



APPENDIX 2: AN OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITIES IN ALASKA

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN ALASKA

Most states have complex structures for local government that are comprised of multiple governmental units with narrow functions. For instance, the State of Washington provides for 17 different local government units including counties, cities, port districts, transit districts, cemetery districts, fire protection districts, hospital districts, irrigation and reclamation districts, library districts, parks and recreation districts, school districts, sewer districts, water districts, public utility districts, diking and drainage districts, health districts, and weed control districts. In the Lower 48, the agglomeration of local governments serving a particular area is comprised of units with overlapping boundaries. Each of these units generally has an independent elected government body with authority to levy taxes.

The framers of the Constitution of the State of Alaska the enjoyed great capacity to be innovative when it came to formulating local government structure for the State of Alaska. At the time, Alaska had only a rudimentary system of local government. The framers of Alaska’s Constitution endeavored to avoid the complex arrangement of local government and overlapping jurisdictions frequently found in the existing 48 states. Alaska’s Constitution recognizes only two types of municipal government – cities and boroughs. The term “municipality” is the generic term encompassing all classes and forms of cities and boroughs. City governments and borough governments in Alaska are municipal corporations and political subdivisions of the State of Alaska.

City governments operate at the community level. By law, the corporate boundaries of new city governments are limited to just that territory encompassing the present local community, plus reasonably predicted growth, development, and public safety needs during the next ten years. In contrast to the limits of city government, an organized borough is a regional government. Borough governments are intended to encompass large natural regions. The Alaska Constitution required all of Alaska to be divided into boroughs – organized or unorganized.

In Alaska, there are three different classifications of city government including home-rule, first-class, and second-class (Figure 1, next page, provides a map with the locations of Alaska’s municipalities). Five different classes of borough government are recognized in state law including unified home rule borough, non-unified home-rule borough, first class borough and second-class borough. In total, 116 cities are not located in an organized borough and therefore lack a regional form of government. These cities are located in the “unorganized borough”, which represents a large part of Alaska. In Alaska, 164 communities or places are incorporated as either a city or borough government in Alaska. In total, there are 145 city governments, 19 borough governments, and one community organized under federal law (Annette Island Reserve). Please see Tables 9 and 10 on pages 46 and 47-49.



Table 9: Nineteen Borough in Alaska

Borough	2016 Population (#)	Approximate Square Miles (*)	Incorporation Date
Unified Home Rule Boroughs (4)			
Municipality of Anchorage	299,037	1,940	September 15, 1975 (A)
City and Borough of Juneau	32,739	3,248	July 1, 1970 (B)
City and Borough of Sitka	8,920	4,530	December 2, 1971 (C)
City and Borough of Wrangell	2,458	3,465	30-May-08
Non-Unified Home Rule Boroughs (7)			
Denali Borough	1,810	12,610	7-Dec-90
Haines Borough	2,466	2,730	October 17, 2002 (D)
Lake and Peninsula Borough	1,629	29,560	24-Apr-89
North Slope Borough	10,528	94,770	1-Jul-72
Northwest Arctic Borough	7,944	39,150	2-Jun-86
Petersburg Borough	3,179	3,829	3-Jan-13
City and Borough of Yakutat	594	9,251	22-Sep-92
First Class Borough (1)			
Municipality of Skagway	1,065	443	20-Jun-07
Second Class Boroughs (7)			
Aleutians East Borough	3,001	15,020	23-Oct-87
Bristol Bay Borough	874	850	2-Oct-62
Fairbanks North Star Borough	98,957	7,430	1-Jan-64
Kenai Peninsula Borough	58,060	21,330	1-Jan-64
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	13,758	6,262	6-Sep-63
Kodiak Island Borough	13,563	12,150	30-Sep-63
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	102,598	25,260	1-Jan-64

* Includes water area within the three-mile limit.

Certified by Commissioner, Dept. of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development.



