

# CHAPTER 4: SWAMC WORK PLAN

## SWAMC VISION

Vibrant and livable communities for Southwest Alaska.

## SWAMC MISSION

Support the collective interests of Southwest Alaskans, businesses, and communities and promote long-term economic opportunities through improved quality of life and responsible development.

### 1) Goal: Support Regional WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT Initiatives

Objective 1: Training and Education – Promote professional development that prepares Southwest Alaska residents to contribute to the region’s economic development potential.

Objective 2: Applicable Training – Promote workforce training that is closely aligned with needed skills.

#### Strategies – Programs, Projects, Activities

- Coordinate shared interests and concerns across the region through active engagement with SWAMC membership to align private sector goals with institutional training curriculum.
- Make use of Alaska Career Information System (AKCIS) job maps that identify career paths, highlighting skills needed for associated employment opportunity and pay scale.
- Coordinate business needs with learning institutions to align goals and facilitate communication, relevant to job training, job seeking and skills for the types of work that are available in the region.
- Maintain SWAMC's Workforce Development programs and facilitate awareness of meaningful and available local employment opportunities.

### 2) Goal: Support Access to and Development of RESOURCES

Objective 1: Fisheries Development – Promote fisheries that provide a sustainable income base to the communities, businesses, and residents of Southwest Alaska.

Objective 2: Tourism Development – Promote awareness and opportunity of the region’s intrinsic natural value, access to unique experiences and abundant wildlife.

Objective 3: New Resource Development – Promote mineral and other resource development activities that increase regional wealth, are responsibly managed, and account for the greatest long-term benefit to the region.

### **Strategies – Programs, Projects, Activities**

- Collect and analyze baseline data to maintain a regional data library to better understand the economic development trends and needs of the region.
- Attend regulatory and policy meetings and monitor their effects on the regional resources.
- Advocate for policies, management, and environmental initiatives that promote a healthy business environment and community livability.
- Advocate public investments that facilitate private sector resource activity.
- Investigate regionally competitive valued added economic development activities.
- Research marketing activities that increase the value of resources.
- Maintain a strategic plan for access and development of resources.

### **3) Goal: Support INFRASTRUCTURE Improvements**

Objective 1: Strategic Infrastructure Investments – Promote infrastructure that facilitates and supports the region’s social, cultural, and economic development needs.

Objective 2: Community Planning – Promote long-term visions, goals, and plans for sustainable community development.

### **Strategies – Programs, Projects, Activities**

- Advocate for regional transportation projects and vital transportation links, including runway and harbor investments that ensure vital air and marine transportation linkages.
- Advocate for improved communication infrastructure and research opportunity for commercial and community usability of available technology.
- Research information infrastructure solutions that meet national standards and offer applications which improve the utility of new communication infrastructure for businesses and communities.
- Assist communities with programs, grants and loans to help expand their infrastructure.
- Represent Southwest Alaska interests in the Southwest Alaska Transportation Plan.
- Advocate services that reduce transportation costs and improve community livability and economic development opportunities.
- Maintain an economic geography dataset for Southwest Alaska that recognizes Southwest Alaska’s contribution to statewide economic wealth and identifies key capital investments for improving regional competitiveness.

### **4) Goal: Support ENERGY Infrastructure that Reduces the Delivered Cost of Power and Increases Regional Efficiency**

Objective 1: Energy Efficiency – Promote energy systems that stabilize or reduce the long-term cost of power, by increasing the efficiency of every unit used.

Objective 2: Ownership of Energy Systems– Promote local ownership of energy planning, decision-making, and projects.

Objective 3: Supply of Low-Cost Power – Promote projects that supply low-cost power.

## Strategies – Programs, Projects, Activities

- Research cost competitive, renewable, and local sources of energy that increase livability and economic development activity in the region.
- Investigate new sources of cheap energy.
- Advocate emerging energy prototype systems in regions where existing high prices offer a price advantage capable of offsetting initial development costs.
- Coordinate stakeholder feedback to aggregate best practices, local priorities, and other local knowledge to improve energy systems.
- Collect and distribute energy data to better inform energy system decisions.
- Assist communities with technical and economic analysis of energy projects.
- Continue with strategic energy planning, including direct assistance to communities.
- Encourage the development of a statewide energy plan through incorporation of the Alaska Energy Authority's Regional Energy Planning process.
- Investigate co-op development and other organizational means of achieving economies of scale for providing cheaper power.
- Encourage and facilitate a plan, with technical feedback from program providers, with direction from community stakeholders to improve efficiency of buildings and infrastructure.

## 5) Goal: Support REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Objective 1: Regional Economic Planning – Promote a regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, with sub-regional and local planning efforts.

Objective 2: Communications – Promote partner networks and activities of the organization, region, state, and federal interests.

Objective 3: Advocacy – Promote local, regional, state and federal policies that benefit the region, its communities, businesses, members and key partners.

Objective 4: Organizational Effectiveness – Maintain leadership from a Board of Directors, representative of regional interests, who guide activities of a productive staff, manage a financially secure organization, and pursue regionally collective interests.

## Strategies – Programs, Projects, Activities

- Continue to offer forums and events that bring stakeholders together, especially SWAMC's Economic Summit and Membership Meeting, which assembles regional stakeholders together for face-to-face discussion and exchange.
- Expand networking opportunities to reach more stakeholders.
- Continue engagement with local, state and federal institutions.
- Advocate for Southwest Alaska interests to Alaska's Legislature in Juneau and congressional delegates in Washington, D.C.
- Advocate for more local decision-making.
- Maintain a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy that is updated annually and rewritten every five years.

- Coordinate regional economic planning efforts and research the economic needs and challenges of Southwest Alaska.
- Maintain and distribute an organizational map of partners pursuing similar development and community goals, complete with partners' contact information.
- Collect and maintain an Asset Map of new and existing development activity.
- Identify and encourage areas of regional competitiveness which could lead to new business opportunities.
- Conduct strategic planning efforts to coordinate multiple partners pursuing similar objectives.
- Maintain personal communication between communities, businesses, members, partner organizations, and the general public to build understanding about the region, its economy, and the needs of its residents.
- Engage municipal and associate members in leadership assignments to help guide policies.
- Increase membership investments and participation in SWAMC.
- Conduct Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) interviews to gain further understanding of business operator needs in the region.
- Follow-up on insights gained from BRE interviews to advocate for businesses.
- Develop a Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program with other regional partners to strengthen the manufacturing base of Southwest Alaska.

## PRIORITY STRATEGIES (PROGRAMS, PROJECTS, ACTIVITIES)

- Support Youth Mentorship and Skills-Gap Training Programs
- Strengthen and Diversify Alaskan Manufacturing
- Understand Operating Environment and Resource Needs of Business
- Promote Energy Planning and Infrastructure Development
- Maintain a Data Library and Publish Economic Trends
- Host SWAMC Economic Summit and Membership Meeting