Ketchikan INDIAN COMMUNITY

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

January 2026

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1. Executive Summary & CEDS Background

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a planning tool developed by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) to assist regional economic development, promote economic resilience, encourage action from both private and public sectors and allow tribes to be eligible for additional EDA funds. This CEDS was developed based on EDA's current content guidelines.[1] Though this document represents present economic circumstances, the KIC recognizes that community economic development planning is an ongoing process and is committed to keeping critical aspects of this Plan updated on an annual basis.

The most significant aspects of this CEDS include planning priorities and an action plan for the Ketchikan Indian Community (KIC) on all economic development focused issues. Regional economic and demographic information are focused, as best as possible, on KIC members and other American Indian/Alaskan Native (AIAN) populations residing in and around the Ketchikan Gateway Borough (KGB). The appendices contain a detailed summary of the community engagement process, and community survey findings.

More precisely, this CEDS includes the following sections:

- Summary Background
- Regional Highlights
- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis
- Strategic Direction and Action Plan
- Evaluation Framework
- Economic Resiliency
- Socioeconomic Background

The KIC CEDS was overseen by a Steering Committee with representation from various aspects of Tribal government. Business and government leaders were also included during the CEDS process through interviews and surveys.

[1] As of publishing this Plan in February, 2026, the most current EDA guidelines were updated on February 6, 2025: https://www.eda.gov/sites/default/files/2025-01/2025-CEDS-Content-Guidelines-Full-Report.pdf?

Acknowledgements

This CEDS was facilitated by Points Consulting under the guidance and assistance of the following Steering Committee members.

- Emily *Tlaa Kil Xants* Edenshaw – Tribal Administrator (TA)/CEO
- Kevin Thomas – Chief Financial Officer
- Richard Harney – Tribal Planner
- Jeremy Weber – Small Business Advisor
- Riley Vierra – Special Planning Projects Assistant
- Cynthia Crowl – Grants Accountant

Our team also coordinated with Tribal Council at several critical stages of the project, which includes the following past and current members.

- Gloria *Ilsxileé Stáng* Burns- President
- Judy *Jadailong* Leask Guthrie – Vice President
- Marcie *Gaduu* Haynes – Secretary
- Rushcelle *T' áaw-Xahl* Hull – Treasurer
- Melissa *Tawíi Gulgáas* Johnson – Councilwoman
- Lloyd *Se ju* Ruaro – Councilman
- Chas *Yáahl SGwáansang* Edwardson – Councilman
- Sharyl Yeisley – Councilwoman
- Alexandra *Wudi Háni Yèil* Ginter - Councilwoman
- Shania *Seenlka.at* Murphy – Youth Representative

Project Consulting Team:

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KIC Organizational Background

The Ketchikan Indian Community (KIC), located in the Southeastern part of Alaska, more specifically Ketchikan, Alaska, is a federally recognized Tribe. KIC's membership includes people from all different cultural groups, but primarily includes Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian, and Unangax people. KIC's mission is to "…enhance and protect the interest of the Tribe and its Tribal citizens, to assist our Tribal members in becoming economically self-sufficient through the provision of socioeconomic services, to enrich and uphold our cultural heritage and traditional way of life."

Social & Economic Context

The Ketchikan Indian Community enters this CEDS process as a growing, increasingly influential Tribal nation in Southeast Alaska. Serving 6,621 Tribal citizens, KIC plays a role that extends far beyond its members. As the second largest Tribal organization in Southeast Alaska, KIC has steadily expanded its role in community stability, economic development, and cultural revitalization. Its programs now span nearly every facet of Tribal members' (and non-members') lives, and include health care, housing, behavioral health, workforce development, youth education, cultural preservation, transportation, and more. Despite the abundance of programs, KIC has no continuous designated Tribal lands, although it does own property in Ketchikan.

Externally, KIC operates in a complex environment. The region's governance is divided between the City of Ketchikan, City of Saxman, and the Ketchikan Gateway Borough, each with different authorities and responsibilities. This fragmented system often slows planning efforts and creates gaps in service provision. However, this creates opportunities for KIC to step into leadership roles in the local community.

At a broader level, the federal government has a legally grounded trust responsibility to federally recognized tribes, meaning it must protect Tribal lands, assets, resources, and treaty right, and carry out federal obligations to Tribal governments and citizens. In the context of this CEDS, it is important to acknowledge because it shapes how economic development gets funded, permitted, and implemented. Many core investments flow through federal programs designed around that government-to-government relationship, and federal agencies are expected to engage in meaningful consultation when actions have Tribal implications.

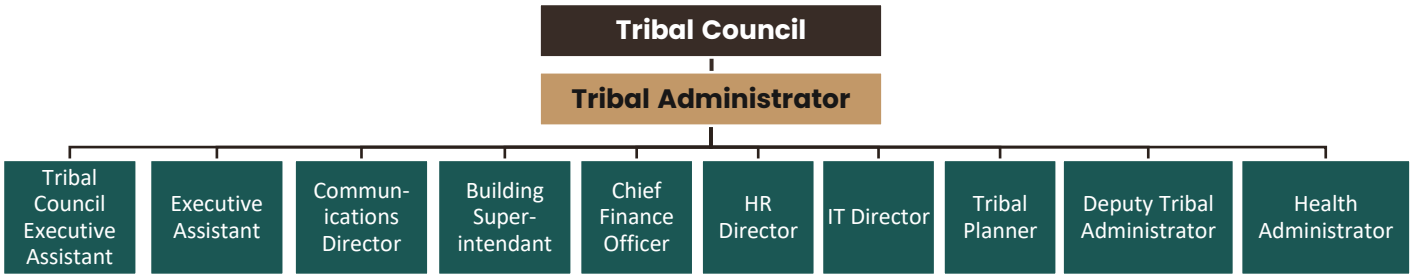
Ketchikan's broader economy is shaped by its maritime identity through the shipyards, cruise industry, fishing fleets, and ferry system, which all provide large employment opportunities for the area. This economy is also defined by limited land availability, dependence on marine transport, and the reliance on a cyclical tourism economy which can drastically affect the livelihoods of Ketchikan citizens. Housing scarcity in particular

effects every demographic group, but Tribal citizens often feel its impacts most acutely.[2] For Ketchikan Tribal citizens, this problem is alleviated by KIC's focus on housing provisions.

KIC's economic future will be shaped by deliberate choices about where to concentrate energy, investment, and organization capacity. KIC's core institutional anchors should serve as its strongest supports. Housing, healthcare, workforce development, and cultural assets are not separate service lines, but rather a diverse economic ecosystem that uplifts Ketchikan's tribal citizens. They are mutually reinforcing pillars that, taken together, reduce Tribal member's dependence on a volatile regional economy while expanding KIC's role as a regional employer, service provider, and economic driver.

Organizational Structure

The following figure outlines the governmental structure of KIC's departments. The full chart with each department lead and their respective team, who all answer the Tribal Administrator, is provided in Appendix D. KIC also has a Tribal Council, which is not shown here as part of the organizational structure. However, ongoing and future projects still need the approval of the Tribal Council.



Regional Collaboration

KIC participates in another regional coalition, the Southeast Conference, where Tribal leaders contribute to economic planning, policy, and the Southeast Alaska five-year Regional CEDS. Through this involvement, KIC has helped shape priorities for the Southeast Conference, and has also used the Southeast Conference's insights to help formulate this CEDS.

Existing Planning Infrastructure

KIC previously developed a strategic plan with four house posts defining the overarching goals and values of KIC shown in Figure 1.2. This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy seeks to build on this plan aligning goals and actions with the identified house posts: Live our culture, Build a healthy Tribe and citizens, Exercise our sovereignty, and Economic self-sufficiency. Not all four posts are equally significant in the context of this CEDS. However, while this document is more specifically focused on economic

[2] U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "Housing Needs of American Indians and Alaska Natives in Tribal Areas: A report from the Assessment of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian Housing Needs," Office of Policy Development and Research, https://www.huduser.gov/portal/publications/HNAIHousingNeeds.html

development, all four house posts are considered in the goals and actions as they apply in the economic development of KIC.

Figure 1.2: KIC Vision & Strategic Direction House Posts

This CEDS sets forth a framework not only to sustain what KIC already does but also to expand its ability to shape Ketchikan's long-term social and economic future. The CEDS provides a strategic roadmap for the Tribe's next five years of economic development. It identifies opportunities for organizational growth, improved interdepartmental coordination, program expansion, and development. It also recognizes the current conditions that affect KIC and its members' futures, such as land limitations, high cost of living, maritime reliance, and workforce issues.

Health and Behavioral Services

KIC's Health and Behavioral Services System forms one of the most comprehensive networks of Tribal care in Southeast Alaska. The health clinic provides primary care, preventative services, and more, while the dental clinic and pharmacy extend access to essential services that can be difficult to obtain for Tribal members that may have limited resources. Behavioral health programs have grown significantly in recent years, offering outpatient counseling, substance-use treatment, intensive support programs, and coordinated case management. The system is strengthened by its accreditation and teams.

The behavioral health program has also been shifting towards an integrated model, where treatment is linked with workforce services, housing support, and cultural activities. Providers noted that many clients face overlapping challenges, including addiction, homelessness, trauma, and unemployment. Addressing these issues holistically is essential for long-term health outcomes. The Tribe is currently exploring ways to deepen its integration of traditional healing practices, a direction that aligns with the community's interests.

Despite its strengths, the health system faces challenges typical of rural Alaska. Recruiting and retaining providers remains difficult, and referrals for specialty care often require travel. Provider recruitment and retention in rural and tribal health systems carries implications that extend beyond staffing alone. Gaps in provider continuity affect scheduling capacity, care quality, and the stability of service lines that Tribal members depend on. For KIC, sustained investment in recruitment and retention is not simply a workforce management priority. It is a prerequisite for maintaining the health system's role as a core institutional and economic asset for the community.

Furthermore, Improvements to electronic health records, billing systems, and department communication are ongoing priorities. Still, the depth of the program's accomplishments and capacity for growth make the health care program an important part of KIC's economic future.

Housing and Infrastructure

Housing is among the most urgent challenges facing Ketchikan, and KIC has begun to position itself as a leader in responding to this crisis for its members. The Tribe is developing a series of new housing projects that reflect its commitment to cultural values, family stability, and long-term community resilience. The 28-unit Elder housing development, supported by Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) financing, will provide appropriate housing for Tribal Elders who often face isolation or unsafe living conditions. Another project, the Woodland Triplex, will bring three, two, and one-bedroom units to accommodate three families from the housing waiting list. The triplex development and planned supportive housing units expand KIC's capacity to address the needs of low-income families, individuals in recovery, and people reentering the workforce.

Another critical piece of infrastructure being overseen by the KIC Housing Authority is the S´Eenáa Hít (also know as the Navigation Center), which aims to provide support services, potentially through Medicaid. This facility will unite health, case management, housing, and cultural services into a single location, enabling a level of coordination between the departments not previously observed. The center will also address the root causes of housing instability by connecting members with the necessary support systems in one place. The project also creates workforce opportunities for KIC, allowing more professionals to be brought onto the team to fill the Navigation Center's needs.

Unfortunately, KIC's land base is limited, which requires the Tribe to use its property strategically. Despite this, there are a number of land opportunities across the Ketchikan Gateway Borough that the Tribe has the ability to utilize. These are Jackson Street and Ten-Mile. Jackson Street presents opportunity for housing but faces topographical challenges that will need to be resolved. The Ten-Mile property represents a rare opportunity for future development and could become a site for cultural amenities, housing, workforce facilities, or economic enterprises. As the Tribe grows its housing portfolio, it is not only addressing immediate needs but also asserting stronger land sovereignty in a community where developable parcels are scarce.

New housing and infrastructural projects are not the only point of focus for the Housing Department. In 2025, the Housing Department dedicated $250K for rental assistance, and $75K for homeowner's assistance, among other programs aimed towards Elders and short-term homelessness housing. Overall, the Housing Department's work is critical to Tribal members and KIC as a whole. Although available property is limited, the department does not plan to slow its advancements towards housing goals and needs.

Education, Training, and Workforce Development

KIC's workforce development programs have emerged as one of its successful and transformative areas of service. The department has built strong relationships with local employers, state agencies, and the University of Alaska Southeast, resulting in training pathways that lead directly to employment. The CDL program has been especially successful, with two dozen Tribal members earning Class A licenses in the past year. The Tribe's flagger certification program, welding and maritime partnerships, and re-entry employment support for incarcerated citizens have also played a critical role in the Workforce Development Department's programs, and all demonstrate a clear understanding of the region's workforce needs and commitment to keeping motivated Tribal members on track.

KIC partnered specifically with the Alaska Marine Highway System and Shellfish Growers Cooperative to promote job opportunities in two industries that have recently seen diminishing employment. This partnership benefits all three organizations by providing answers to the needs of each. At the time of writing, eight Tribal members have become employed with the Alaska Marine Highway System, all for a total of less than $600 per person (training costs).

The Tribal Scholars Program, operated in collaboration with local schools and universities, bridges secondary education and post-secondary education by allowing high school students to earn college credits while reconnecting with Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian languages. The Tribe's youth programs also include after-school activities, summer employment opportunities, and skill-building workshops that emphasize financial literacy, leadership, and community service.

Workforce Development, which runs through the Education Department, strives to create opportunities for KIC members through direct employment services and vocational training grants. These grants can offer up to $10,000 for Tribal members pursuing training at accredited centers for programs leading to certification or a degree. This opportunity comes through the Department of Labor and Vocational Rehabilitation Program. From this program, 12 members have received over $70,000 in grants. Furthermore, in 2024, 46 Tribal members received over $317K in higher educational scholarships.

Cultural Resources and Heritage

Cultural Revitalization is at the heart of KIC's mission. The Tribe's cultural resources programs support language restoration, the protection of sacred objects and cultural sites, the repatriation of ancestral remains, and the dissemination of traditional ecological knowledge. Language revitalization in particular has become a major priority across Southeast Alaska, and KIC collaborates with organizations such as Tlingit & Haida, Sealaska, and local schools to promote the teaching of Tlingit, Haida, and Sm'algyax.[3]

Tourism

The Tribe's cultural preservation also has economic implications. Ketchikan is one of Alaska's top cruise destinations, reaching around 1.5 million visitors annually.[4] The traffic from these cruises is dense, and hundreds of ships between April and October bring waves of visitors to the downtown Ketchikan area and the nearby cultural areas like Saxman and Totem Bight. Demand for authentic cultural experiences such as guided tours, art markets, and storytelling, continues to grow. KIC has an opportunity to develop the cultural tourism market in Ketchikan that respect tribal values while generating revenue simultaneously.

The visitor volume from these ships creates a market for KIC to grow within. KIC holds multiple properties around the Ketchikan area that hold possibilities for tourism centers, such as totem parks, tribal villages, and more. KIC could create guided tours through Tlingit & Haida history, bus trips to totem parks, dance and education programs, and small-group wildlife excursions.

[3] Sealaska, "Sealaska Language Priorities Reflected in Seven Recent Grants," April 18, 2022, https://www.mysealaska.com/news/item/stories/sealaska-language-priorities-reflected-in-seven-recent-grants/f%E2%80%86k%E2%80%86b%E2%80%86s

[4] Jack Darrell, "Ketchikan Sees First Cruise Ship of the Season," *KRBD*, April 18, 2025, https://www.krbd.org/2025/04/18/ketchikan-sees-first-cruise-ship-of-the-season/

Economic Development Assets and Future Opportunities

KIC has a range of economic development tools at its disposal, many of which are poised for expansion. One such opportunity is the ability to leverage Ketchikan's federal designation as a Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUBZone). HUBZones, created by the United States Small Business Administration in 1998, allows access to federal contracting opportunities in fields such as construction, logistics, professional services, and maritime support for small businesses within the designated HUBZone. Therefore, if KIC wishes to expand its enterprise collection, it could tap into significant and unique streams of federal revenue.

Strategic land acquisition and development will be central to the Tribe's future. The Ten-Mile property offers immediate opportunities, but long-term economic sovereignty will depend on expanding the Tribal land base. Whether through purchase, federal programs, or negotiated agreements with local governments, increasing land control will strenghten KIC's ability to develop housing, cultural sites, and more. This could also potentially be accomplished by becoming an official Alaska Village Corporation, but this would require the amendment of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) of 1971, something which has been proposed but not yet accomplished.

In terms of community development, KIC has an opportunity to engage with local government partners to ensure that Tribal housing prioirities are represented in any discussions surrounding the Coast Guard's expanding presence in Ketchikan. Collaboration with local governments may allow KIC to take advantage of the Coast Guard's housing needs that allows for Tribal members and service members to jointly benefit.

2. Regional Highlights

Key Industry Clusters

Through research and knowledge of the Ketchikan area, along with research on KIC, the project team compiled a short list of industry clusters which are key to KIC and Ketchikan's success. These industries are strengths of KIC, but also present opportunity for further development to facilitate economic prosperity and resiliency over the next five years. Focusing development programs on specific industry clusters typically yields greater economic benefits than pursuing more generalized efforts.[5] These target industries are usually selected based on the region's natural resources, existing businesses, workforce skills, infrastructure, and institutions. By comparing these industry characteristics, communities can better understand the potential economic and fiscal impacts of attracting businesses in each target sector. Some of the opportunities incumbent within these industries are addressed in more detail in the following narrative.

Employment in KIC's key industries has fluctuated over the past decade. These key industries include:

- Commercial Fishing and Seafood Industry
- Construction
- Government
- Health care
- Maritime Economy
- Natural Resources
- Tourism & Hospitality
- Wholesale Trade

Construction

The construction sector is a key employer for KIC, but employment in this industry has been declining since 2014. Similar to trends seen across the United States, a significant portion of the construction workforce is reaching retirement age, and there are not enough younger workers with the necessary skills to replace them. As of 2024, approximately 400 individuals were employed in the sector.

Despite declining employment, construction remains critical for Ketchikan and KIC's broader economic and social goals. Housing development, infrastructure upgrades, and climate adaptation projects all depend on a skilled local construction workforce. For KIC, this labor gap aligns directly with workforce development initiatives. Strategic investment in construction training programs could address two challenges simultaneously: reducing unemployment among Tribal members while accelerating the delivery of housing and infrastructure projects essential to community stability.

[5] David L. Barkley and Mark S. Henry, *Targeting Industry Clusters for Regional Economic Development: An Overview of the REDRL Approach* (Clemson University, 2005), accessed May 5, 2025, https://ageconsearch.umn.edu/record/113803.

This industry will continue to be supported by KIC's efforts to provide new amenities to the public and KIC members. Currently, KIC is building supportive housing units for Elders, and a Navigation Center. Housing is a core area of KIC's current economic activity with direct implications for construction and construction-related employment. The Ketchikan Indian Community Housing Authority administers programs such as the Home Improvement Assistance Program, rental programs, and purchasing programs to assist Tribal members in findings housing.[6] These programs assist in stimulating demand for local contractors and skilled tradespeople, effectively connecting Tribal housing needs with construction market activity.