Table 10: 145 Cities in Alaska

Classification	2016 Population	Incorp.Date
Home Rule Cities (11)		
Cordova	2,386	1909
Fairbanks (5)	31,957	1903
Kenai (7)	7,098	1960
Ketchikan (8)	8,191	1900
Kodiak (9)	6,124	1940
Nenana	381	1921
North Pole (5)	2,145	1953
Palmer (11)	6,268	1951
Seward (7)	2,663	1912
Soldotna (7)	4,376	1967
Valdez	4,011	1901

Classification	2016 Population	Incorp.Date
First Class Cities (18)		
Craig	1,102	1922
Dillingham	2,316	1963
Galena	488	1971
Homer (7)	5,252	1964
Hoonah	793	1946
Hydaburg	404	1927
Kake	605	1952
King Cove (1)	923	1949
Klawock	814	1929
Nome	3,777	1901
Pelican	78	1943
Saint Mary's	587	1967
Sand Point (1)	943	1966
Seldovia (7)	206	1945
Tanana	224	1961
Unalaska	4,448	1942
Utqiagvik (Barrow) (12)	5,041	1958
Wasilla (11)	8,704	1974

Classification	2016 Population	Incorp.Date
Second Class Cities (116)		
Adak	309	2001
Akhiok (9)	97	1974
Akiak	389	1970
Akutan (1)	1,000	1979
Alakanuk	707	1969
Aleknagik	217	1973
Allakaket	165	1975
Ambler (13)	260	1971
Anaktuvuk Pass (12)	393	1959
Anderson (4)	238	1962
Angoon	408	1963
Aniak	517	1972
Anvik	77	1969
Atka	65	1988
Atkasuk (12)	248	1982
Bethel	6,244	1957
Bettles	10	1985
Brevig Mission	418	418
Buckland (13)	507	1966
Chefornak	442	1974
Chevak	1,030	1967
Chignik (10)	96	1983
Chuathbaluk	118	1975
Clark's Point	54	1971
Coffman Cove	204	1989
Cold Bay (1)	59	1981
Deering (13)	143	1970
Delta Junction	1,130	1960
Diomede	88	1970
Eagle	79	1901
Edna Bay	41	2014

1 = City located within the Aleutians East Borough
 2 = City located within the Bristol Bay Borough (none)
 3 = City located within the City and Borough of Yakutat (none)
 4 = City located within the Denali Borough
 5 = City located within the Fairbanks North Star Borough
 6 = City located within the Haines Borough (none)
 7 = City located within the Kenai Peninsula Borough

8 = City located within the Ketchikan Gateway Borough
 9 = City located within the Kodiak Island Borough
 10 = City located within the Lake and Peninsula Borough
 11 = City located within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough
 12 = City located within the North Slope Borough
 13 = City located within the Northwest Arctic Borough
 14 = City located within the Petersburg Borough



Table 10: 145 Cities in Alaska, *continued*

Classification	2016 Population	Incorp. Date
Second Class Cities (continued)		
Eek	341	1970
Egegik (10)	85	1995
Ekwok	113	1974
Elim	339	1970
Emmonak	856	1964
False Pass (1)	73	1990
Fort Yukon	558	1959
Gambell	721	1963
Golovin	182	1971
Goodnews Bay	265	1970
Grayling	189	1969
Gustavus	558	2004
Holy Cross	155	1968
Hooper Bay	1,188	1966
Houston (11)	2,163	1966
Hughes	91	1973
Huslia	326	1969
Kachemak (7)	479	1961
Kaktovik (12)	262	1971
Kaltag	172	1969
Kasaan	89	1976
Kiana (13)	421	1964
Kivalina (13)	429	1969
Kobuk (13)	148	1973
Kotlik	621	1970
Kotzebue (13)	3,295	1958
Koyuk	331	1970
Koyukuk	97	1973
Kupreanof (14)	21	1975
Kwethluk	805	1975
Larsen Bay (9)	77	1974

