Southcentral Foundation
SWAMC	Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference
TDX	Tanadgusix Corporation
TGSPI	Tribal Government of St. Paul Island
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service