Table 2.1: Construction Employment Trends, 2014-2024

Industry Sector	Ketchikan
Employment 2024	399
Job Growth (2014–2024)	(117)
% Job Growth (2014–2024)	(22.7%)
2024 Location Quotient	0.83
Approx. 2024 Earnings (wages, salaries & proprietor earnings)	$90,019
Compounded Annual Growth Rate for Employment (CAGR)	(2.3%)

Source: Lightcast, 2025

Government

The government sector is one of the largest employers for Ketchikan, providing approximately 2,200 jobs across Tribal, state, and federal agencies. However, since 2014, employment in this sector has declined an average of 0.6% annually. This decline is likely driven by reductions in state and federal government employment. Since 2009, state government positions in Ketchikan have decreased approximately 30%, while federal government positions have declined 32%.[7] Although the government sector continues to offer a significant number of jobs, overall employment in the sector has dropped 6.7% over the past decade.

Table 2.2: Government Employment Trends, 2014-2024

Industry Sector	Ketchikan
Employment 2024	2,173
Job Growth (2014–2024)	(156)
% Job Growth (2014–2024)	(6.7%)
2024 Location Quotient	1.8
Approx. 2024 Earnings (wages, salaries & proprietor earnings)	$100,583
Compounded Annual Growth Rate for Employment (CAGR)	(0.6%)

Source: Lightcast, 2025

Government employment provides a stabilizing force in Ketchikan's economy, offering relatively high wages and year-round employment that helps offset the volatility of tourism and fishing. However, long-term declines in state and federal government

[6] Ketchikan Indian Community, "Core Programs," KIC Housing Authority, https://kictribe.org/housing.

[7] "NDP25-01 Southeastern/Ketchikan/NA," *U.S. Department of the Interior* (2022): 58, https://www.doi.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2025-01/ndp25-01-ketchikan-fsbfinal.pdf

employment introduce uncertainty, particularly for communities that rely heavily on public-sector wages.

KIC occupies a unique position within this employment landscape. As a Tribal government and service provider, it functions simultaneously as an employer and economic powerhouse. Continued expansion of tribal programs not only supports member well-being but also partially insulates the local economy from broader contractions.

Health Care

Ketchikan's health care sector plays a vital role in the community, offering a broad range of services such as behavioral health, dental services, and pharmaceutical services. Over the last ten years, it has grown 1.1%. Like many other communities in the U.S., workforce shortages in this sector remain a challenge. However, the sector's steady growth in employment is an encouraging sign.

Table 2.3: Health care Employment Trends, 2014-2024

Industry Sector	Ketchikan
Employment 2024	925
Job Growth (2014–2024)	10
% Job Growth (2014–2024)	1.1%
2024 Location Quotient	0.8
Approx. 2024 Earnings (wages, salaries & proprietor earnings)	$90,211
Compounded Annual Growth Rate for Employment (CAGR)	0.1%

Source: Lightcast, 2025

KIC currently provides a health clinic, dental services, pharmacy, and behavioral health programming, with planned expansions to various health services in the future. Therefore, KIC is already a major health care employer and provider in Ketchikan through its programs. Tribal governance of these services places KIC in direct alignment with the health care industry cluster, providing both employment and critical community health infrastructure.

Further evidence of KIC's successful health care programs comes from a recent award under the Indian Health Service Tribal Managements Grants Program, which allocated funding specifically to tribal organizations to enhance their ability to manage health programs and strengthen internal administrative capacity. This external grant reflects Alaska Native health care providers' broader shift toward tribal program management and local solutions to health workforce and service challenges.

Maritime Economy

The maritime economy includes industries such as shipbuilding and repairing, deep-sea freight transportation, and other water-based logistics and support services. Since 2014, employment in this sector has declined approximately 5.7%. Key reasons for this decline include delayed ferry replacement projects due to ongoing budget constraints, which

have significantly impacted local shipyard activity and jobs.[8] Additionally, maritime passenger volumes dropped 73% in 2021 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to further employment losses across related services.[9] Despite these challenges, the maritime sector still employs over 300 people in the region as of 2024.

The Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) is critical to the survivability of the Southeastern Alaskan communities. The AMHS is a state-run ferry network that connects many coastal island communities in the Southeast. It carries passengers, freight, vehicles, and serves as a critical connection for health, education, and culture for communities that are not otherwise accessible by roads, such as Ketchikan.

Table 2.4: Maritime Economy Employment Trends, 2014-2024

Industry Sector	Ketchikan
Employment 2024	345
Job Growth (2014–2024)	(21)
% Job Growth (2014–2024)	(5.7%)
2024 Location Quotient	11.78
Approx. 2024 Earnings (wages, salaries & proprietor earnings)	$108,674
Compounded Annual Growth Rate for Employment (CAGR)	(0.5%)

Source: Lightcast, 2025

For KIC members specifically, AMHS provides access to other tribal communities, cultures, traditions, and economic opportunities. Importantly, maintaining control over access, transportation, and mobility is part of tribal sovereignty. Having dependable ferry access ensures that Tribal members are not overly dependent on external or more expensive means of travel. AMHS also provides access to the tourism economy, which is important to the survivability of not only Ketchikan, but KIC as well.

The Alaska Marine Highway System has recently struggled, especially in the Port of Ketchikan, but also across Southeast Alaska. Passenger counts have dropped dramatically since 2014. While the pandemic did cause a portion of this decline, overall passenger volume has not returned to 2014 levels. This is occurring for a variety of reasons, including the lack of workers willing to participate in the industry.[10] Rising costs associated with the tourism industry may also have an impact on passenger volume. Figure 2.1 shows

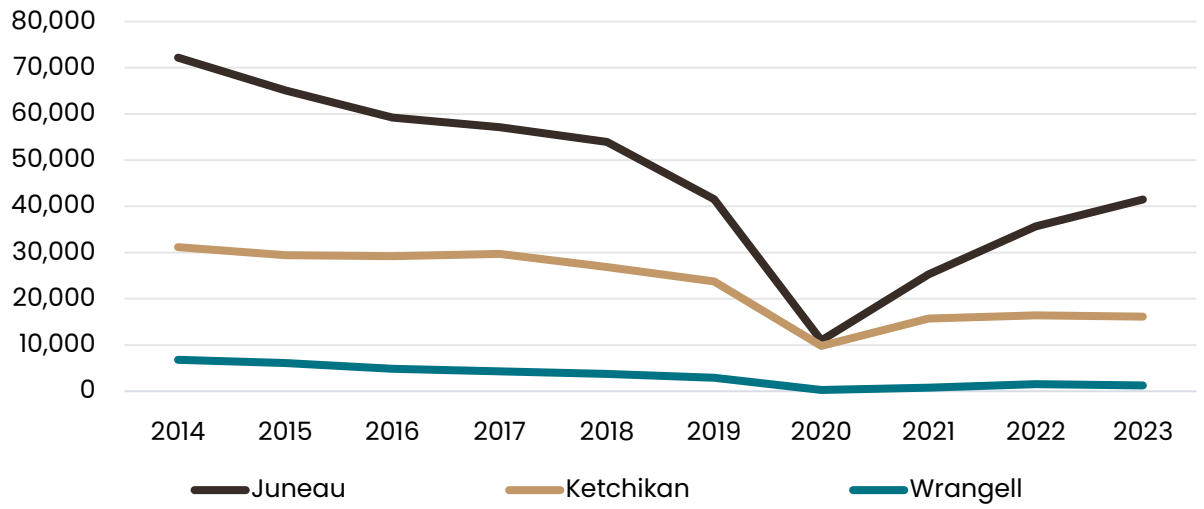
[8] Iris Samuels, "Federal funding makes a new Alaska state ferry possible — but not guaranteed," *Anchorage Daily News*, Marc 31st, 2024, https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/2024/03/31/federal-funding-makes-a-new-alaska-state-ferry-possible-but-not-guaranteed/.

[9] Rain Coast Data, "SouthEast Alaska by the Numbers 2022," *SouthEast Conference* (2022): 10, https://www.seconference.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/SE-by-the-numbers-2022-Final.pdf.

[10] Iris Samuels, "Alaska Marine Highway System 'going the wrong direction' on staffing, director says," *Anchorage Daily News,* February 2025, https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/2025/02/13/marine-highway-system-going-the-wrong-direction-on-staffing-director-says/.

decreasing passenger counts, by geography. Moving forward, it will be important to not only KIC, but all communities to support the Alaska Marine Highway System.

Figure 2.1: Passenger Totals by Geography for AMHS



Source: Alaska Marine Highway System Annual Traffic Volume Report, 2023

Natural Resources

The Natural Resources sector in the Ketchikan region has experienced a long-term economic decline. In 1990, the Tongass Timber Reform Act effectively ended guaranteed timber contracts, significantly reducing logging activity in the area. This was followed by the closure of the Ketchikan Pulp Mill in 1997, which had substantial economic consequences for local workers and families.[11] More recently, the pandemic hammered the oil and gas sector causing a loss of 3,200 jobs across Alaska, further weakening the sector.[12] As a result of these

Table 2.5: Natural Resources Employment Trends, 2014-2024

Industry Sector	Ketchikan
Employment 2024	70
Job Growth (2014–2024)	(18)
% Job Growth (2014–2024)	(20.5%)
2024 Location Quotient	0.92
Approx. 2024 Earnings (wages, salaries & proprietor earnings)	$116,829
Compounded Annual Growth Rate for Employment (CAGR)	(2.1%)

Source: Lightcast, 2025

[11] U.S. Department of the Interior, proposal, *NDP25-01* (Washington DC: Department of the Interior: 2022), 58, https://www.doi.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2025-01/ndp25-01-ketchikan-fsbfinal.pdf.

[12] Karinne Wiebold, "Alaska to add 5,400 jobs as all industries grow or stay flat," *Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development*, January 2024, https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/sites/default/files/trends/jan24art1.pdf.

combined factors, employment in the Natural Resources sector has declined 20.5% since 2014.

Tourism and Hospitality

Employment in the tourism and hospitality sector has grown at an average rate of 2.0% since 2014, reflecting Alaska's strong and expanding tourism industry. While growth was temporarily slowed by the global impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the sector has since rebounded. As of 2014, approximately 1,400 individuals were employed in this field, and that number has continued to rise. However, like many other regions, a challenge remains: many jobs in tourism and hospitality are lower paying, making it difficult to attract and retain workers especially as the cost of living continues to climb.

Table 2.6: Tourism and Hospitality Employment Trends, 2014-2024

Industry Sector	Ketchikan
Employment 2024	1,391
Job Growth (2014–2024)	273
% Job Growth (2014–2024)	24.4%
2024 Location Quotient	1.61
Approx. 2024 Earnings (wages, salaries & proprietor earnings)	$52,136
Compounded Annual Growth Rate for Employment (CAGR)	2.0%

Source: Lightcast, 2025

The Tourism and Hospitality industry is especially important for KIC, as Ketchikan's cyclical tourism economy severely limits the revenue generation opportunities outside of cruise ship operational months. For this reason, it is critical that KIC capitalizes on its cultural tourism opportunities through development of specific properties tailored to a guest experience.

Wholesale Trade

Employment in the Wholesale Trade sector has declined 5.8% since 2014. Several factors contribute to this trend. Employment has bounced back but is still 4.8% below pre-Covid levels as of 2022.[13] Despite these challenges, the sector continues to employ approximately 100 individuals, and jobs in this industry remain 1.57 times more concentrated

Table 2.7: Wholesale Trade Employment Trends, 2014-2024

Industry Sector	Ketchikan
Employment 2024	106
Job Growth (2014–2024)	(6)
% Job Growth (2014–2024)	(5.8%)
2024 Location Quotient	1.57
Approx. 2024 Earnings (wages, salaries & proprietor earnings)	$77,359
Compounded Annual Growth Rate for Employment (CAGR)	(0.5%)

Source: Lightcast, 2025

[13] Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development, "10-year industry projections," *Alaska Economic Trends Magazine*, October, 2024, https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/sites/default/files/trends/oct24art1.pdf.

locally than the national average, highlighting its continued importance to the regional economy.

Commercial Fishing and Seafood Industry

The Commercial Fishing and Seafood industry holds deep cultural and economic significance for the Ketchikan region, providing vital employment opportunities for residents. However, over the past decade, employment in this sector has declined. One likely factor is the broader downturn in the industry. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), industry profitability dropped 50% between 2021 and 2023. In 2024, Trident Seafoods announced plans to sell four of its largest plants including facilities in Kodiak, False Pass, and Ketchikan further signaling contraction.[14] Despite these challenges, the Commercial Fishing and Seafood industry remains a cornerstone of KIC's economy. Jobs in this sector are 139.57 times more concentrated locally than the national average, underscoring its outsized role in the region's employment landscape.[15]

More specifically, KIC previously owned the Deer Mountain Hatchery, which over time was unprofitable for KIC, resulting in closure of the operation.[16] This move effectively ended KIC's official relationship with the Commercial Fishing and Seafood Industry. PC felt that this industry was important to include for cultural reasons, as many American Indian and Alaskan Native communities have deep histories with fishing. This industry is also generally large in Ketchikan and the State of Alaska. Community survey responses also indicated a desire from KIC members to potentially reenter the market.

Table 2.8: Commercial Fishing and Seafood Industry Employment Trends, 2014-2024

Industry Sector	Ketchikan
Employment 2024	383
Job Growth (2014–2024)	(154)
% Job Growth (2014–2024)	(28.6%)
2024 Location Quotient	139.57
Approx. 2024 Earnings (wages, salaries & proprietor earnings)	$90,197
Compounded Annual Growth Rate for Employment (CAGR)	(3.0%)

Source: Lightcast, 2025

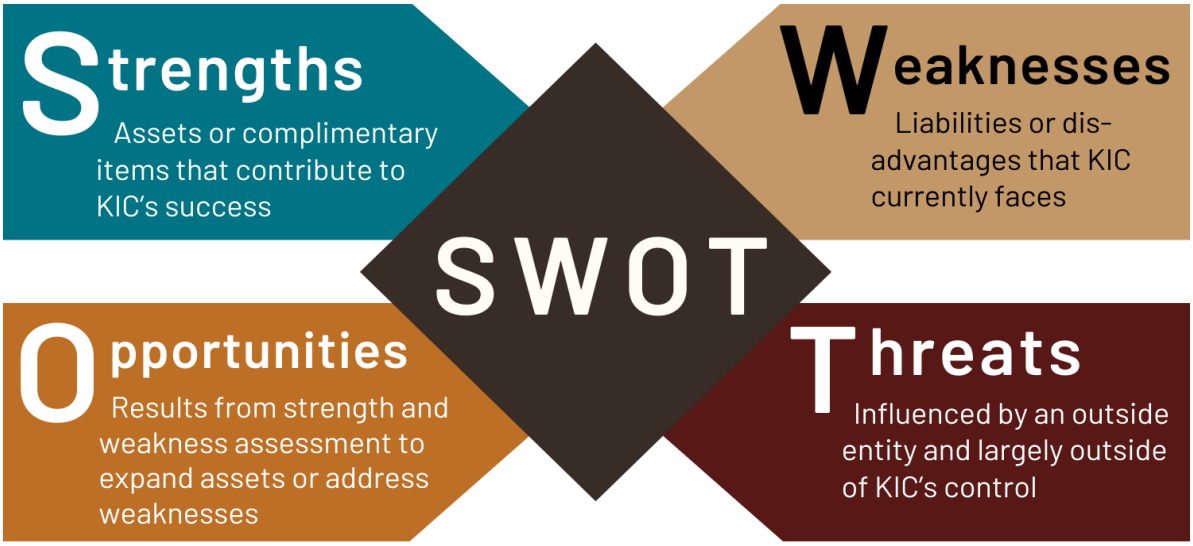
[14] NF Staff, "Alaska fishing industry sees nearly 7,000 job cuts" *National Fisherman*, October 24, 2024, https://www.nationalfisherman.com/alaska-fishing-industry-sees-nearly-7000-job-cuts.

[15] An important point about the location quotient (LQ) for the commercial fishing and seafood industry is that the math naturally drives it higher. The LQ compares the industry's share of total employment in the Ketchikan Indian Community (KIC) to its share nationwide. Because commercial fishing and seafood jobs make up a much larger portion of total employment in KIC than they do in the U.S. overall, the resulting ratio is elevated. In other words, the local share is being divided by a much smaller national share, which leads to a high location quotient indicating that the industry is significantly more concentrated in KIC than in the nation as a whole.

[16] Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association Incorporated, "Deer Mountain – Hatchery Permit #49," accessed January 29, 2026, SSRAA - Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association | Deer Mountain Hatchery.

3. S.W.O.T. Analysis

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis is a strategic planning tool which provides guidance and a comprehensive understanding of the current situation to businesses, organizations, and other entities.



Strengths

- Successful development of assets beneficial to tribal members, including a health clinic and housing projects
- Existence of Tribal Health Clinic, which benefits health care, employment, and impacts the local economy
- KIC has a young demographic, especially compared to KGB's and Alaska's
- Recent changes by Department of the Interior (DOI), which reclassified Ketchikan as "rural" and ensures priority access for harvesting resources
- Emphasis on cultural education for youth and adults
- Regional partnerships with organizations for economic development (e.g. Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce, Southeast Conference, etc.)
- Relatively strong wages for KIC employees compared to regional averages and AIAN averages
- Ketchikan Tribal Business Corporation which serves as the business development arm of KIC. Assists in organizing Tribal businesses.
- Developed Strategic Plan
- Deep cultural history
- Strong housing program which aims to provide affordable housing opportunities to Tribal members

Weaknesses

- Underdeveloped technology utilization
- Slow growing and cyclical nature of the tourism industry in Ketchikan (cyclical economy)
- Overall regional dependence on transfer payments from government agencies rather than high labor-based incomes
- Lack of affordable housing in Ketchikan area
- General cost of living in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough
- AIAN residents in Ketchikan have generally low wages compared to their non-AIAN counterparts
- Lack of Tribal trust lands
- High leadership turnover
- Low self-promotion of KIC/AIAN businesses
- Internal organizational fragmentation across departments, including limited data sharing and inconsistent communication
- High development and construction costs due to island geography and supply-chain constraints
- Limited centralized tracking of program outcomes and costs

Opportunities

- Potential to increase tribal sovereignty for fishing and use for commercial, retail, and food service
- Tourist interest in Tribal history and artifacts; Over 1.6M+ visitors per year in Ketchikan, many with a desire to learn about local culture
- Newly classified rural status opens the door to new harvesting opportunities
- State Tribal Education Compact Schools (STECS) that allow for the Tribe to educate their people while preserving rich cultural lessons
- Potential to leverage environmental monitoring with cultural programming, giving KIC the ability to build local authority in natural resource management and cultural revitalization
- Advocation for local native fisherman
- Leverage Ketchikan's SBA set-aside certifications to pursue federal contracting opportunities
- Pursue strategic land acquisition to expand sovereign land holdings
- Secure last-mile broadband and ensure access to all KIC members
- Leverage tribal funding and partnerships to advance resilient and sustainable energy designs in housing and other projects
- Opportunity to leverage Coast Guard presence to jointly benefit service members and Tribal member's housing needs

Threats

- Shifts in federal policies away from pro-sovereignty positions on economic development
- Risk of losing more long-term housing units to short and moderate-term rentals resultant of tourism industry
- Presence of numerous highly cyclical industries, including tourism, fishing, oil, and gas
- Environmental uncertainty
- Isolation of Revillagigedo Islands hinders access to resources
- Jurisdictional complexity between KIC, City, Borough, State, and Federal authorities that can delay or constrain projects

The SWOT analysis points to several conditions that shaped the goals and priorities outlines in Chapter 4. KIC enters this planning period with real institutional strengths, such as an established health and behavioral services system, a growing housing portfolio, demonstrated workforce development outcomes, and an expanding role as a regional economic anchor. At the same time, the analysis surfaces structural constraints that cannot be wished away. Limited trust lands restrict development options, internal coordination gaps reduce organization effectiveness, and the region's dependence on cyclical industries creates persistent income and employment volatility for Tribal members. The strategic direction that follows is designed with these realities in mind. The goals prioritize stabilizing the foundation, then building outward toward enterprise growth, workforce expansion, and long-term land and cultural asset development. Progress on any single goal will be easier to sustain if the foundational work on housing internal coordination moves forward in parallel.