Classification	2016 Population	Incorp. Date
Second Class Cities (continued)		
Lower Kalskag	288	1969
Manokotak	496	1970
Marshall	459	1970
McGrath	302	1975
Mekoryuk	215	1969
Mountain Village	860	1967
Napakiak	355	1970
Napaskiak	458	1971
New Stuyahok	497	1972
Newhalen (10)	178	1971
Nightmute	285	1974
Nikolai	94	1970
Nondalton (10)	153	1971
Noorvik (13)	644	1964
Nuiqsut (12)	446	1975
Nulato	246	1963
Nunam Iqua	201	1974
Nunapitchuk	584	1969
Old Harbor (9)	231	1966
Ouzinkie (9)	159	1967
Pilot Point (10)	74	1992
Pilot Station	647	1969
Platinum	48	1975
Point Hope (12)	711	1966
Port Alexander	58	1974
Port Heiden (10)	98	1972
Port Lions (9)	177	1966
Quinhagak	735	1975
Ruby	178	1973
Russian Mission	331	1970
Saint George	72	1983

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**Table 10: 145 Cities in Alaska, *continued***

Classification	2016 Population	Incorp. Date
Second Class Cities (continued)		
Saint Michael	417	1969
Saint Paul	397	1971
Savoonga	729	1969
Saxman (8)	418	1929
Scammon Bay	570	1967
Selawik (13)	847	1977
Shageluk	77	1970
Shaktoolik	281	1969
Shishmaref	597	1969
Shungnak (13)	299	1967
Stebbins	630	1969
Teller	263	1963
Tenakee Springs	140	1971
Thorne Bay	532	1982
Togiak	893	1969
Toksook Bay	656	1972
Unalakleet	758	1974
Upper Kalskag	231	1975
Wainwright (12)	557	1962
Wales	167	1964
Whale Pass	45	2017
White Mountain	209	1969
Whittier	248	1969
Organized Under Federal Law		
Metlakatla	1,467	1944

1 = City located within the Aleutians East Borough

2 = City located within the Bristol Bay Borough (none)

3 = City located within the City and Borough of Yakutat (none)

4 = City located within the Denali Borough

5 = City located within the Fairbanks North Star Borough

6 = City located within the Haines Borough (none)

7 = City located within the Kenai Peninsula Borough

8 = City located within the Ketchikan Gateway Borough

9 = City located within the Kodiak Island Borough

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Figure 1: Map of Alaska Communities – Organized and Unorganized

**The City of Petersburg is now Petersburg Borough.*



LEGAL AUTHORITY FOR PLANNING, PLATTING AND LAND USE REGULATION

Community size, cultural make-up, and type of local governing structure influence the level and character of local community planning. Only cities and boroughs can have land use powers. Land use regulation, as authorized by adopted municipal planning and zoning powers, is required for only a minority of communities including boroughs, home rule cities, and first class cities. Planning and zoning is elective for second class cities, which are largely located in rural Alaska.

In total, only a minority (21 %) of Alaska's municipalities implement land use regulation. In contrast, the majority of communities (79 %) may or may not engage in community planning, but do not regulate land use. These communities engage in community planning for the purpose of prioritizing grant funding, developing a shared community vision, community development strategy, and improving overall quality of life; however, they are not authorized to implement land use regulation. One of the major motivations for rural communities to engage in community planning has been to fulfill a government requirement in order to receive financial and technical assistance for physical infrastructure projects and local public services.

Of Alaska's 164 municipalities, nearly half (49 %) are not required by law to exercise planning and zoning powers. In contrast, slightly over half (51 %) either independently exercise planning and zoning powers or are part of a borough that has responsibility for area-wide planning and zoning. Of noteworthy importance, the wide majority of Alaska's communities and nearly half of Alaska's municipalities do not exercise planning and zoning authority; local residents are without land use regulation services. These communities do not have the authority to regulate development in the floodplain and are not candidates for the NFIP. In short, only 86 Alaska municipalities have planning and zoning authority or are in a borough with planning and zoning authority and are subsequently eligible to join the NFIP.

By 1900 the United States Army had mapped Alaska's prominent mountain ranges and larger rivers. The United States Geological Survey (USGS), which began topographic mapping in 1882, took over from the Army and became the primary mapping and exploration agency in Alaska. Each year the USGS collaborated with geologists working around the territory to make maps, develop photographs, keep field notes, and write reports. This information increased the ability of the miners and others to locate and expedite the development of resources in Alaska. Today, remote sensing techniques are commonly used for mapping. Photogrammetry and LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) are two of the common remote sensing mapping techniques. They are sophisticated techniques and technology that require skilled technicians and cartographers. The drastically improved technology allows for increased and diversified map uses including mineral exploration, transportation design, and urban planning. The expense of this type of technology and Alaska's large land mass, combined with the limited local and regional government budgets, make the adoption of this technology for Alaska problematic for many communities.



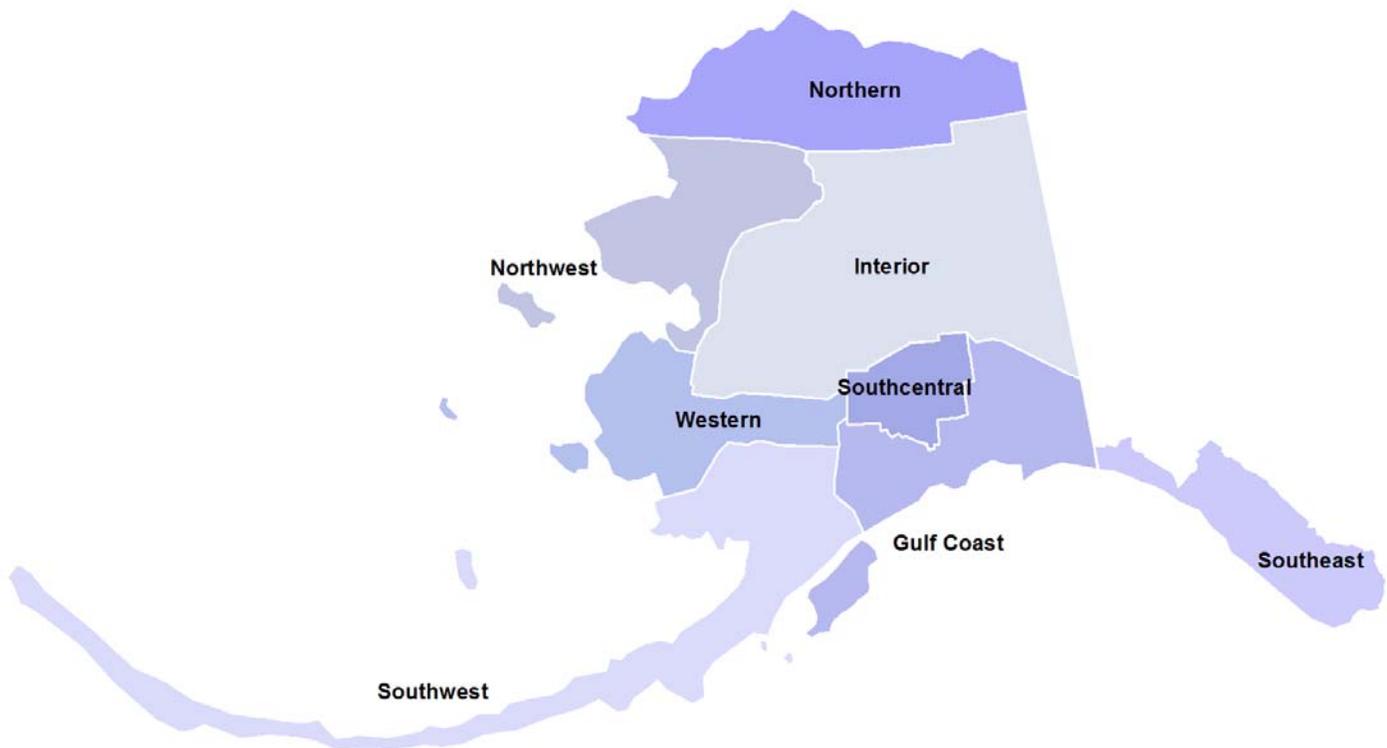
ALASKA'S REGIONS

In Alaska, the majority of municipalities are not connected to the road system (86%). Only a minority are connected by road to other places (14%). Historically, urban and rural communities located either along the coast or on a river as waterways served as the primary means to transport people and goods. Today, nearly all of Alaska's municipalities are located either on a river (41%), on the coast (36%), or both (24%).

Communities are unequally distributed across eight Alaska regions including northern (2%), northwest (8%), western (155%), Southwest (13%), interior (21%), Southcentral (10%), gulf coast (20%), and Southeast (11%) regions (Figure 3). In geographical terms, non-Native communities are mainly concentrated in Southeast, Southcentral, and Southwest Alaska while Native communities are largely located in northern, western, and interior Alaska.

What makes life challenging for many Alaskans is not Alaska's extreme geography and topographical features, it is what is absent from everyday life on the frontier — essential community infrastructure, and easy access. This is especially true for Alaskans residing in rural or semi-rural regions.

Figure 2: Alaska's Regions