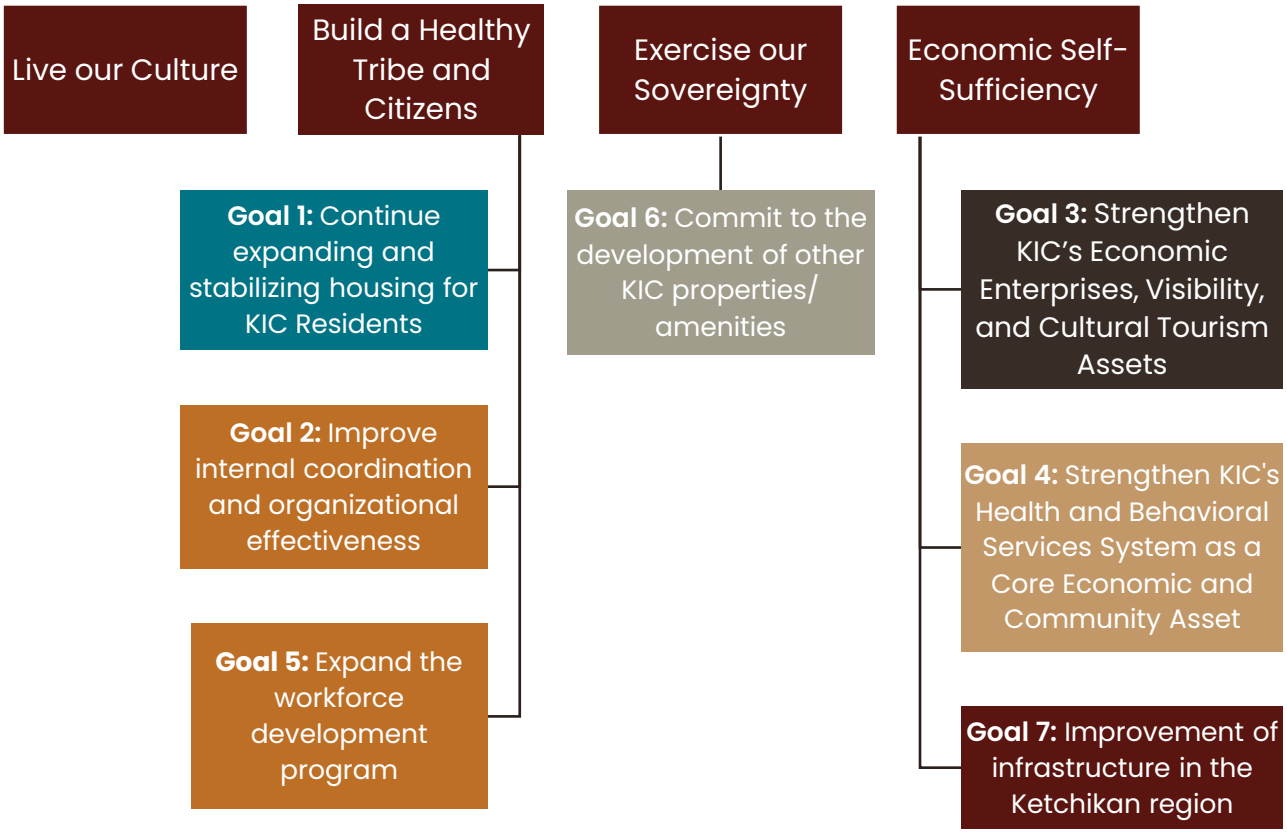
4. Strategic Direction & Action Plan

The Strategic Direction & Action Plan is the most critical aspect of a CEDS. It accounts for the socioeconomic, community, and external factors uncovered during the SWOT analysis and aligns those factors with specific strategies and actions that community leaders can address. Figure 4.1 demonstrates the alignment of these Goals and Objectives with the house posts created in the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan (Figure 1.2).

Vision Statement

"We ensure the prosperity of a culturally rich heritage and a thriving community of healthy and economically self-sufficient Tribal Citizens."

Figure 4.1: Goals and Objectives Alignment with House Posts



Ideally, over the next five years community leaders will be able to return to these Goals and Objectives in order to measure performance of the community. At its core, the Strategic Direction & Action Plan answers two fundamental questions:

- Where does KIC want to go as a community?
- How will KIC get there?

There are two layers to the Strategic Direction & Action Plan:

Goals

Goals are big-picture outcomes and intentions that provide direction based on the Vision Statement. Frequently, Goals are intangible and somewhat aspirational. They provide a structure for the more precise Objectives.

Objectives

Objectives fold into the Goals but are more measurable and specific. Objectives identify specific actions and tactics that can be taken to achieve the Goals.

The goals and objectives listed and elaborated throughout this chapter are intended to improve the economic resiliency of KIC and help leadership expand beyond their current limits. They are not equal in sequence or function. Goals 1 and 2 are foundational: expanding and stabilizing housing and strengthening internal coordination are prerequisites that enable KIC to execute the more ambitious work ahead. Goals 3, 4, 5, and 6 represent the core economic growth agenda, addressing enterprise development, workforce outcomes, healthcare improvements, and the long-term activation of KIC's physical and cultural assets. Goal 7 addresses the infrastructure baseline on which the community's resilience depends. Leadership is encouraged to use this framework when allocating time, staffing, and funding across competing priorities, particularly in the first two years of implementation when capacity constraints will require clear choices about what comes first. The goals and objectives are listed below:

Goal 1: Continue expanding and stabilizing housing for KIC residents

- **1.1** Improve client service and workflow integration between housing, behavioral health, and social services
- **1.2** Finish current housing projects, such as the Elder permanent supportive housing, and multi-family developments
- **1.3** Strengthen long-term housing planning by establishing a pipeline of continuing projects
- **1.4** Investigate possibilities and demand for non-Elder permanent supportive housing solutions
- **1.5** Consider program for preservation of single-family and multi-family units from further corporate acquisition
- **1.6** Utilize the Coast Guard's presence to partner with local governments and create housing opportunities for both service members and Tribal citizens.

Goal 2:
Improve Internal Coordination and Organizational Effectiveness

- **2.1** Establish cross-department coordination meetings
- **2.2** Implement collaborative IT systems for improved communication and cybersecurity
- **2.3** Develop succession plans for key leadership roles
- **2.4** Increase administrative capacity for each department, adding coordinators and funding at least one shared administrative position
- **2.5** Identify reasons for employee turnover and improve employee retention rates

Goal 3:
Strengthen KIC's Economic Enterprises, Visibility, and Cultural Tourism Assets

- **3.1** Improve processes for retrieving financial data for planning purposes
- **3.2** Continue submitting competitive bids for Small Business Administration set-asides
- **3.3** Improve visibility of KIC programs to external organizations/the public
- **3.4** Identify tourism opportunities and take advantage of the environmental land cultural resources currently available for tourism purposes
- **3.5** Consider key building and property acquisitions of city and KGB owned properties
- **3.6** Improve amount of spending by KIC on tribally owned businesses
- **3.7** Pursue partnerships with cruise ship industry to promote cultural tourism
- **3.8** Begin development on multiple properties oriented towards cultural tourism, including Ten-mile

Goal 4:
Strengthen KIC's Health and Behavioral Services System as a Core Economic and Community Asset

- **4.1** Address Provider recruitment and retention as a structural institutional priority by reducing dependence on temporary staff and increasing local hiring pipelines
- **4.2** Complete and advance feasibility studies for the behavioral health clinic and healing enter
- **4.3** Reduce dependence on out-of-Ketchikan referrals by expanding health clinic service offerings
- **4.4** Improve health system administrative structure, including electronic health records, billing workflows, and interdepartmental data sharing
- **4.5** Formalize the operational architecture of KIC's integrated behavioral health care model

Goal 5: Expand the workforce development program to ensure positive employment outcomes for KIC citizens

- **5.1** Improve current workforce development systems and create leadership pipelines to develop the next generation of Tribal leaders
- **5.2** Execute MOAs with at least five regional employers/organizations specifying preferred hiring or training program partnerships
- **5.3** Improve member volunteer programs, especially for the Elders program
- **5.4** Enhance workforce development pipeline for regionally critical professions

Goal 6:
Commit to the development of other KIC properties/amenities

- **6.1** Develop and publicize disaster evacuation plan in coordination with both City and Borough management
- **6.2** Improve statistics and processes on tribal enrollment for improved planning and communication
- **6.3** Create a master plan and development timeline for the family justice building, healing center, wellness center, and Ten-mile property
- **6.4** Continue growth of Positive Parenting courses
- **6.5** Improve local cultural communication (primarily schools) with good, authentic educational content

Goal 7:
Improvement of infrastructure in the Ketchikan Region

- **7.1** Continue to pursue electric grid resiliency projects with funding from the Department of Energy
- **7.2** Continue to enhance pedestrian safety through proper planning and pursuing grant funds through the Tribal Transportation Program Safety Fund
- **7.3** Secure supplemental disaster recovery funding from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- **7.4** Develop broadband internet service provider (ISP) system for Tribal members

Key Projects

Within these goals and objectives, we have identified a few key projects that KIC can prioritize to bring the greatest regional impact in the first few years of implementation of the CEDS. These projects are listed below along with the objective they align with. A full implementation plan and implementation steps for all goals and objectives can be found in the Evaluation Framework section in Tables 5.1-5.7.

Key Projects:

- Finish construction of 28-Unit permanent supportive housing project (Goal 1.2)
- Finish construction of the Woodland Triplex (Goal 1.2)
- Finish construction and staffing of S´Eenáa Hít Navigation Center (Goal 1.2)
- Implement collaborative IT systems for improved communication and cybersecurity (Goal 2.2)
- Execute MOUs with regional employers specifying preferred hiring or training program partnerships (Goal 4.2)
- Create a master plan for the healing & wellness center (Goal 5.3)
- Create a master plan for the ten-mile property (Goal 5.3)
- Finish highway and sidewalk safety project (Goal 6.2)

5. Evaluation Framework

The Evaluation Framework component of a CEDS defines the standards by which Strategic Direction & Action Plan progress will be measured over the next five years. Each CEDS Annual Update will report progress according to these metrics. Whereas the Strategic Direction & Action Plan focuses on where the regional economy will go and how it will get there, the Evaluation Framework focuses on the key questions:

- "How are we doing?" and
- "What can we do better?"

A few clarifications are necessary regarding the Evaluation Framework. While some performance measures are highly quantitative, others focus on the development or improvement of qualitative features. All measures should be reviewed annually to track progress made and identify where more focus should be placed the next year. The expected duration for each task is indicated in the time-line column in Table 5.1.

Each action is aligned with one of the six goals outlined in the Strategic Direction & Action Plan. Additionally, the evaluation framework provides an idea of who the responsible parties are for each action along with potential external partners. Key indicators are provided as a means to track progress in annual evaluations of the CEDS progress.

Implementation Schedule & Progress Indicators

The following table outlines which departments and entities should work towards and evaluate the identified goals and actions over the next five years. A Short-Term timeline should be considered a one to two year project, Mid-Term three to four years, and Long-Term about five years. However, the timelines provided for completing these actions reflect PC's estimates. KIC may choose to adjust these timelines as they see fit based on available resources, capacity, and other practical considerations.

Table 5.1: Action Plan Implementation Schedule & Key Indicators

Goal	Objective	Internal Actors	Potential External Partners	Timeline	Key Indicators
1. Continue expanding and stabilizing housing for KIC residents	**1.1** Improve integration between housing, behavioral health, and social services	Housing, Behavioral Health, Social Services		Short-Term (+Ongoing)	Cross-department meetings occurring on a defined schedule; number of shared referrals or joint cases tracked quarterly
	1.2 Finish current housing projects, such as the Elder and multi-family developments	Housing, Planning Department	Private affordable housing developers, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC), Denali Commission	Mid-Term	Certificates of Occupancy (CO) for new units
	1.3 Strengthen long-term housing planning by establishing a pipeline of continuing projects	Housing, Planning Department	Private Developers, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC), Denali Commission, Cape Fox/Other Tribal Partners	Mid-Term (+Ongoing)	Number of Units planned as compared to state/regional goals by AMI and number of units under active development or financing
	1.4 Investigate possibilities and demand for non-Elder permanent supportive housing solutions	Housing, Social Services	Private Partners, City of Ketchikan, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC)	Mid-Term	Number of suitable properties identified; recommendation issues (proceed or do not proceed) with supporting rationale
	1.5 Consider programs for preservation of single-family and multi-family units from further corporate purchases	Housing, Planning Department		Long-Term	Fund created, units purchased for preservation
	1.6 Utilize the Coast Guard's presence to partner with local governments and create housing opportunities for both service members and Tribal citizens.	Housing, Planning Department	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, City of Ketchikan, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC)	Long-Term	Signed MOUs (and/or MOAs) with significant parties, including the United States Coast Guard, Ketchikan Gateway Borough, and City of Ketchikan

2. Improve internal coordination and organizational effectiveness	**2.1** Establish cross-department coordination meetings	Administration, Planning, Health, Education & Training, Social Services, Housing, and Cultural Resources Departments		Short-Term	Increase in number of cross-department initiatives or shared projected initiated as a result of increased meeting frequency
	2.2 Implement collaborative IT systems for improved communication and cybersecurity	IT Department		Short-Term	List of systems implemented; staff adoption rate tracked at 6 and 12 months
	2.3 Develop succession plans for key leadership roles	Administration		Short-Term	Number of succession plans created and reviewed with identified successors
	2.4 Increase administrative capacity for each department, adding coordinators and funding at least one shared administrative position	Administration, Planning, Health, Education & Training, Social Services, Housing, and Cultural Resources Departments		Mid-Term	Number of added positions
	2.5 Identify reasons for employee turnover and improve employee retention rates	Administration		Mid-Term	Employee turnover rates compared to prior-year baselines and comparable tribal employer benchmarks
3. Strengthen KIC's Economic Enterprises, Visibility, and Cultural Tourism Assets	**3.1** Improve processes for retrieving financial data for planning purposes	Chief Financial Officer; Tribal Council; Department Administrators		Short-Term	Adoption of standard operating procedure related to financial data requests
	3.2 Continue submitting competitive bids for SBA set-asides	Administration, Tribal Business Corporation	Federal Government/Small Business Administration	Short-Term (+Ongoing)	Number of 8A contracts awarded; tracking of total contract value awarded
	3.3 Improve visibility of KIC programs to external organizations/the public	Administration	City of Ketchikan, Ketchikan Gateway Borough	Short-Term (+Ongoing)	Annually published fact sheet; number of external partnership

					inquires or documented instances of KIC being cited as a community contributor
	3.4 Identify tourism opportunities and take advantage of the environmental and cultural resources currently available for tourism purposes	Cultural Resources Department		Mid-Term	Number of tourism opportunities identified and the utilization rate of these resources (are our resources seeing groups of tourists every day and generating revenue?)
	3.5 Consider key building and property acquisitions possibilities for city and KGB owned properties	Housing & Planning Departments	City of Ketchikan, Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Denali Commission	Mid-Term	Key properties identified, Number of purchased properties
	3.6 Improve amount of spending by KIC on tribally owned businesses	Chief Financial Officer; Tribal Council; Department Administrators	Denali Commission	Mid-Term (+Ongoing)	Increase in percentage of KIC spending on tribally owned businesses
	3.7 Pursue partnerships with cruise ship industry to promote cultural tourism	Cultural Resources Department	Cruise Ship Businesses (e.g. Alaska Dream Cruises, American Cruise Lines, Royal Caribbean, etc.)	Long-Term	Meetings held with cruise line representatives
	3.8 Begin development on multiple properties oriented towards cultural tourism, including Ten-mile	Cultural Resources, Planning, Education & Training Departments		Long-Term	Master plan developed, Development started
4. Strengthen KIC's Health and Behavioral Services System as a Core Economic and Community Asset	**4.1** Address Provider recruitment and retention as a structural institutional priority by reducing dependence on temporary staff and increasing local hiring pipelines	Health, Administration, and Education & Training Departments		Short-Term (+Ongoing)	Staff vacancy rate; reduction in dependence on temporary or contract staffing; number of locally hired staff
	4.2 Complete and advance feasibility studies for the	Health, Social Services, and	Private Consultants	Mid-Term	Development plan completed; funding sources identified;

	behavioral health clinic and healing enter	Planning Departments			construction or renovation timeline established
	4.3 Reduce dependence on out-of-Ketchikan referrals by expanding health clinic service offerings	Health Department	Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC)	Mid-Term	Number of new service lines added; estimated reduction in out-of-Ketchikan referrals; number of patients served by new services annually
	4.4 Improve health system administrative structure, including electronic health records, billing workflows, and interdepartmental data sharing	Health, IT, and Administration Departments		Short-Term	EHR system reviewed and updated; billing workflow improvements documented; data sharing protocols established across relevant departments
	4.5 Formalize the operational architecture of KIC's integrated behavioral health care model	Health and Behavioral Health Departments	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration	Mid-Term	Integrated care model documented and adopted; referral pathways and care coordination protocols in place; number of clients served under the integrated model annually
5. Expand the workforce development program to ensure positive employment outcomes for KIC citizens	**5.1** Improve current workforce development systems and create leadership pipelines to develop the next generation of Tribal leaders	Education & Training Department		Short-Term	Number of credentials earned, job placements recorded, six-months retention rate, and average wage at placement
	5.2 Execute MOAs with at least five regional employers/organizations specifying preferred hiring	Education & Training Department	Regional Employers, Denali Commission	Mid-Term	Number of MOAs signed

	or training program partnerships				
	5.3 Improve member volunteer programs, especially for the Elders program	Education & Training Department		Mid-Term	Number of active volunteers and number of volunteer hours logged annually
	5.5 Enhance workforce development pipeline for regionally critical professions	Education & Training Department	Local Employers, Chamber of Commerce, Ketchikan Marine Industry Council, Grow Ketchikan, Denali Commission	Long-Term	Number of new programs added; Employer satisfaction with program graduates
6. Commit to the development of other KIC properties/ amenities	**6.1** Develop and publicize disaster evacuation plan	Safety & Emergency Management Coordinator	City of Ketchikan, Ketchikan Gateway Borough	Short-Term	Plan developed, published, and communicated to Tribal members; number of members who received notification
	6.2 Improve statistics collection processes in tribal enrollment for improved planning and communication	Planning Department, Administration		Short-Term	Enrollment data audit completed; SOP adopted; percentage of records verified as current
	6.3 Create a master plan and development timeline for the family justice building, healing center, and Ten-mile property	Health, Planning, and Social Services Departments	Private Developers	Mid-Term	Master plans completed for each property; first development action initiated within plan timeline
	6.4 Continue development of Positive Parenting Classes	Social Services, Behavioral Health, Cultural Resources Departments		Mid-Term	Number of class participants and completions
	6.5 Improve local cultural communication (schools, primarily) with good authentic educational content.	Education & Training, Cultural Resources Departments	Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District	Mid-Term	Student attendance at presentations and programs