Most Alaska communities cannot be reached by road; movement of goods and people is not only difficult, but costly. Mountain ranges, waterways, and distance make a statewide electric system prohibitively expensive. Consequently, the majority of rural villages are not connected to a major power grid. Many communities still lack basic indoor plumbing, including running water, flush toilets, and showers, resulting in higher incidence of hygiene-related childhood disease.

Jobs are scarce and small population centers oftentimes do not have hospitals. However, the difference between rural Alaska and “any other rural area” is that in other states, people can drive to the nearest large town to obtain essential services. Commuting is generally not an option for the people of rural Alaska; there are fewer miles of road in Alaska than in any other state. For most communities, supplies must be transported by boat or airplane. To obtain advanced education, training, medical, or other services, residents must travel by air to the nearest regional hub community or Anchorage – the state’s largest service center.

For all its size, Alaska’s total population is the nearly the smallest in the nation at approximately 739,828 people (Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, 2017). Alaska Natives comprise nearly 15.2% of Alaska’s total population, the largest percentage in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). A “frontier” is defined as a region that contains six or fewer persons per square mile; Alaska has only two persons per square mile.

ALASKA’S POPULATION AND ITS DISTRIBUTION

The 2016 estimated population in Alaska’s 164 municipalities ranged from 10 (Bettles) to 299,037 (Anchorage) residents. The average municipal population was 5,071 residents. Of noteworthy importance, with a total population of 299,037 residents (2016), Anchorage is the largest municipality in Alaska and an outlier in regards to population. Consequently, Anchorage skews the mean; median is a more appropriate representation of the general size of Alaska’s municipalities.

Similar to all Alaska’s communities (e.g., incorporated and unincorporated communities), the majority of Alaska’s municipalities are small. One hundred and twenty-eight (128) municipalities (79%) are considered “rural”, with populations less than 1,500 residents. Over half (55%) of municipalities are extremely small with populations less than 500 residents; 13% are less than 100 residents. In contrast, only six municipalities (4%) contain 30,000 residents or more including the City and Borough of Juneau, City of Fairbanks, Fairbanks North Star Borough, Kenai Peninsula Borough, Mat-Su Borough, and the Municipality of Anchorage.

In total, 31 municipalities are also active NFIP participants including 19 cities and 12 boroughs; three cities are suspended including Kenai, Soldotna, and Wrangell. The City of Delta Junction withdrew from the NFIP in 2015. Municipalities enrolled in the NFIP program are generally the larger municipalities. Specifically, NFIP municipalities range from 97 (Koyukuk) to 299,037 (Anchorage) residents. The NFIP community average population is 23,404. Unlike most Alaska communities or municipalities, NFIP municipalities are generally more urban or semi-urban in nature. Only a minority (41%) are considered “rural” with populations less than 1,500 residents. Over half (59%) are considered urban or



semi-urban with populations greater than 1,500 residents; 19% are greater than 10,000 residents. Five municipalities (16%) are 30,000 residents or more including the City and Borough of Juneau, Fairbanks North Star Borough, Kenai Peninsula Borough, Mat-Su Borough, and the Municipality of Anchorage.

Alaska's population (approximately 739,828) resides in over 300 distinct communities, each with its own unique history, culture, and organizational structure. Alaska's communities are the most remote and rural in the nation, scattered across vast tracts of undeveloped land and separated by challenging topographical features. To overcome access challenges, many rural communities are located along coastal shorelines and rivers that serve as transportation corridors needed to move supplies and provide access to important subsistence resources. Other communities were settled at present day locations due to proximity to subsistence resources, availability of services, natural resource development, and other unique regional opportunities. Communities are mainly concentrated in the southern half of Alaska; only nine villages exist along the Arctic North Slope.

POPULATION CHANGE IN ALASKAN COMMUNITIES

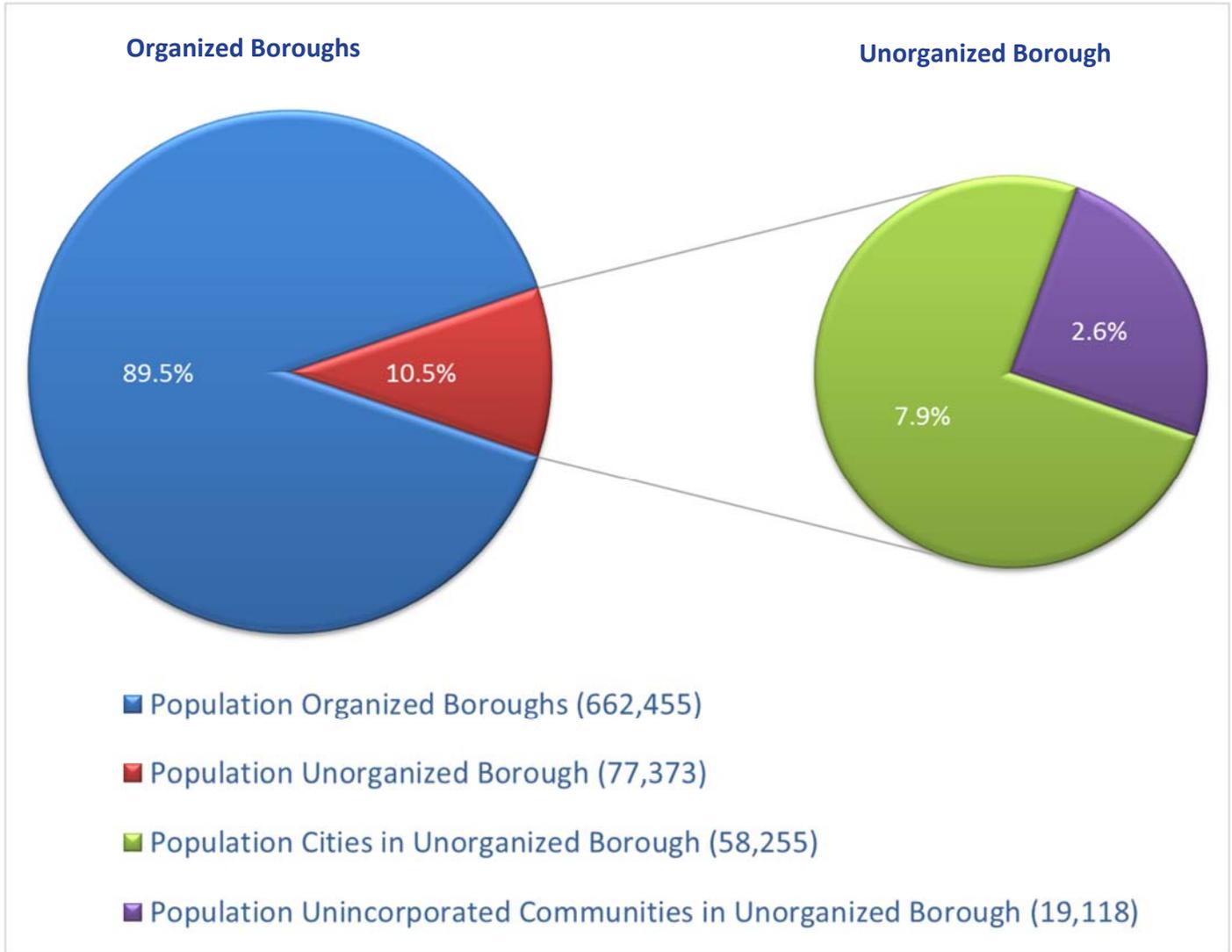
Population change in Alaska is a complex issue. While the state as a whole is growing, with the largest growth rates experienced in the Southcentral region, many other regions of the state are experiencing overall population declines. Many suggest differential population growth is best described as a rural versus urban divide. Generally speaking, Alaska's rural population is decreasing due to out-migration, lower birth rates, and an aging population. The southeast region, in particular has lost the most residents, absorbing 69% of the total statewide rural population decline from 2000 to 2008 (DCRA, 2009).