7. Improvement of infrastructure in the Ketchikan region	**7.1** Continue to pursue electric grid resiliency projects with funding from DOE	Planning Department, Safety & Emergency Management	U.S. Department of Energy	Short-Term (+Ongoing)	Number of projects funded and completed; estimated percentage reduction in grid vulnerability or diesel dependency
	7.2 Continue to enhance pedestrian safety through proper planning and pursuing grant funds through the Tribal Transportation Program Safety Fund	Planning Department, Safety & Emergency Management	U.S. Department of Transportation FHWA, Private Consultants	Mid-Term (+Ongoing)	Grant funds secured for pedestrian safety
	7.3 Secure supplemental disaster recovery funding from EDA and FEMA	Safety & Emergency Management	Economic Development Administration, Federal Emergency Management Association	Long-Term	Funding secured; projects initiated; estimated number of households or assets covered by new resilience measures
	7.4 Develop broadband ISP system for tribal members	Planning Department, Tribal Council, Administration	National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Economic Development Association	Long-Term	Number of tribal member households connected to tribal broadband system

Table 5.2: Implementation Steps for Goal 1: Continue expanding and stabilizing housing for KIC residents

Goal 1 Objectives	Suggested Steps
1.1 Improve integration between housing, behavioral health, and social services	Create a cross-department task force with a representative from the housing, behavioral health, and social services departments
	Identify areas that overlap between the departments or gaps where collaboration could be beneficial to all
	Identify what roles can be played by each department in these areas
	Establish a standard operating procedure (SOP) for a "referral" system to provide smooth transfer between departments
	Set up regular check-in meetings to coordinate on how goals are being achieved
	Review progress on current projects

1.2 Finish current housing projects, such as the Elder and multi-family developments	Verify that funding sources are sufficient for completion
	Develop tenant selection criteria (If needed)
	Communicate progress and estimated completion dates to the community
1.3 Strengthen long-term housing planning by establishing a pipeline of continuing projects	Assess current and future housing needs
	Identify land suitable for future housing development in the region
	Seek partnerships with Cape Fox and other local organizations/tribes to locate land available for joint housing projects
	Meet with private developers to understand barriers to building housing in Ketchikan
	Complete engineering and water feasibility analysis for necessary properties (e.g. Jackson Street property)
	Meet with additional stakeholders to explore possibilities for housing expansion and funding options
	Prioritize projects by urgency and impact
	Create a schedule for efficient use of resources, as one project ends, ensure the next project is ready to begin construction
1.4 Consider program for preservation of single-family and multi-family units from further corporate purchases	Create a list of properties likely to need preservation efforts for KIC to watch for
	Establish a dedicated housing acquisition reserve to allow KIC to act quickly on housing acquisitions when out-of-town corporations act to acquire properties
	Build relationships with local owners to ensure they are aware of the KIC as a possible buyer when they decide to sell
1.5 Investigate possibilities for possible permanent supportive housing solutions	Work with the Cities of Ketchikan and Saxman to identify and quantify the need for permanent supportive housing
	Research models of permanent supportive housing in other tribal communities
	Assess what nearby services/opportunities would best support individuals living in permanent supportive housing (e.g. health care, social services, transportation)
	Identify possible suitable properties (vacant or redevelopable) that would be close to other necessary services/opportunities
	Identify possible funding sources such as federal and state grants or nonprofit or philanthropic partnerships
	Contact AHFC to explore funding options for appropriate projects
1.6 Utilize the Coast Guard's presence to partner with local governments and create housing opportunities for both service members and Tribal citizens.	Convene a meeting with representatives from the Borough, City, and Coast Guard to identify shared housing needs, assess the scale of demand from service members, and establish KIC's role as a partner in regional housing planning discussions.
	Begin exploration of KIC and Borough properties to determine feasibility as mixed-use or dual-population housing sites.
	Formalize a partnership through an MOU or joint planning agreement.

Table 5.3: Implementation Steps for Goal 2: Improve internal coordination and organizational effectiveness

Goal 2 Objectives	Suggested Steps
2.1 Establish cross-department coordination meetings	Create a planning committee with representatives from all key departments
	Establish an SOP outlining agenda, procedures, and frequency of such meetings
	Conduct regular joint planning sessions to review current projects and priorities, identify overlapping goals, and plan for future collaborative initiatives
2.2 Implement collaborative IT systems for improved communication and security	Assess the current system and potential needs for upgrades including where communication or security is weaker
	Select which collaborative tools would be most beneficial to KIC
	Train staff on using collaborative IT systems and tools
	Assign someone to monitor usage and troubleshoot issues as they arise
2.3 Develop succession plans for key leadership roles	Determine which roles could be considered key leadership roles
	Determine what factors are most important to consider in determining how to refill these roles
	Develop plans for how to refill these roles and provide training to new personnel before key roles are vacated
2.4 Increase administrative capacity for each department, adding coordinators and funding at least one shared administrative position	Define the role the coordinators and additional administrative position will have
	Determine where funding for new positions will come from
	Follow hiring procedures to hire qualified candidates
2.5 Identify reasons for employee turnover and improve employee retention rates	Conduct exit interviews (where possible)
	Conduct an annual employee engagement survey
	Evaluate feedback to identify common reasons employees may be leaving the KIC
	Benchmark employee turnover stats against industry standards for workforce retention
	Develop a plan to improve the identified areas
	Streamline process for approving job descriptions for open positions
	Consider offering retention bonuses for employees that stay with the Tribe long-term

Table 5.4: Implementation Steps for Goal 3: Strengthen KIC's Economic Enterprises, Visibility, and Cultural Tourism Assets

Goal 3 Objectives	Suggested Steps
3.1 Improve processes for retrieving financial data for planning purposes	Determine what financial data are commonly needed for planning purposes
	Develop SOP detailing expected timelines and level of staff authorized to make such requests
	Implement procedures to keep track of this data in an accessible location and consistent format
	Audit business procedures and ensure proper documentation is organized in light of recent 8a scrutiny
	Pursue more IT, health, and construction contracts in line with existing Business Corporation strategies

3.2 Continue submitting competitive bids for federal 8A contracts	Follow federal 8a program audit requirements when necessary
	Find additional opportunities aligned with interest and skills of KTBC Family
	Develop staffing plan for KIC Members for appropriate positions to execute federal contracts
3.3 Improve visibility of KIC programs to external organizations/the public	Using the KIC Annual Report each year, create a one-pager fact sheet of the impacts KIC has on the community as a whole
	Identify ways to share this and other KIC accomplishments with the community as a whole (e.g. KIC Facebook page)
3.4 Complete required feasibility studies for behavioral health clinic and healing center	Hold preliminary discussions on plan details of the behavioral health clinic and healing center
	Identify potential sources of grant funding
	Conduct feasibility study
	Determine next steps for the healing center
3.5 Identify tourism opportunities and take advantage of the cultural resources currently available for tourism purposes	Inventory cultural and environmental tourism amenities and activities currently active and brainstorm possible additional consumer interest
	Ensure cultural tourism department remains engaged to ensure historical and cultural accuracy and respectfulness in the long run
	Identify individuals or organizations who could serve as advocates for these types of tourism
3.6 Consider key building and property acquisitions for city and KGB owned properties	Identify which city and KGB owned buildings and properties would be beneficial for KIC to purchase
	Meet with city and KGB representatives to discuss the possibility of purchasing properties
	Initial soft offers on relevant properties
	Develop real estate acquisition criteria for profitable assets outside of Ketchikan
3.7 Improve amount of spending by KIC on tribally owned businesses	Develop SOP detailing the target percentage of KIC spending that goes to tribally owned businesses
	Identify services that tribal owned businesses could provide where other businesses are currently providing them
	Review budgets quarterly to track whether target percentage is being met
3.8 Pursue partnerships with cruise ship industry to promote cultural tourism	Define what goals the Ketchikan Indian Community has in partnering with the cruise ship industry
	Research how cruise lines have partnered with indigenous people in other regions and decide which cruise lines to begin collaboration with
	Development of a “stewardship crew” that has basic archeological, historical, safety and hospitality training
	Hold meetings with representatives from the cruise ship industry to lay out how a partnership could be beneficial to both parties
	Decide what cultural experiences would be best to develop and promote as part of this partnership (potentially tours of Totem Bight State Park)
	Develop materials for the cruise lines to use for advertising cultural tourism in Ketchikan
3.9 Begin development on multiple properties oriented	Determine priorities for where and what to develop first to enhance cultural tourism the most
	Coordinate with Cultural Resources department on secret and sacred materials to not be utilized for cultural tourism.

towards cultural tourism, including Ten-mile	Develop master plans and consider conducting feasibility study on most aligned and profitable cultural tourism concepts
	Identify possible funding sources for development of land
	Create and publish an RFP to find the right developer for the project

Table 5.5: Implementation Steps for Goal 4: Strengthen KIC's Health and Behavioral Services System as a Core Economic and Community Asset

Goal 4 Objectives	Suggested Steps
4.1 Address Provider recruitment and retention as a structural institutional priority by reducing dependence on temporary staff and increasing local hiring pipelines	Conduct and internal audit of current vacancy rates, turnover patterns, and reliance on temporary or contract staffing across clinical and administrative roles
	Identify the compensation, scheduling, and quality-of-life factors most cited by departing staff through exit interviews and peer benchmarking against comparable tribal health systems
	Develop a recruitment strategy that targets tribal citizens for clinical and administrative roles, including partnerships with University of Alaska Southeast and other credentialing programs
	Establish retention incentives for long-term staff, including compensation review cycles, professional development funding, and career advancement pathways
	Set annual targets for reducing vacancy rates and temporary staffing dependence
4.2 Complete and advance feasibility studies for the behavioral health clinic and healing enter	Identify and prioritize funding sources for development, including Indian Health Service construction programs, Denali Commission grants, and other federal tribal health facility funding
	Determine the scope, location, and services to be housed in the facility, in coordination with the Health, Social Services, and Planning Departments
	Develop a project timeline with defined milestones from design through construction or renovation
	Engage the community in the design process to ensure the facility reflects Tribal values and addresses the most pressing service gaps
4.3 Reduce dependence on out-of-Ketchikan referrals by expanding health clinic service offerings	Identify the service lines with the highest referral volume and the greatest potential for in-house delivery such as dialysis, women's health, and specialty care
	Assess the staffing, equipment, space, and licensing requirements for each candidate service line
	Analyze the revenue and cost implications of bringing each service in-house, including potential reimbursement from HIS, Medicaid, and other payers
	Assess the economic benefit of making new services available to non-tribal members in Ketchikan
4.4 Improve health system administrative structure, including electronic health records, billing workflows, and interdepartmental data sharing	Assess the current state of electronic health records, identifying gaps in functionality, usability, and interdepartmental data sharing
	Develop a prioritized list of upgrades or system changes, in consultation with clinical and administrative staff
	Review billing workflows to identify common points of error, delay, or revenue loss, and develop corrective procedures
	Establish data sharing protocols between the Health Department and other relevant departments
	Assign responsibility for ongoing monitoring of administrative system performance and schedule annual reviews
7.5 Expand community health outreach and preventive care programming	Identify the chronic conditions and health risk factors most prevalent among KIC's Tribal membership, using existing clinic data and IHS reporting
	Develop a community health outreach plan that prioritizes screenings, education, and early intervention for those high-prevalence conditions

	Define annual outreach targets and track participation, conditions identified, and referrals generated
	Evaluate the program at the end of year two and adjust the outreach strategy based on participation data and community feedback

Table 5.6: Implementation Steps for Goal 5: Expand the workforce development program to ensure positive employment outcomes for KIC citizens

Goal 5 Objectives	Suggested Steps
5.1 Implement a workforce outcomes tracking system to track long-term success that records credentials earned, job placement, retention, and wage progression	Identify the success indicators to track and the time period/intervals at which they will be tracked
	Develop a survey or other method of obtaining information on participants after they exit the programs (e.g. job placement, retention, and wage progression)
	Develop a procedure for recording the data including where and how to store the data so it is accessible and usable in the future
5.2 Execute MOUs with at least five regional employers/ organizations specifying preferred hiring or training program partnerships	Brainstorm a list of regional employers/organizations to reach out to about this partnership (e.g. JAG Marine Group, Dawson Construction, etc.)
	Communicate with representatives from each employer/organization to determine if they are willing to go forward with an MOU
	Develop a template for the MOUs including KIC's goals and expectations for the agreement
	Discuss/negotiate the MOUs with the employers/organizations to ensure they are beneficial to all parties
5.3 Improve member volunteer programs, especially for the Elders program	Identify what volunteer programs should be focused on first, based on need for volunteers
	Select someone to champion the organization and increase effectiveness of member volunteer programs
	Consider facilitating an open house or community survey to get input from KIC members on how they would be willing to volunteer and how they would like to hear about opportunities
	Determine how to share volunteer opportunities with members (e.g. through Facebook, newsletters, adding a sign-up page to the KIC website, etc.)
5.4 Enhance workforce development pipeline for regionally critical professions	Identify highest demand and most difficult to fill positions (e.g. nurses, CDL) through discussions with local employers and analyzing labor market data
	Develop marketing with workforce development and communications material to recruit candidates
	Identify what programs are already offered for these skills and what programs could be added or improved
	Explore partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce, the Ketchikan Marine Industry Council, Grow Ketchikan, University of Alaska Southeast etc. to continue to improve workforce development programs and opportunities in Ketchikan
	Advertise workforce development plans locally to employers, upcoming high school graduates, and KIC members.

Table 5.7: Implementation Steps for Goal 6: Commit to the development of other KIC properties/amenities

Goal 6 Objectives	Suggested Steps
6.1 Develop and publicize disaster evacuation and resiliency plan	Coordinate with the City of Ketchikan and Ketchikan Gateway Borough on acquiring funding of a disaster evacuation and resiliency plan (e.g. EDA grant)
	Develop a plan for evacuations and rebuilding in the case of flooding and other natural disasters
6.2 Improve statistics and processes on tribal enrollment for improved planning and communication	Conduct an internal audit of enrollment data to identify incomplete records and outdated information
	Create an SOP detailing collection, organization, and storage of data including who has access and data security plans
	Maintain tribal member data by requiring/incentivizing biennial updates to tribal member/household info
6.3 Create a master plan and development timeline for the family justice building, healing center, and Ten-mile property	Identify which property is of largest priority and begin with that property
	Determine which department(s) will be in charge of the planning process for each property
	Consider collecting community feedback on what needs should be filled by each property
	Create a master plan for each property including the goals of the development, review of zoning and land use policies, analysis of the site topography, soil conditions, etc., expected costs, and design concepts.
	Create a development timeline for each property
6.4 Continue development of Positive Parenting Classes	Keep track of attendance numbers of the class
	Consider identifying other needs for parenting that could be compiled into a sequel class
6.5 Improve local cultural communication (schools, primarily) with good authentic educational content.	Identify possible ways to share cultural education with the community such as presentations to grade school classes, after school cultural education programs, etc.
	Coordinate with the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District on how to implement these programs
6.6 Expand health clinic offerings to include a variety of treatments not offered in Ketchikan, such as dialysis	Identify the treatments that are not offered in Ketchikan that would be possible to add to the health clinic (e.g. dialysis, women's health, etc.)
	Consider surveying the community to see which treatments would be most desirable
	Collect data on how often patients must be referred to clinics further away for each of these treatments
	Analyze revenue and cost implications of reducing external spending for health care providers and bring such services in house
	Asses what authorizations and paperwork will be needed by the State Department of Health
	Choose which treatments it is most feasible and desirable to add to current offerings at the clinic
	Obtain any required licenses and accreditations including additional training for staff, nurses, and practitioners as needed
	Consider spacial needs for treatment (equipment, dedicated treatment space, etc.)
	Study economic and community benefits of non-tribal members visiting KIC health facilities

	Purchase equipment needed for treatment

Table 5.8: Implementation Steps for Goal 7: Improvement of infrastructure in the Ketchikan region

Goal 7 Objectives	Suggested Steps
7.1 Continue to pursue electric grid resiliency projects with funding from DOE	Identify qualified projects to improve the electric grid in Ketchikan
	Establish guidelines of how to prioritize which project to fund first
	As funds are awarded each year, plan and carry out plans to perform highest priority projects
7.2 Continue to enhance pedestrian safety through proper planning and pursuing Tribal Transportation Program Safety Fund grants	Consider developing a master plan for safety, specifying which areas require improvements for safety of the community
	Continue to apply for TTPSF grants to fund these projects beginning with the highest priority
	Where needed, submit RFQs for designers and developers of projects
7.3 Secure supplemental disaster preparedness funding from EDA and FEMA	Develop and approve a Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) according to FEMA guidance and with coordination from the City of Ketchikan and Ketchikan Gateway Borough
	Identify eligible, needed projects in Ketchikan that target areas such as economic stability, job protection, flood management, wildfire mitigation, other disaster prevention and mitigation, etc.
	Identify which organization (FEMA or EDA) is more aligned with the type of project, or different parts of a project
	Monitor and apply for grant opportunities to fund disaster preparedness and resilience projects
7.4 Develop broadband ISP system for tribal members	Identify regional providers of broadband and how KIC can work with them for middle-mile broadband
	Identify areas where last-mile broadband is needed including wiring and other infrastructure additions
	Create a tribal broadband enterprise to oversee the distribution of broadband
	Register as a broadband provider with the Federal Communications Commission
	Conduct a feasibility & network design study to determine the feasibility of the project
	Secure funding for capital costs of implementation. Possible grant funding options include NTIA Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program, USDA ReConnect, EDA
	Establish criteria for use of program (e.g. free for tribal members, costs for non-tribal members)

6. Economic Resiliency

Economic resiliency refers to the ability of a regional economy to cope with hardship. According to the EDA, economic resiliency includes the following three attributes: the ability to recover quickly from a shock, the ability to withstand a shock, and the ability to avoid the shock altogether.[17] A partnership between local institutions, businesses, and neighborhoods is necessary to achieve true resiliency, along with coordinated regional-level planning. Building economic resilience into a regional economy requires the ability to anticipate risk, evaluate how that risk can impact key economic assets, and build a responsive capacity, all activities that can facilitated through CEDS planning.

In 2024, a partnership between the City of Saxman, City of Ketchikan, and the Ketchikan Gateway Borough, created the Greater Ketchikan Area (GKA) Multi-Jurisdictional Emergency Operations Plan.[18] The plan was created to address preparedness for emergencies impacting GKA residents which would include most of the members of the KIC. This plan includes a base plan which defines the roles and responsibilities of local agencies, elected officials, and tribal entities recognizing the KIC as a sovereign Tribal nation but emphasizing the strength that could come from partnerships and coordination with GKA jurisdictions. The base plan also details what is to be done in each emergency phase: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. The second part of the plan is the functional & hazard-specific annexes which provides protocols for specific threats (e.g. tsunami, hazardous materials) or functions (e.g. evacuation, public information). This response plan is an example of a "responsive" resiliency initiative rather than a "steady state" one: it outlines how the community can expect to receive emergency notifications, and details how specific response actions will take place. The KIC should focus on fostering partnerships with the GKA to ensure greater strength for the community amid emergencies.