Alaska's 164 municipalities generally reflect the same declining population as experienced by rural communities across most of Alaska. Although total population change between 2000 and 2008 ranged from +46% to -49%, the mean population change was -3%; the median was -2%. During the 2000 to 2008 period, Bettles experienced the greatest population loss (-49%), while Houston experienced the greatest population growth (+46%).

Considering all Alaska municipalities, the majority (57%) experienced population loss during the 2000 to 2008 period ranging from -49% (Bettles) to -1% (Napakiak, Fort Yukon, Kiana, Allakaket, Juneau, Seldovia, and Togiak). In contrast, 40% experienced population increase ranging from +1% (Sand Point, Anaktuvuk Pass, Newhalen, Noorvik, Mountain Village, and Kotzebue) to +46% (Houston). Four municipalities (Eagle, Kobuk, Aleutians East Borough, and Fairbanks) experienced zero net loss or gain during the 2000 – 2008 period.



Figure 3: Population Distribution in Alaska's Organized and Unorganized Boroughs



Total State Population Estimate 2016: 739,828

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section



OTHER SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF ALASKA'S COMMUNITIES

Income

Defying misperceptions originating in the Lower 48, most Alaskans that live in a municipality are not wealthy Americans. Alaska's municipalities (164) range in per capita income from \$6,503 to \$31,747; mean is \$15,245 (2000). Nearly half (47%) of all municipalities have a per capita income of less than \$14,000 per year; slightly over half (54%) have a per capita income greater than \$14,000 per year. Only one-third (32%) of all municipalities have a per capita income greater than \$20,000 per year.

Municipalities participating in the NFIP have slightly higher per capita income. Specifically, NFIP participants (31) range in per capita income from \$6,503 to \$27,700; mean is \$19,408 (2000). Over half (59%) report a per capita income of greater than \$20,000 per year. Less than one-quarter (22%) report a per capita income of less than \$14,000 per year.