Regional Risk

Ketchikan sits in a geography that is both economically valuable and vulnerable. The community's coastal setting and island-based infrastructure creates unique risks, especially when combined with the sometimes intense local climate.[19] Such risks include:

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[17] "Economic Resilience," US Economic Development Administration, accessed January 30, 2026, https://www.eda.gov/grant-resources/comprehensive-economic-development-strategy/content/economic-resilience.

[18] "Greater Ketchikan Area Multi-Jurisdictional Emergency Operations Plan," April 4, 2024, https://www.borough.ketchikan.ak.us/DocumentCenter/View/12380/2024-EOP-Base-Plan-Adopted-with-Joint-Res.

[19] STARR, "Ketchikan Gateway Borough Discovery Report" (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2014), https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/Portals/4/pub/Ketchikan_Gateway_AK_Discovery_Report.pdf.

- Earthquakes
  - The KGB is located on several fault lines.
- Landslides
  - Steep terrain and large amounts of precipitation causes loose ground.
- Flooding
  - Flooding does occasionally occur in Ketchikan, but it is not the largest risk posed compared to other risks.
- Tsunami
  - Ketchikan's geography on the Pacific Ocean and surrounded by fault lines which does make it susceptible to tsunamis. However, Revillagigedo Island is sheltered by other surrounding islands of Southeast Alaska.
- Severe Weather
  - Like many other ocean towns, weather can ramp up in severity quickly, ranging from wind and rainstorms to extreme snowstorms.

These vulnerabilities became very real in August 2024, when a landslide in Ketchikan resulted in one death, multiple injuries, evacuations, and damage to homes and utilities. Events such as these are important to recognize not only from a community standpoint, but also from an economic point of view because they can disrupt workforce availability, displace households, damage infrastructure, and impose costs upon the municipality. Ketchikan's housing supply is also already geographically constrained, meaning that structure losses may be amplified compared to other susceptible communities.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Ketchikan also experiences economic exposure from reliance on a few major sectors that are sensitive to shocks. The tourism industry is a prime example of this, with nearly 1.5 million cruise passengers in peak season. [20] This cyclical industry is both positive and negative for Ketchikan's economy. On one hand, revenue during summer months is high, and the overall economic well-being of the KGB improves dramatically. However, it also strains infrastructure and creates volatility in employment, housing availability, and service delivery. When the tourism industry is disrupted, as it was during the COVID-19 pandemic, these economic boosts are quickly dissipated.

The regional economy is also tightly bound to the cost and reliability of essentials such as energy, freight, and health care access. Therefore, resilience in a city such as Ketchikan may depend less on quick growth, and more on building strong systems that can thrive under heavy economic fluctuations from tourism and living costs.

KIC also remains exposed to transportation and supply chain fragility, which is one of the defining resilience challenges for island-based economies. The Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) functions as a critical lifeline network for Southeast communities, and service levels depend on fleet maintenance cycles, vessel repairs, and schedule changes. Any disruption to this system will reduce mobility for workers and residents and makes recovery harder during natural disasters and downturns. From a resilience standpoint, this

[20] Jack Darrell, "Ketchikan Sees First Cruise Ship of the Season," *KRBD*, April 18, 2025, https://www.krbd.org/2025/04/18/ketchikan-sees-first-cruise-ship-of-the-season/.

indicates a need for stronger local preparedness, more reliable freight coordination, and systems that reduce exposure to external interruptions.

Finally, KIC experiences capacity constraints that are common in rural and tribal communities, including limited staffing bandwidth, limited access to specialized planning/engineering resources, and the challenge of coordination across three different government entities (KIC, KGB, and City of Ketchikan). All of these factors pose threats to the long-term success of KIC and the surrounding economy. For KIC, this means that resilience is not simply about identifying new projects, but also sustaining the organizational capacity to develop, implement, and maintain them over time.

Current Resiliency Assets

To account for many of the aforementioned risks, Ketchikan does have an array of assets that support economic resilience. One such asset is the City of Ketchikan's power supply, which is currently focused on hydropower systems supported by multiple projects. More specifically, hydropower is the primary generation source, which is supplemented by diesel generators during low reservoir periods, with additional supply tied to the Southeast Alaska Power Agency (SEAPA) projects.[21] Ketchikan is able to supply approximately 50% of its power requirements with its own hydropower. The additional 50% comes from a power sales agreement with SEAPA. Unfortunately, this does expose Ketchikan to some risk, as not all power is supplied through their own means.

KTBC's Mission

"Achieve economic self-sufficiency and build wealth through Tribally aligned businesses that benefit our community."

While Ketchikan itself has multiple assets that are geared towards the region's resiliency, KIC has also developed a strong network of initiatives that directly improve the community's ability to withstand disruption, support community health, stabilize households, and diversify economic opportunities. An important arm of this work for KIC has been the Ketchikan Tribal Business Corporation (KTBC). The KTBC currently works towards bringing economic stability, resiliency, and sovereignty to members of KIC. Its mission and vision emphasize sustainable growth and prosperity for future Tribal members.

KTBC's portfolio includes subsidiaries that operate across multiple sectors, including facility services and IT/cybersecurity support. These industries are generally less seasonal than tourism and can provide stable employment opportunities for Tribal members. Importantly for resilience, diversification also strengthens KIC's ability to sustain programs and services even when external funding may fluctuate.

KIC has also invested in a variety of infrastructural needs to combat economic instability issues, such as housing and health care. Housing is often a point of vulnerability during disasters and economic downturns, so KIC continues to invest in housing for its members,

[21] "KPU and Hydro-Electric Generation," City of Ketchikan, accessed January 30, 2026, https://www.ketchikan.gov/hydro-electric.

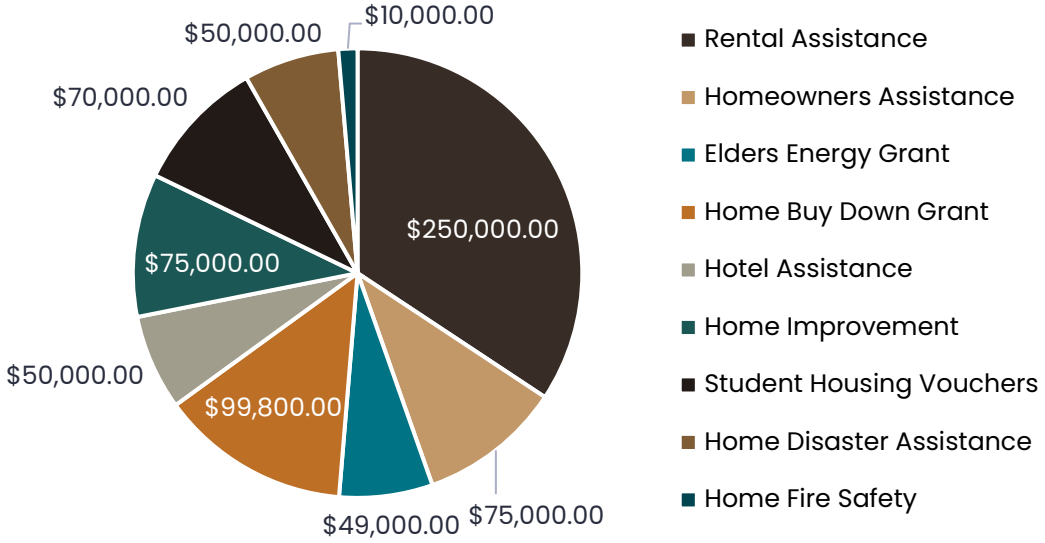
as demonstrated in Chapter 1. KIC is currently building out a variety of projects which include single-family homes and apartments.

Health care is also a huge portion of KIC's current economic well-being. Economic resilience is inseparable from community health and workforce participation. KIC's health and wellness investments strengthen resilience by reducing the long-term effects of addiction, untreated mental health needs, and addressing the lack of affordable health care overall. KIC's health care system will hopefully provide a strong leg to stand on during economic downturns for the foreseeable future.

In 2023, KIC spent over $5 million on direct payments to Tribal Citizens to assist with various needs, such as housing payments, burial fees, education, training, and emergencies. Over the previous 5 years, KIC has spent an average of approximately $9 million on member assistance.

Furthermore, the Ketchikan Indian Community Annual Report in 2024 indicates that there will be over $725K dedicated to helping the housing needs of its members and community.

Table 6.1: Housing Programs Budget for 2025



Source: Ketchikan Indian Community Annual Report 2024

Other Critical Assets

Broadband Internet Access

One strong indicator of any community's resiliency today is true post-COVID pandemic recovery. The COVID-19 shutdowns highlighted the need for better internet infrastructure to prevent breakdown of communication during unforeseen circumstances. Many communities across the country were forced to quickly adapt. Fortunately, high-speed internet is relatively accessible in Ketchikan and the surrounding areas. According to data from the Census Bureau, the percentage of households in the Ketchikan ANVSA (including Ketchikan, Saxman, and Ward Cove) with high-speed internet is slightly greater than the percentage in the U.S. and over six percentage points greater than in Alaska.

Table 6.2: Households with Broadband and Computers

	Households that have Broadband (High-Speed Internet Subscription)	Households that Have a Desktop Computer or Laptop
City of Ketchikan	72.7%	79.0%
Ketchikan ANVSA	75.4%	81.4%
KGB	74.7%	81.0%
Alaska	69.0%	81.4%
US	74.6%	79.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, S2801, 2023

The fact that Ketchikan has such a high percentage of households with high-speed internet likely creates many opportunities the Tribe can capitalize on. Fast internet could open the door to things like telework & telehealth appointments, and online jobs and skills training. Students and youth could further their education through online learning options offered by universities that are further away. Older or non-traditional students might particularly appreciate technology that would allow them to pursue educational opportunities without having to travel to a physical campus.

Ketchikan's relatively abundant internet access is an example of a steady-state, or long-term initiative. Improving internet accessibility will help the Tribe continue its operations in the event of another pandemic-like shock as well as ensure crisis communication operations continue functioning in the case of an emergency.

Social Services

The Ketchikan Indian Community offers many social services related to domestic violence prevention & intervention, Elder meals & caregiving, and other need-based financial aid.[22] Additionally, the KIC recently secured funding for an initiative which will construct 28 units designed for seniors who are at risk of experiencing homelessness. This will allow for greater security for many vulnerable Elders of the community to have more stable living environments and support.[23]

Education

Education functions as a long-term resilience strategy by strengthening workforce adaptability and earning potential. Lower post-secondary attainment among AIAN populations represents both a challenge and an opportunity. Targeted investments in education and credentialing programs can produce high economic returns if aligned properly with high-demand sectors such as health care, construction, and maritime services.

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[22] "Social Services," Ketchikan Indian Community, accessed October 31, 2025. http://www.kictribe.org/social-services.

[23] Ketchikan Daily News. "Funding Secured for KIC Housing Project." *Ketchikan Daily News*, July 19, 2025. https://www.ketchikandailynews.com/news/local/funding-secured-for-kic-housing-project/article_cecaf770-0d6f-4939-8448-c3f857cc6cc8.html.

KIC has made intentional steps towards improving the education of its members, including multiple rounds of educational funding and cultural education programs.[24] Recently, KIC was selected among five Alaskan Tribes to be part of the state-tribal education compact pilot program.[25] The program rewards grant funding to the selected tribes for a handful of years with the intention of each tribe opening its own school. These schools, called State Tribal Education Compact Schools (STECs), would be public schools open to all students and are intended to provide a culturally rich combination of modern Western education mixed with ancient tribal educational models.

Further educational programs are provided by KIC as well. The Education & Training department of the KIC is intended to help KIC members achieve self-sufficiency, success, and fulfillment through accomplishing their educational and vocational goals. The main educational programs are:

- Employment & Training Services
- Post-Secondary Services—including scholarships for both undergraduate and graduate students.
- Youth Services
- Cultural Education
- Heritage Language Program

Ketchikan residents also have access to higher education through the University of Alaska Southeast which has opportunities for Bachelors and Associates degrees as well as many certificates and training for the trades. The UAS Ketchikan campus is home to the Maritime Training Center with many programs specific to the maritime industries. Another option is Alaska Construction Academies which has a location in Ketchikan. This academy has programs for high school students and adults to be trained and placed into construction and trade apprenticeship programs.

KIC's workforce development department has strong partnerships with these programs to ensure the availability of higher education and training to all tribal members.

Cultural Resources

"It is our mission to steward, conserve, preserve, enhance, and protect places and customs that are of significant historical, cultural, and environmental importance by using traditional ecological and cultural knowledge and science."[26]

The Cultural Resources Department was officially formed in 2013 to address environmental and cultural issues that could impact the KIC's "way of life". This department encourages

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[24] Alexandra Kay, "Readying the Next Generation, Tribal Support for Southeast Workers," *Alaska Business Magazine*, vol 39, 9, September 2023, Readying the Next Generation.

[25] Reagan Miller, "Ketchikan Indian Community among five Alaska tribes selected for state-tribal education compact pilot program," *KTOO*, March 17, 2023, Ketchikan Indian Community among five Alaska tribes selected for state-tribal education compact pilot program

[26] "Cultural Resources," Ketchikan Indian Community, accessed October 31, 2025. https://www.kictribe.org/culturalresources.

both understanding of the traditions and customs of the KIC and the promotion and protection of healthy ecosystems in partnership with federal and state partners.

7. Summary Background

In most communities in the United States, analysts rely upon a combination of data sources from state and federal organizations. Common sources at the federal level include the U.S. Census Bureau and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), among others. Tribal areas are a challenge to survey accurately due to the combination of inadequate and culturally based federal data collection policies and practices, tribal communities' mistrust of government agencies, non-traditional employment and residential patterns, and other cultural differences. For these reasons, these standard means of data collection have historically proven to be inaccurate.

In the case of Ketchikan and the Ketchikan Indian Community (KIC), there is no defined reservation or tribal area. The members of KIC are spread throughout the Cities of Ketchikan and Saxman, as well as across the entire Ketchikan Gateway Borough. To help remedy this, the Census Bureau creates Alaska Native Village Statistical Areas (ANVSAs) to represent permanent and/or seasonal residences of Alaska Natives who are members of, or receive governmental services from, the defining Alaska Native Village (ANV). ANVSAs include only an area where Alaska Natives represent a substantial proportion of the population during at least one season of the year.[27] Within the Ketchikan Gateway Borough (KGB), approximately 95.0% live within the Ketchikan ANVSA.

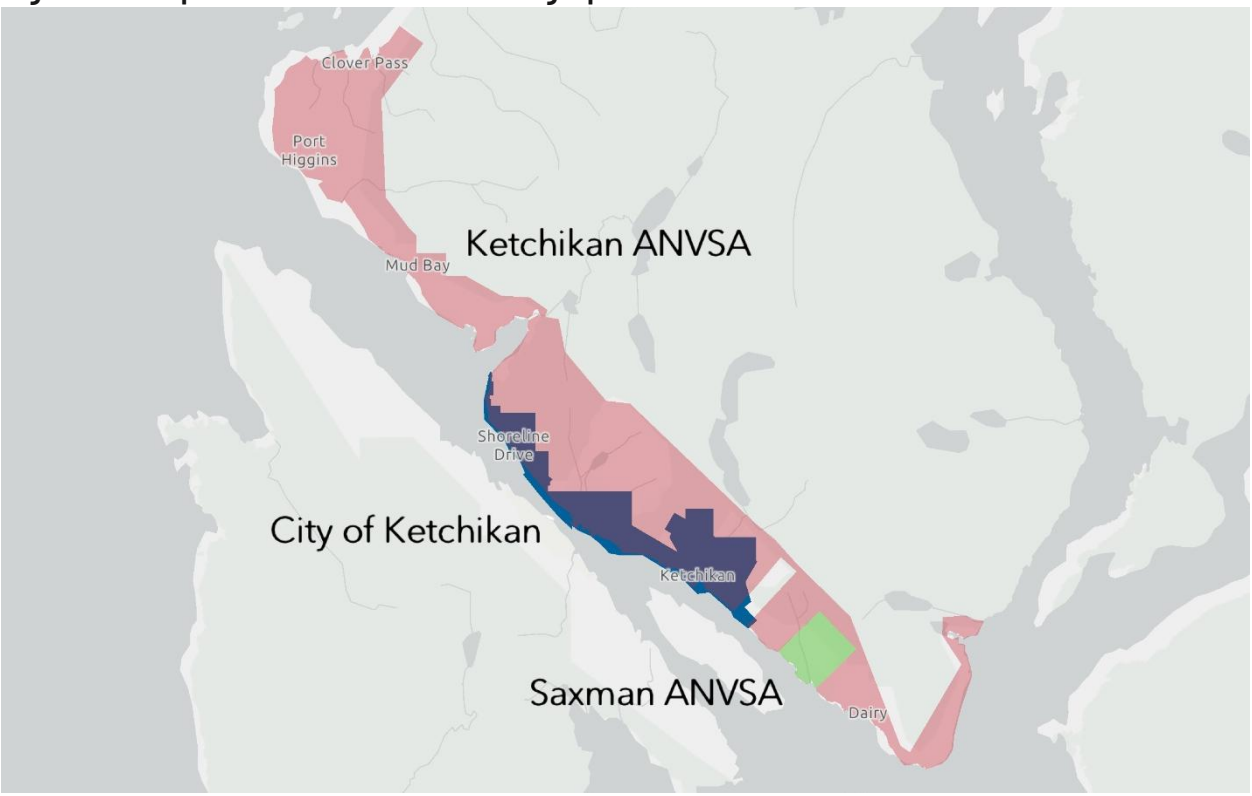
While the lack of a defined reservation area makes demographic collection of KIC members difficult, the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis's Reservation Profile Database along with U.S. Census Bureau American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) specific data tables help to define the demographic profile of the AIAN community in Ketchikan. With this data, we can be confident that the findings presented draw close to representing the members of KIC, as those who are AIAN in Ketchikan are likely to be affiliated with KIC.

In addition to these public data sources, PC incorporates several proprietary datasets and insights from a community survey conducted as part of this analysis (please reference the Community Engagement section for more information). Proprietary data sources are used when they offer more recent, region-specific, or otherwise higher quality information than public sources. For example, Esri Business Analyst provides 2024 data, whereas Census data may only be available through 2023 or earlier. These socioeconomic data are essential for understanding the characteristics of the County's population and provide a foundation for developing an effective regional economic development strategy.

Figure 7.1 shows an approximate layout of the ANVSA areas surrounding the City of Ketchikan. The Saxman ANVSA is also pictured in green, but won't be included in any analysis in this section.

[27] "Definitions of the Native American Indian and Alaska Native Geographic Areas," U.S. Census Bureau, accessed January 30, 2026, https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/geography/about/glossary/aian-definitions.html

Figure 7.1: Map of Ketchikan's Native Geographies



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ESRI Business Analyst

One of the main takeaways of this chapter is that AIAN people have struggled in comparison to the broader community. Across most measures, AIAN people fare worse than the general population. For instance:

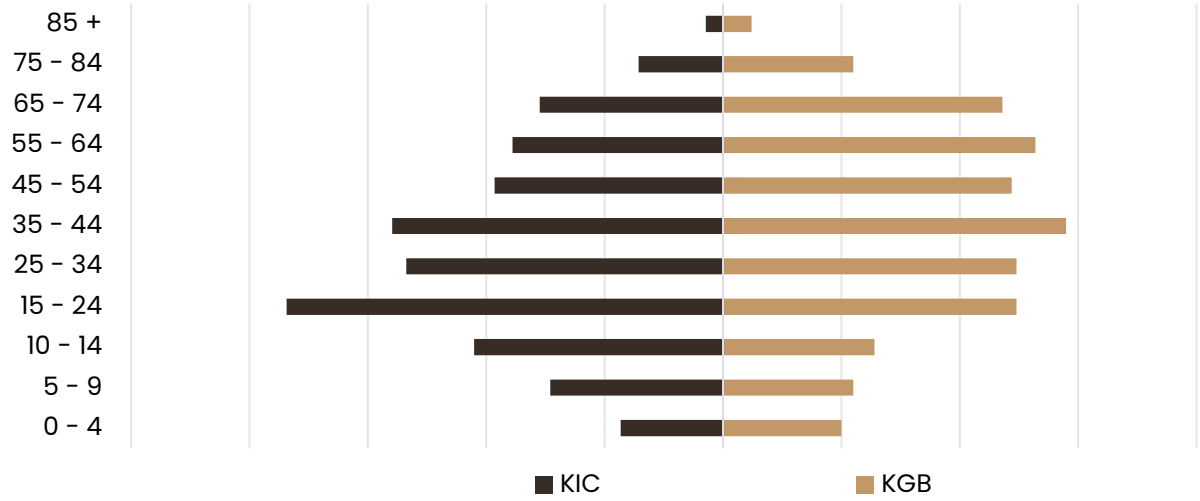
- Household income is over $40K less than the general population of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough and the City of Ketchikan.
- Poverty rates among AIAN people in Ketchikan are double that of the general population.

Demographics

The Ketchikan Indian Community is large, with total membership cresting over 6,500. Locally, around 5K members live in the KGB. KIC provided PC with partial enrollment data for approximately half of its membership. Using this, our team created a heatmap of member locations and age breakdowns, and we are confident that the demographic findings from this data represent KIC membership well. The vast majority of members live in either Ketchikan or Saxman, both located in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough.

Figure 7.2 shows the ages of the Ketchikan Indian Community compared to Ketchikan Gateway Borough. The largest age group for KIC is 15–24-year-olds, while for the Borough it is 35–44-year-olds. Overall, KIC enrollees are more youthful than the broader KGB population. The median age of KIC members is 32, compared to 40.8 for KGB. This is a sizable difference in terms of population dynamics. Over 50% of KIC membership is below 35 years of age.

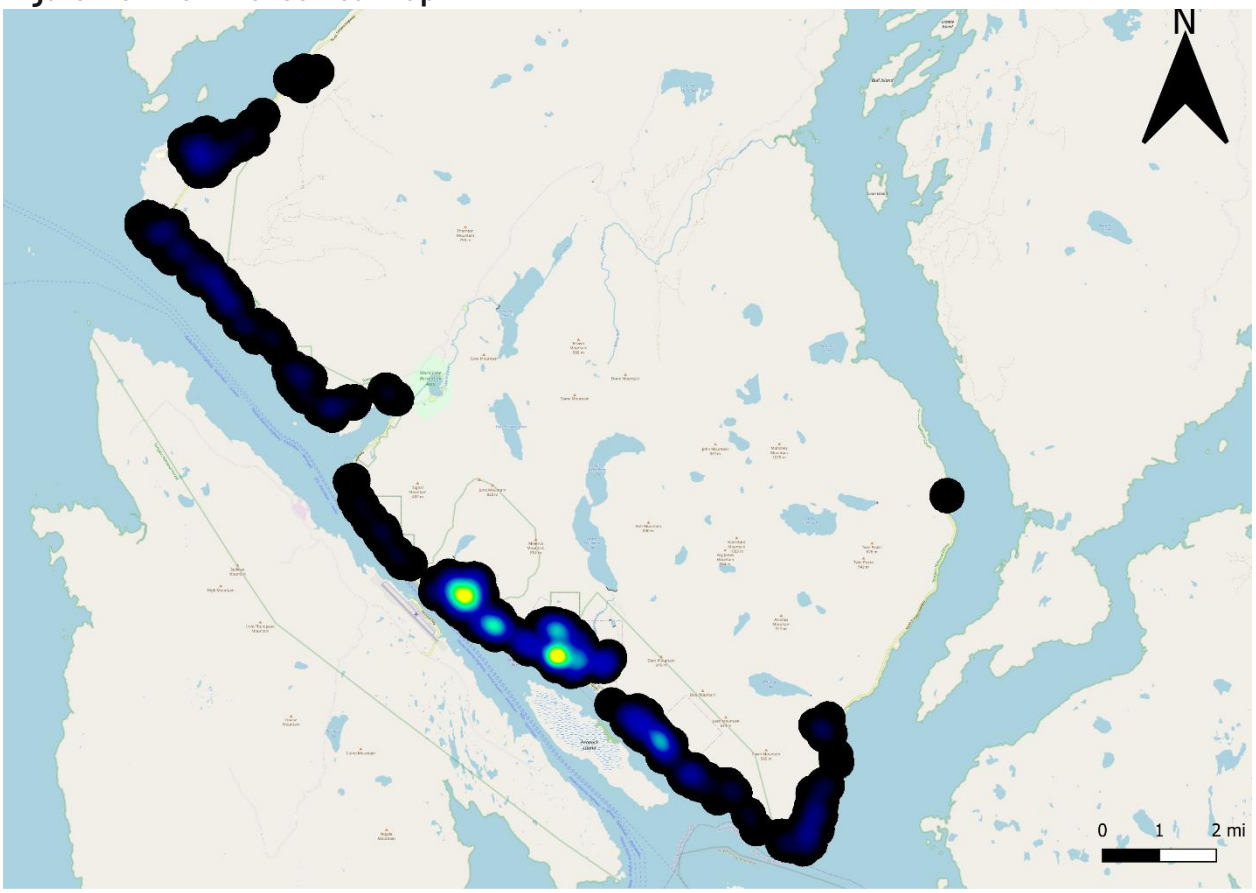
Figure 7.2: KIC Enrollees and Ketchikan Gateway Borough Age Comparison



Source: PC using data from KIC

Figure 7.3 provides a heatmap of the enrollees that are in the Borough. As shown, most members live in the heart of the City of Ketchikan. There are also some large groups in Saxman, and to the northwest following the shoreline. Most enrollees in KIC are located within the Ketchikan Gateway Borough though.

Figure 7.3: KIC Enrollee Heatmap



Source: PC using data from KIC

To properly assess the demographics of KIC and understand the differences between KIC and non-KIC residents, our demographic research will evaluate the City of Ketchikan, ANVSA, and Borough of Ketchikan, Alaska, and the US. Within those geographies, the AIAN population has been segmented to highlight the differences between likely KIC members and the broader community.

Nationally, an increasing number of people are identifying as American Indian and Alaska Native. Between 2000 and 2010, the AIAN cohort increased 27% at the national level. Many tribal areas are adjacent to urban and micropolitan centers and, in some areas, reservations have been fully encircled by urban population centers. AIAN populations that live adjacent to reservations tend to fare better in terms of income and poverty statistics. However, in the case of the Ketchikan Indian Community, there is no reservation to assess for population statistics.

Despite the increases in AIAN-identifying populations around the United States, the population in Ketchikan has been declining. This likely coincides with the City's simultaneous recent population decrease. Interestingly, the population of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough (KGB) has grown in the last five years (+70). However, the AIAN population has also decreased within the KGB.

In the City of Ketchikan, AIAN residents comprise approximately 19.8% of the population. White residents are the largest cohort within Ketchikan, followed by Asians and multi-racial residents. AIAN residents in the city are younger than their non-AIAN counterparts. This trend is shared across all other identified geographies. More specifically, AIAN populations have a lower median age than the median for all races at the national level. The median age for AIANs in Ketchikan is around four years lower than the AIAN population in the US, and about 10 years lower than the median age for all U.S. residents. In general, the population in Ketchikan is younger than the U.S. population. However, the population of the entire KGB is older, meaning that more rural areas favor older residents.

Table 7.1: Demographics of the City of Ketchikan

Race/Ethnicity	Population	Share
White Alone	4,052	50.0%
Asian Alone	1,102	13.6%
Two or More Races	1,078	13.3%
Hispanic Origin	446	5.5%
Some Other Race Alone	146	1.8%
Black Alone	97	1.2%
Pacific Islander Alone	24	0.3%
American Indian Alone	1,604	19.8%
Total Non-AIAN	6,499	80.2%
Total	**8,103**	**100%**

Source: ESRI Business Analyst, 2024

Table 7.2: Median Ages by Geography

Geography	Male	Female	Overall
All Races			
City of Ketchikan	35.9	38.5	36.9
KGB	40.7	40.9	40.8
Alaska	35.2	36.1	35.6
United States	37.7	39.8	38.7
AIAN Population			
City of Ketchikan	27.3	31.6	28.8
KGB	31.8	33.5	32.8
Alaska	29.4	30.8	30.2
United States	32.3	33.6	32.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2023, B01002(C)

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment is an important statistic to note in a demographic breakdown because of its link to positive economic development outcomes. In fact, economic research shows that education plays a vital role in increasing labor productivity, contributing anywhere from 13 to 30 percent of the total productivity increase. In essence, this means that investments in education (human capital) are comparable to

investments in financial capital or equipment in terms of how they boost economic growth and resiliency.[28]

The AIAN population in Ketchikan shows a low rate of high school graduates, with double the share of non-high school graduates as the rest of the City (6.3%). However, the rate of high school or GED equivalent achievement is higher than the rest of the city (42.5% compared to 31.3%). For post-secondary education, only 10.0% of AIAN residents in Ketchikan have achieved a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 24.0% of Ketchikan residents and 35.0% of the U.S. population. This implies that AIAN residents are falling behind around the high school level.

Figure 7.4 shows a visual representation of the differences in educational attainment between AIAN and general populations. Across all geographies, post-secondary achievement is lower among AIAN cohorts. Non-high school graduates are also more common in the AIAN demographic. However, a majority of AIAN residents complete high school or the GED equivalent in all geographies. It should also be noted that AIAN residents in Alaska, the KGB, and the City of Ketchikan all have lower rates of post-secondary completion than the U.S. AIAN population.

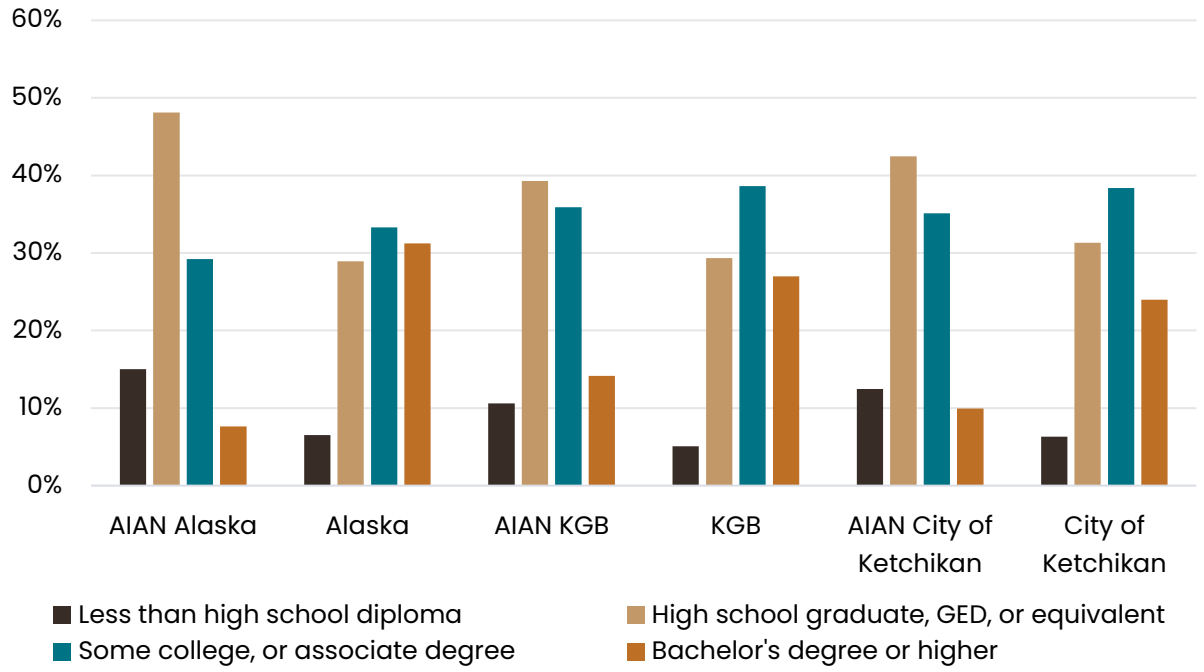
Table 7.3:AIAN Educational Attainment, Population 25 Years and Older, 2023

Educational Level	U.S.	Alaska	KGB	Ketchikan ANVSA	City of Ketchikan
Less than high school diploma	21.5%	15.0%	10.6%	10.5%	12.5%
High school graduate, GED, or equivalent	31.2%	48.1%	39.3%	37.1%	42.5%
Some college, or associate degree	31.1%	29.2%	35.9%	36.0%	35.1%
Bachelor's degree or higher	16.2%	7.6%	14.2%	16.4%	10.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2023, C15002C

[28] Gary S. Becker, "Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis with Special Reference to Education" (University of Chicago Press, 1983).

Figure 7.4: Comparison of Educational Attainment in AIAN and the Entire Population, 25 Years and Older, 2023



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2023, C15002C, S1501

Crime

Criminal activity can reduce current and future economic productivity and can generally negatively impact community morale. Research has shown that individuals who come from low-income backgrounds are more prone to committing crimes and are also more likely to be the victims of crime. [29] Additionally, a report from the National Congress of American Indians states that Indian reservations face violent crime rates that are 2.5 times higher than the national rate, with some reservations seeing that rate rise as high as 20 times the national rate of violence.[30] Additionally, despite the AIAN population only accounting for 0.5% of the U.S. population, they make up about 3.0% of the incarcerated population.[31]

Figure 7.5 displays the number of reported crimes per year, covering a wide range of criminal activities. The data comes from the Ketchikan Police Department through the

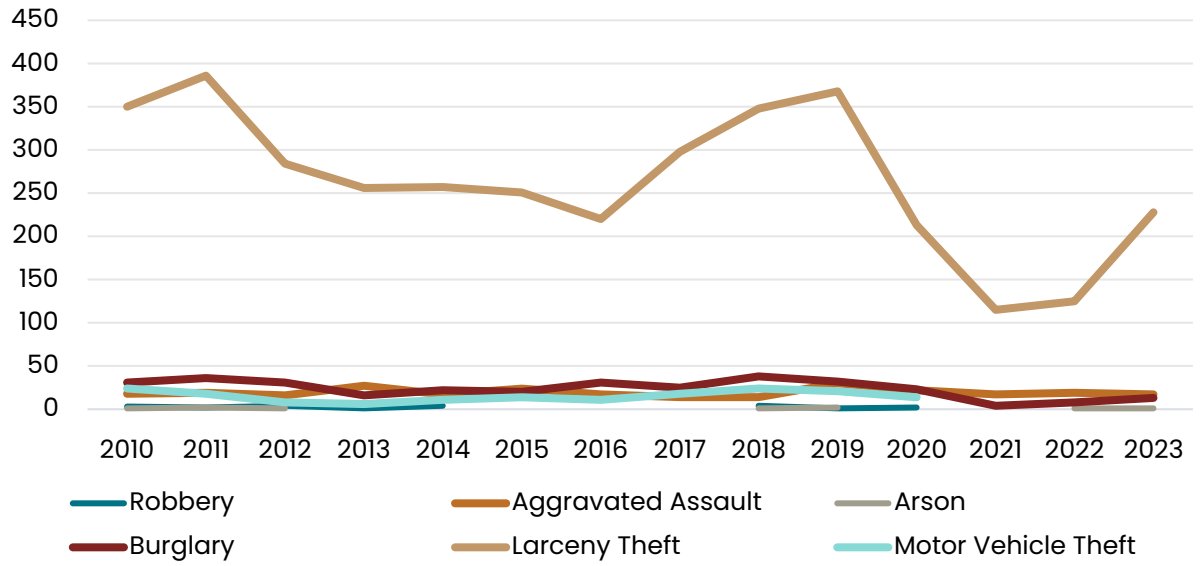
[29] A. Sethi et al. "The Relationship between Crime and Socioeconomic Status", ArcGIS StoryMaps, https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b5ab6df3741649c4bcc0a5fbd9e3b45b.

[30] "Background on Tribal Justice & Law Enforcement", National Congress of American Indians, 2011 https://www.ncai.org/attachments/PolicyPaper_AbDtrAjPdZqsCFZiPiORyUiOSZqZrAPgxWxVKAJGBfXcDdmgrUC_Background%20on%20Tribal%20Justice%20and%20Law%20Enforcement_NOV.pdf.

[31] E. Widra, "New, Expanded Data on Indian Country Jails Show Concerning Trends Extend to Tribal Lands", *Prison Policy Initiative*, October 8, 2024, https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2024/10/08/indian-country-jails-2023/.

Federal Bureau of Investigation. Over the years, property crimes (including burglary, motor-vehicle theft, and larceny-theft) have been the most prevalent. The incidence of aggravated assault, the most common violent crime, has remained consistent over the last 13 years. Despite yearly fluctuations, overall crime has generally decreased over the last decade, largely due to a decline in larceny-theft.

Figure 7.5: Annual Crime Breakdown by Type in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough



Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Crime Data Explorer, National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), 2023

Financial Characteristics

According to U.S. Census data, Native Americans in all reservations have the highest rate of poverty among all minority groups in America, with 21.2% of the population under the poverty threshold, compared to 11.1% of Americans overall.[32] With a jobless rate that peaked at 28.6% during the pandemic, AIANs have been one of the most harshly impacted cohorts of the population from COVID-19. However, the disparity between Native Americans and the rest of the population in unemployment and poverty numbers existed before the pandemic. Out of the 300 or so Native American reservations in the US, very few have consistently well-functioning economies, which forces residents to travel outside of the reservation to access stores, banks, jobs, and higher education institutions.[33] However, the Ketchikan Indian Community is integrated into the City of Ketchikan, rather than holding its own reservation land. Also, the City of Ketchikan and the Ketchikan ANVSA make up 95% of the KGB's population, meaning that KIC has access to most of the Borough's opportunities.