Poverty

In 2000, the percent of population in poverty in Alaska's municipalities (164) ranged from zero percent to 64% percent; mean was 18%. Nearly three-quarters (71%) of all municipalities have a poverty rate of less than 25%. In contrast, zero municipalities have a poverty rate greater than 75%. Approximately one-quarter (28%) have a 25% to 49% poverty rate. In 2000, municipalities participating in the NFIP (32) had significantly lower poverty rates. Specifically, the percent of population living in poverty ranged from four percent to 25%; mean was 13%. Of noteworthy importance, no NFIP participants had poverty rates higher than 49%. The overwhelming majority (91%) have poverty rates less than 25%.

Housing Units

In 2000, the quantity of housing units in Alaska's municipalities (164) ranged from 26 to 100,368; the mean was 1764. Similar to all municipalities, the quantity of housing units in municipalities participating in the NFIP (31) ranged from 55 to 100,368 (Table 9, next page). Of noteworthy importance, average quantity of housing units in NFIP participants (7,164) is significantly greater than all municipalities (1,764).

**Table 11: 2000 Housing Units**

Housing Units	Municipalities (163)	NFIP Participants (32)
Minimum	26	55
Maximum	100,368	100,368
Mean	1,764	7,164

Critical Facilities

In the United States, Alaska ranks at the very bottom in the percentage of its rural population who have adequate household plumbing facilities, including running water. In many villages, even those near urban areas, the majority of households may not have running water. Over the past twentyfive years, the federal and state government have made significant investments in critical facility infrastructure in rural communities including roads, public use buildings, medical clinics, housing water/wastewater facilities, electrical systems, schools, bulk fuel storage facilities, airports, boardwalks, and harbors.

Over the past forty years, billions of federal dollars have been spent on the most critical facility infrastructure – water and wastewater utilities. Although the capital utility projects are grant-funded for construction costs, the limited cash economies in many rural Alaska communities create a fragile economic base for ongoing operations and maintenance of infrastructure. Oftentimes, built infrastructure operation and maintenance costs far exceed the financial capabilities of a local community to pay for the local service. That is, limited local economies do not fully support the increasing operation and maintenance costs associated with critical facilities.

The current fiscal condition in rural Alaska, in combination with lack of comprehensive infrastructure policy, makes sustainability of capital project investments difficult. Local governments in the Lower 48 generally fund infrastructure projects via revenue or general obligation bonds. In comparison, community critical facility infrastructure is generally 100% grant-funded. As progress continues in constructing critical facilities, communities with new systems must be able to independently operate and maintain them. Meeting the associated operation and maintenance costs will continue to be a significant challenge for smaller communities with limited local economic bases. Furthermore, a shrinking state operating budget results in fewer grants and loans to all Alaska communities. The most challenged of Alaska’s communities are unlikely to receive resources to maintain and operate public services as state and federal government revenue declines. The development, operation, and maintenance of critical facility infrastructure are further challenged by escalating energy, materials, and labor expenses.



Many Alaska communities exist without running water and use plastic buckets for toilets, euphemistically referred to as “honeybuckets”. Despite Alaska’s abundance of water, it is often extremely difficult to obtain water for drinking and sanitation – especially in rural areas. In many communities, piped water systems do not exist inside homes and domestic water used by residents must be hauled by hand from central watering points, a water well, or a washeteria. Similarly, communities without piped wastewater generally utilize a honeybucket haul system as a principal method of sewage disposal. In those communities, the honeybucket is a five-gallon bucket with a toilet seat attached. Once filled, the bucket is hand carried and emptied into a neighborhood haul container or sewage lagoon. In these communities, honeybuckets are used in homes, commercial buildings, and even medical clinics. With government investment in critical facilities, the percentage of homes with piped water and sewer has increased; however, there are still a significant quantity of households that are hand-carrying water and employing honeybuckets for wastewater removal. In 2007, the percentage of households without adequate plumbing in Alaska’s 164 municipalities ranged from zero percent to one-hundred percent; the mean percent was 46%.

Figure 4: Alaska's Unorganized Boroughs

Legend

-  Unorganized Boroughs
-  Organized Boroughs