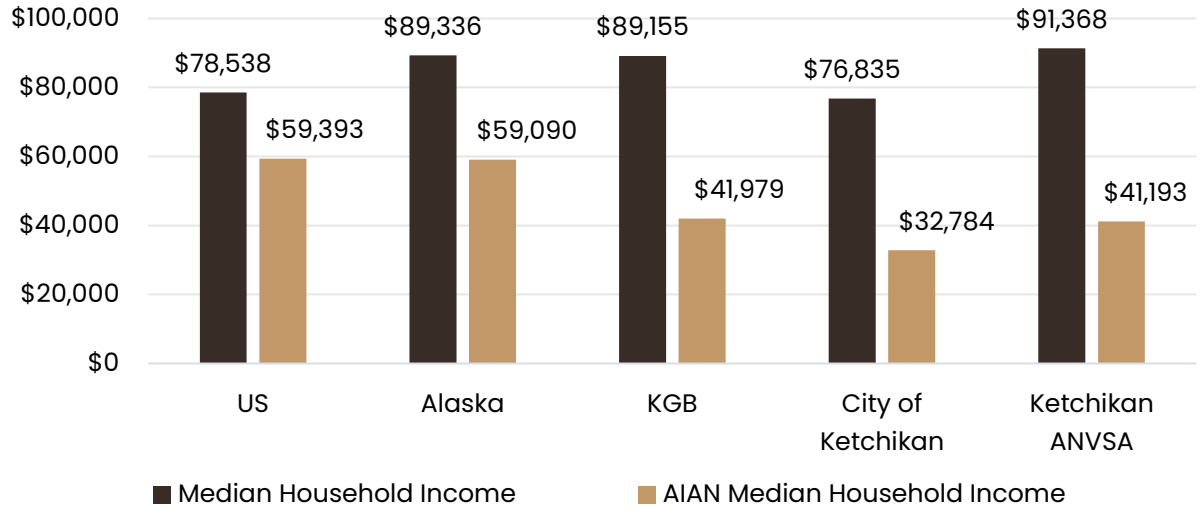
[32] U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Commerce, *Poverty in the United States: 2023", accessed January 30, 2026,* , https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/2024/demo/p60-283.pdf.

[33] Robert J. Miller, "Establishing Economies on Indian Reservations", *The Regulatory Review*, April 1, 2021, https://www.theregreview.org/2021/04/08/miller-establishing-economies-indian-reservations/#:~:text=Few%20of%20the%20300%20Indian,%2C%20higher%20education%2C%20and%20jobs

Because of this, job opportunities from the City and other resources are more available to Tribal members. This proximity to the broader Ketchikan community helps support KIC's members and contributes to its resilience. Simultaneously, KIC members contribute a large amount to the overall economy of Ketchikan due to the unified nature of the community and broader city.

To obtain a better understanding of the financial health of KIC households, it is essential to look at metrics such as median income and expenditures. Figure 7.6 compares the median household incomes of the general population and the AIAN population, by region. The City of Ketchikan has a median household income of $77K, which is only approximately $2K behind the U.S. median, but over $10K lower than the KGB and Alaska medians. The AIAN fares significantly worse, earning less than 50% of the City's median household income ($33k). This trend is experienced across all the identified geographies but is exacerbated in the Ketchikan area.

Figure 7.6: Median Household Income, 2023

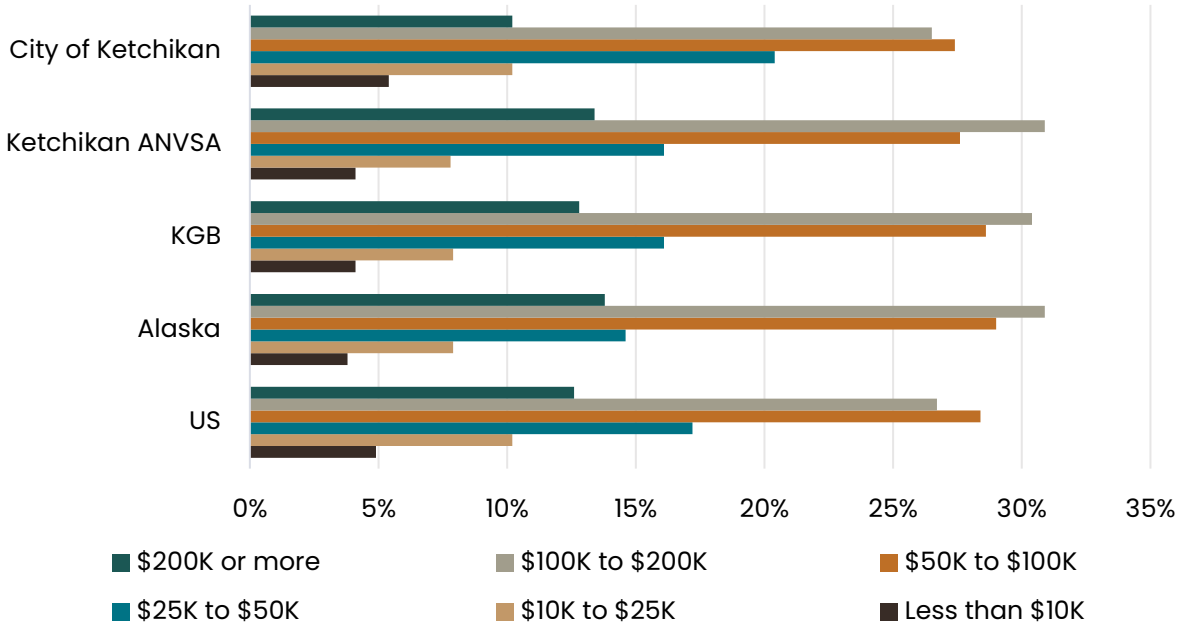


Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2023, S1903

Figure 7.7 and Figure 7.8 display the household incomes by geography broken into distributions, first by the entire population and then by the AIAN population. Only 4.9% of households make less than $10K in the US. Among all geographies, only the City of Ketchikan has a higher rate at 5.4% of households. Examining only the AIAN population reveals that 7.9% of households in the U.S. make less than $10K. For the City of Ketchikan, however, that same demographic makes up 17.2% of the population. Furthermore, only 35.1% of the AIAN population makes more than $50K in the City of Ketchikan, which is a significantly smaller proportion than the broader Ketchikan population and the US.

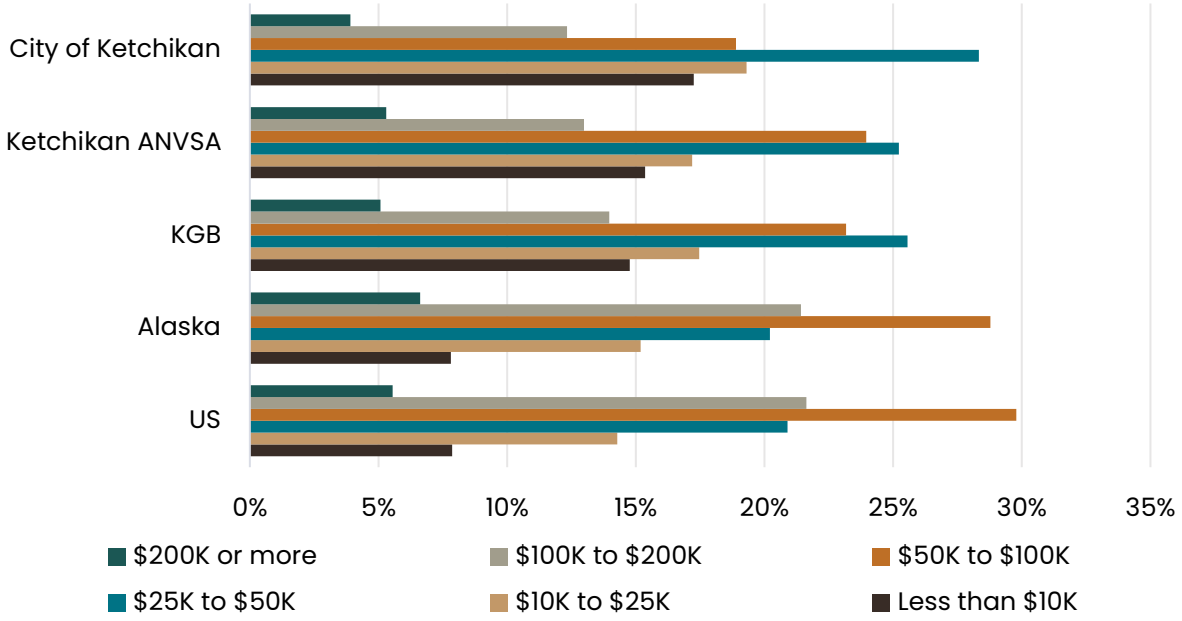
The AIAN population also has a smaller proportion of higher income earners than the state and national levels. More specifically, the AIAN population in the City of Ketchikan has a lower share of households over $100K than any other geography listed. Among the AIAN households in the city, the $25K–$50K income range is the largest at 28.3% of households.

Figure 7.7: Household Income Distribution for the Entire Population, 2023



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2023, S1901

Figure 7.8: Household Income Distribution for American Indians and Alaska Natives, 2023



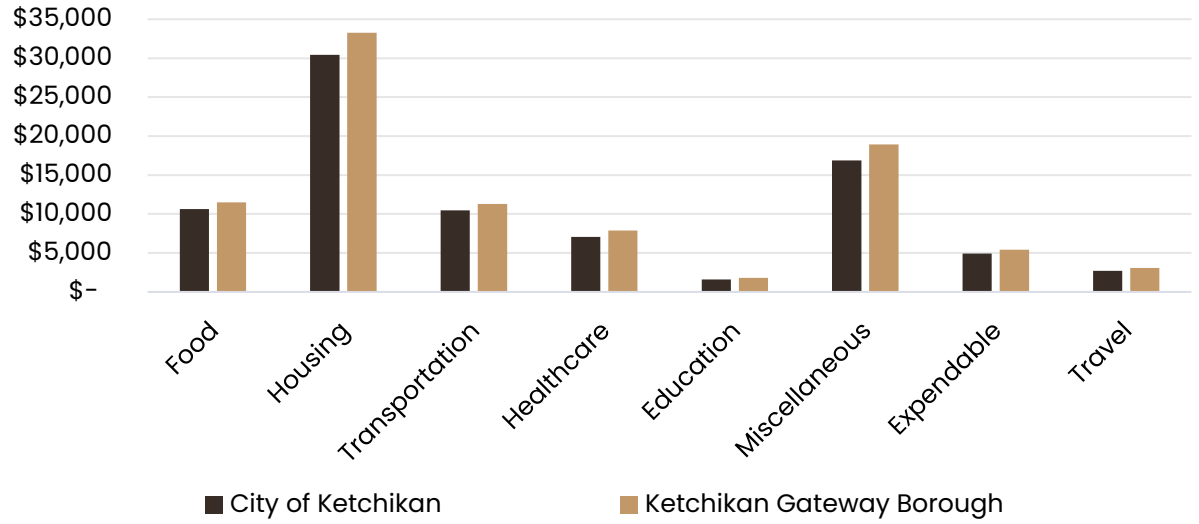
Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2023, B19001C

Figure 7.9 shows a breakdown of the average monthly expenditures for households in the City of Ketchikan and the KGB, while Table 7.4 shows a comparison of the available disposable income by region. The largest average monthly expenditure for residents in the

region is housing (including utilities), followed by miscellaneous household spending, which are also the largest spending categories at the county and state level.[34]

In general, expenditures for the City and Borough are similar, although the KGB has a larger budget to spend as evidenced by the increased income found earlier in this chapter. Unfortunately, detailed statistics for the AIAN population aren't available for expenditures and disposable income alike.

Figure 7.9: Household Budget Expenditures in the City of Ketchikan, 2024



Source: ESRI Business Analyst, 2024

In terms of disposable income (or after-tax income) most of the Ketchikan area (both City and KGB) has a disposable income between $50K and $75K, which aligns with both the national and state levels. Although it is worth noting that the majority of the Borough's households are in the $100K–$150K range. Ketchikan also has a higher proportion of households with a disposable income between $15K and $25K.

Table 7.4: Households by Annual Disposable Income in the City of Ketchikan, 2024

Income Level	U.S.	Alaska	KGB	City of Ketchikan
<$15,000	9.6%	7.3%	4.8%	6.2%
$15,000 - $24,999	7.7%	5.9%	10.0%	13.3%
$25,000 - $34,999	8.4%	7.1%	8.0%	9.9%
$35,000 - $49,999	12.7%	9.5%	7.6%	8.0%
$50,000 - $74,999	18.2%	18.3%	19.2%	19.5%
$75,000 - $99,999	12.2%	13.7%	14.2%	13.2%
$100,000 - $149,999	17.9%	22.9%	21.5%	17.8%

[34] Miscellaneous household expenditures include apparel and services, personal care products, funeral expenses, legal fees, banking service charges, accounting fees, credit card membership fees, shopping club membership fees, support payments, life insurance, and pensions and social security.

$150,000 - $199,999	6.8%	7.5%	7.0%	5.7%
$200,000 or more	6.3%	7.8%	7.7%	6.4%

Source: ESRI Business Analyst, 2024

Given that housing is the largest expenditure for households in Ketchikan, it is crucial to understand how this impacts low-income households and how it varies based on household composition. Table 7.5 compares the City of Ketchikan's housing cost burden to the county, state, and national levels. Before delving into the table, it's important to define what housing cost burden entails. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines cost-burdened families as those who spend over 30% of their income on housing and may face difficulty affording basic necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and health care. Severely cost-burdened households are considered to be households that spend over 50% of their income on housing.

It is also important to note that ANVSAs are not recognized as areas of recognition for Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy Data (CHAS), and an AIAN filter cannot be applied. With this context in mind, it is observed that Ketchikan fares worse than the state and national cost burden rates. Although the disparity is not large, both the City and the Borough see higher rates of severely cost-burdened and cost-burdened renters and homeowners, with the one exception being the severely cost-burdened group in the KGB. Nevertheless, the level of non-cost-burdened households is lower in both Ketchikan regions.

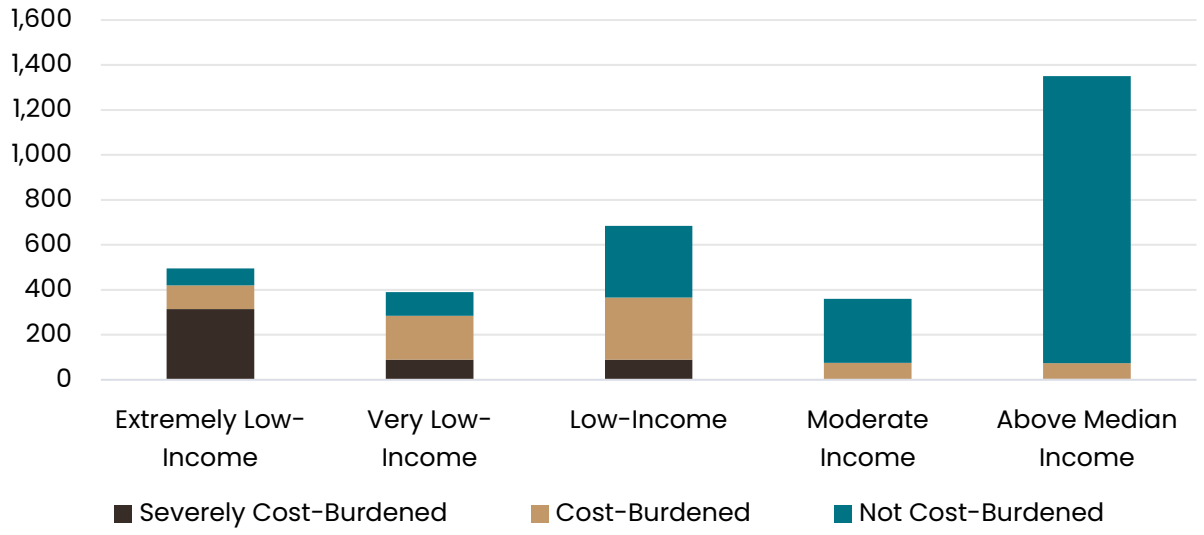
Table 7.5: Housing Cost-Burden, 2017-2021

Region	Number of Households	Severely Cost-Burdened	Cost-Burdened	Not Cost-Burdened
City of Ketchikan	3,270	15.6%	21.7%	62.7%
KGB	5,485	13.2%	18.8%	68.0%
Alaska	260,560	11.5%	15.8%	72.7%
U.S.	125M	13.4%	15.4%	71.2%

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy Data, 2017 – 2021

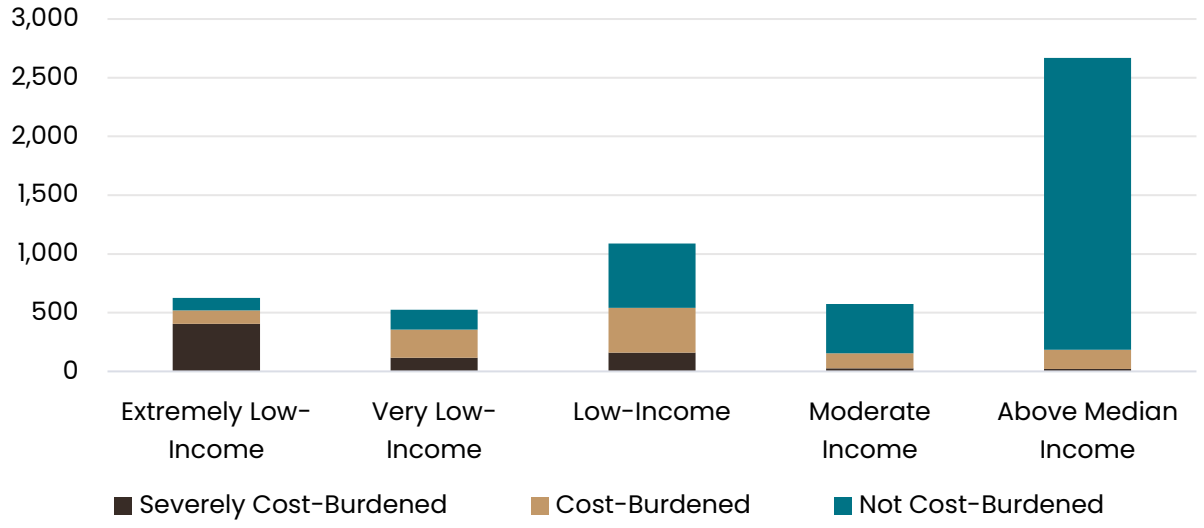
Figure 7.10 and Figure 7.11 give a visual representation of the cost-burdened households in both the City and the Borough by income level. For example, in the City of Ketchikan, the majority of severely cost-burdened households come from the extremely low-income category, while cost-burdened households come primarily from very low-income and low-income cohorts. Only 70 households in the city are cost-burdened despite being above the median income. The KGB follows the same trends as the city, with most cost-burdened households coming from lower income cohorts.

Figure 7.10: Cost-burdened Households in the City of Ketchikan



Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy Data, 2017 – 2021

Figure 7.11: Cost-burdened Households in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough



Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy Data, 2017 – 2021

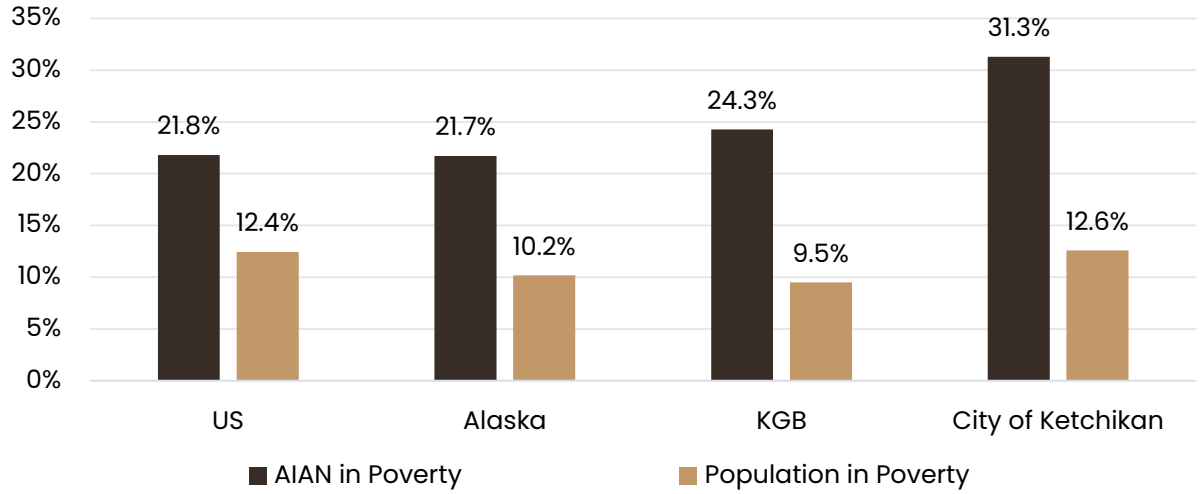
Poverty

When discussing low-income households, it's also useful to look at poverty rates by gender and age range in order to get a more complete profile of the sectors of the population that may be struggling the most. Figure 7.12 shows the poverty rate for both the general populace and the AIAN populations in each respective region.

Alaska and the Ketchikan Gateway Borough exhibit lower poverty rates than the US, while the City of Ketchikan is only 0.2 percentage points higher. However, poverty among AIAN populations spikes across the board and is specifically higher in the Ketchikan area. The

City of Ketchikan AIAN population shows a 31.3% poverty rate, which is unsurprising considering the low incomes shown earlier.

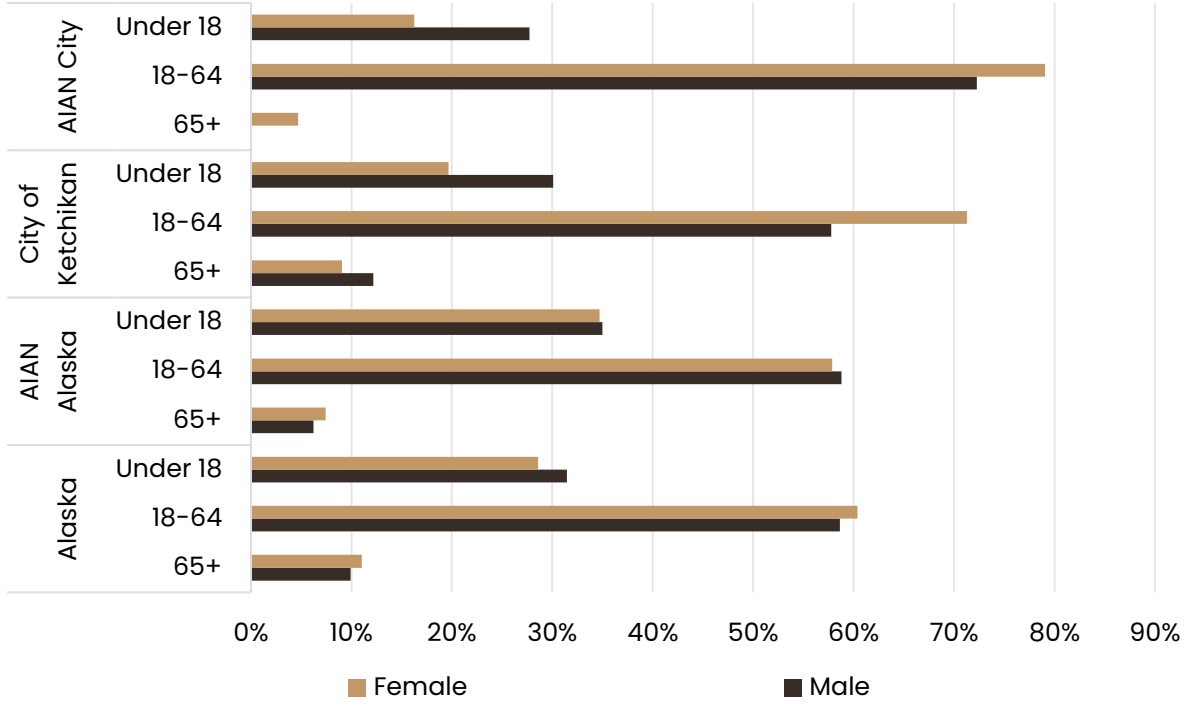
Figure 7.12: AIAN in Poverty vs. Entire Population in Poverty



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2023, B17001C, B17001

Figure 7.13 shows poverty levels distributed by age and sex. In the City of Ketchikan, individuals in poverty over the age of 18 are slightly more likely to be female, while the opposite is true for those under 18. This trend is also observed within the AIAN population. In the State of Alaska, poverty is fairly evenly distributed between males and females.

Figure 7.13: Poverty by Age and Gender Comparison, 2023



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2023, B17001C, B17001

Housing

Tribal areas face some of the toughest challenges regarding housing needs at the national level. The combination of relatively low incomes and purchasing power, along with infrastructure maintenance issues, makes affording and maintaining homes difficult for Tribal residents.[35] Table 7.6 shows the available subsidized units within the entire borough. These units are generally priced lower to increase affordability compared to typical market-rate properties.

Table 7.6: Subsidized Housing in the KGB

Property	City	Type	Units
Glacier Park	Ketchikan	LIHTC & USDA RD - Multifamily	22
Carlanna	Ketchikan	LIHTC	24
Ketchikan Affordable Rentals	Ketchikan	LIHTC	24
Opportunity House	Ketchikan	HUD Multifamily	8

Source: Minneapolis FED Policymap using HUD Data

KIC offers its own housing program as well, which brings a variety of housing styles and units for its members. KIC is also in the process of constructing a 28-unit permanent supportive housing development.

Table 7.7: Active KIC Housing Developments

Property	City	Structure Type	Units
3221 Baranof Avenue	Ketchikan	Multi-Unit Complex	12
1409 Jackson Street	Ketchikan	Multi-Unit Complex	7
Brown Deer Road	Ketchikan	Duplexes/Single-Family	6
Woodland Avenue	Ketchikan	Duplexes/Single-Family	5
Buren Street	Ketchikan	Duplexes	4
Warren Street	Ketchikan	Single-Family	1

Source: PC using data from KIC

Figure 7.14 and Figure 7.15 show the most common occupied housing types in Ketchikan, Alaska, and the US. Detached housing, commonly referred to as single-family housing, is a standalone home, while attached housing refers to a family home that shares an exterior wall with an adjacent unit, such as a townhouse. Two-family homes, with an upstairs and a downstairs unit, are considered a two-unit structure. The remaining categories follow a similar structure.[36]

The general population in both the United States and Alaska predominantly lives in single-family detached housing, followed by large apartment complexes (10+ units) in the United States and townhomes in Alaska. The Ketchikan Gateway Borough is similar to national

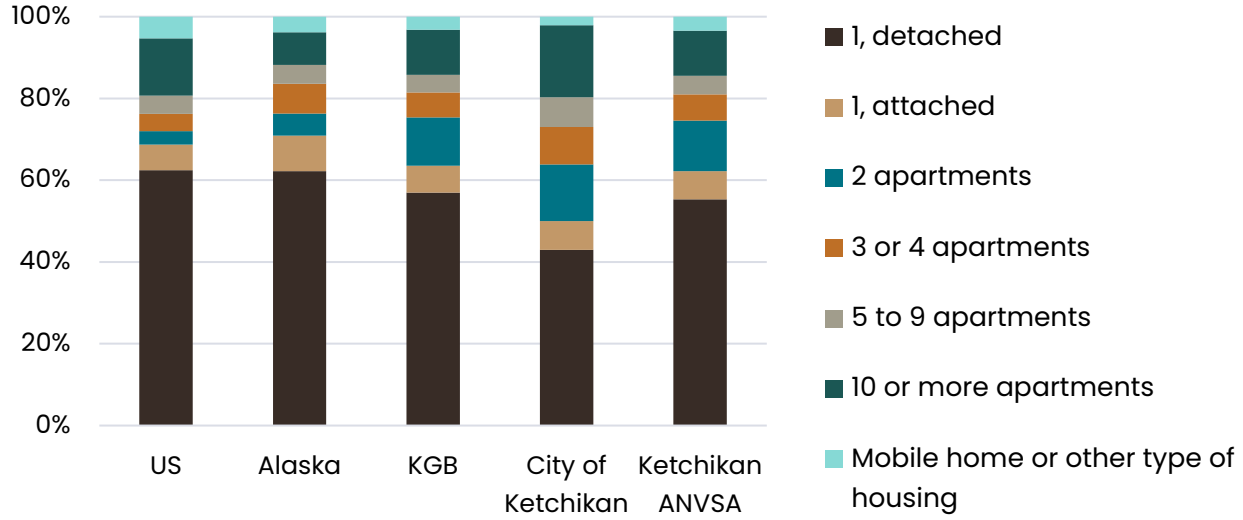
[35] "Native American Housing," National Low Income Housing Coalition accessed January 30, 2026, https://nlihc.org/explore-issues/policy-priorities/native-american-housing.

[36] "Census Housing Indicators," Case Western Reserve University, 2018, https://neocando.case.edu/resources/neocando/new%20docs/05%20-%20Census%20Housing%20Indicators.pdf.

and state trends, but the City of Ketchikan contrasts heavily. Less than 50% of occupied housing units are single-family homes. While detached housing remains the majority in the city, a large portion of residents live in apartment structures, both large and small. Townhomes have a similar share in the city as the national and state averages, and mobile homes are proportionally less common in Ketchikan than in the nation or state.

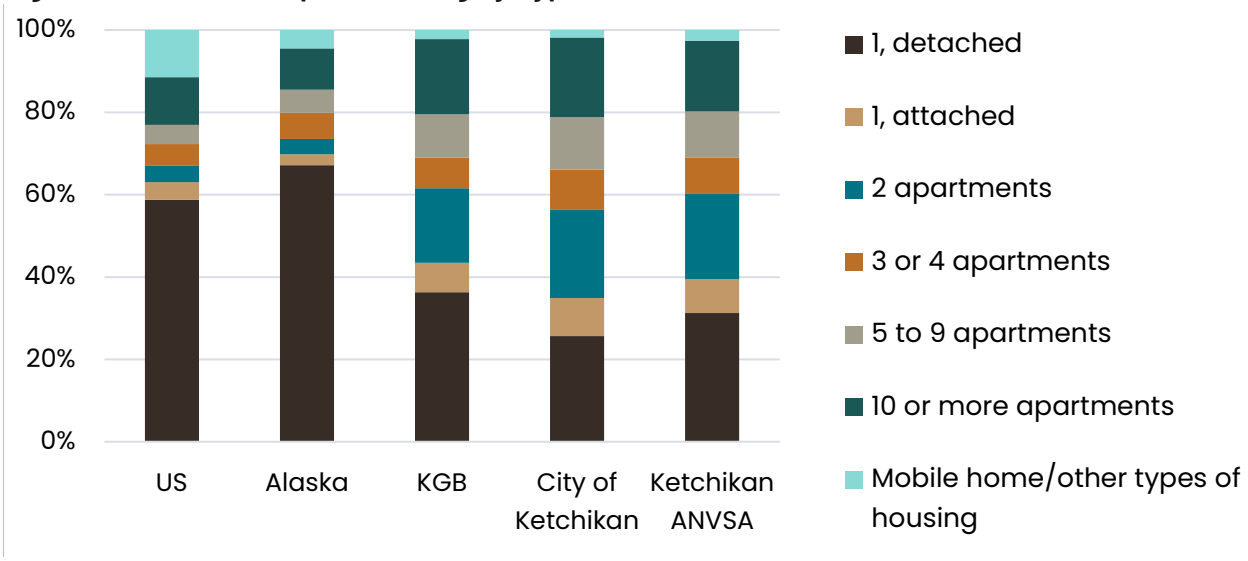
Interestingly, in Alaska, the overall AIAN population predominantly resides in single-family detached housing. However, within the KGB and the City of Ketchikan, the rate of occupied detached housing drops dramatically among AIANs. Similar to the general population in the city, most AIAN residents live in apartment-style buildings. Only 25.7% occupy single-family detached homes.

Figure 7.14: Occupied Housing by Type, 2023



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2023, S2504

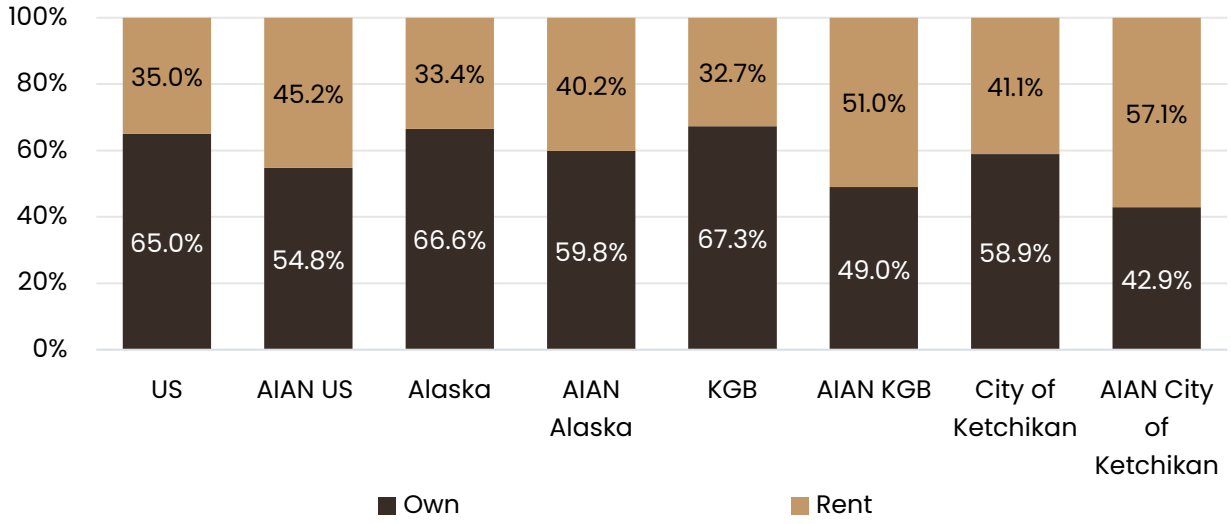
Figure 7.15: AIAN Occupied Housing by Type, 2023



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2023, B25032C

The City of Ketchikan has a much higher percentage of renters compared to other areas, as shown in Figure 7.16. Conversely, the KGB has a slightly higher share of owner-occupied homes than the nation or state. AIAN people in both the KGB and the City of Ketchikan have an even lower rate of homeownership. This trend is reflected in the AIAN population across Alaska and the United States.

Figure 7.16: Owner-Occupied vs. Renter-Occupied Housing, 2023



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2023, B25003C, B25003

Economic Overview

Accurate economic estimates for tribal communities are difficult due to the lack of comprehensive data collection and reporting. However, the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis (Minneapolis FED) and the U.S. Census Bureau have collected data on labor market conditions for Native American populations, which provide big picture insights into the economy of tribal communities in the United States. Similar to previous sections of this chapter, the small sample size of AIAN people and the lack of a defined reservation area in Ketchikan imply that data reliability and precision may be limited. Nevertheless, the available data are sufficient to gauge general economic trends, such as how AIAN populations fare compared to the general population.

While employment is consistently lower and unemployment higher in AIANs than all individuals in United States, the last decade shows positive trends. From 2014 to 2023, employment has increased 2.2% and unemployment decreased 5.9%.[37] Beyond employment, Southern Oklahoma State University notes that Native American communities have achieved better access to education and improved infrastructure in

[37]"Native American Labor Market Dashboard," Federal Reserve Bank of Minnesota, accessed January 30, 2026, https://www.minneapolisfed.org/indiancountry/resources/native-american-labor-market-dashboard.

recent years.[38] Furthermore, in 2022, billions of dollars were invested in grants and programs to expand tribal access to broadband. [39] Overall, economic conditions for AIAN populations in the United States have improved substantially over the past decade.

Table 7.8 and Table 7.9 show employment differences between all people and AIAN populations in the Ketchikan area. In all study areas, employment among AIAN civilians is approximately 20 percentage points lower than the general population. Labor force participation, defined as the number of working-age civilians either employed or actively seeking employment, is also lower for AIANs in every geography except the United States. The City of Ketchikan exhibits the highest unemployment rate for AIAN people at 14.3%. This is notable given that the unemployment rate for the overall population in the city is lower than the state and national averages.

Table 7.8: Employment for Ketchikan, Alaska, and the United States, 2023

Region	Civilian Employment-Population %	Civilian Labor Force Participation Rate	Civilian Unemployment Rate
City of Ketchikan	62.1%	64.7%	4.1%
Ketchikan ANVSA	61.6%	63.8%	3.4%
KGB	60.6%	62.8%	3.5%
Alaska	58.9%	62.5%	5.8%
US	59.8%	63.0%	5.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2023, S0801

Table 7.9: AIAN Employment for Ketchikan, Alaska, and the United States, 2023

Region	Civilian Employment-Population %	Civilian Labor Force Participation Rate	Civilian Unemployment Rate
City of Ketchikan	40.3%	47.0%	14.3%
Ketchikan ANVSA	45.1%	51.0%	11.6%
KGB	41.9%	47.7%	12.2%
Alaska	47.8%	55.5%	13.8%
US	59.2%	63.3%	6.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2023, C23002C

The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic brought unique working conditions that allowed employees to work from their homes in much of the United States. What originally began as a safety practice has evolved into a flexible option for many employees into 2023 and beyond. The occurrence of remote work has slowly diminished since the end of the pandemic around 2022, but rates remain higher than before 2020. In the US, 13.5% of workers 16 and over currently work from home, which jumped over five percentage points from 2019. The rate of

[38] "Improving Economic Development for Tribes," Southeastern Oklahoma State University, accessed March 3, 2023, https://online.se.edu/articles/mba/improving-economic-development-for-tribes.aspx.

[39] Ibid.

remote workers is much lower in both Alaska (8.8%) and the Ketchikan area (4.7% KGB and 3.4% City), although the rates of remote workers have more than doubled since 2019.

In the AIAN population, remote work has grown on a state and national level, but not in the Ketchikan area. The City of Ketchikan has seen no increase in remote work among AIANs, while the KGB has seen a 0.1% increase since 2019.

Table 7.10: Percent of Workers Working from Home, 2023

Region	Workers 16 and Over	2023 % Working from Home	% Point Change from 2019
City of Ketchikan	4,123	3.4%	1.3%
Ketchikan ANVSA	6,683	4.8%	2.4%
KGB	6,966	4.7%	2.0%
Alaska	351,270	8.8%	4.0%
United States	157,645,183	13.5%	8.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2023, S0801

Table 7.11: AIAN Percent of Workers Working from Home, 2023

Region	Workers 16 and Over	2023 % Working from Home	% Point Change from 2019
City of Ketchikan	374	2.9%	2.9%
Ketchikan ANVSA	513	3.9%	3.9%
KGB	557	3.6%	3.5%
Alaska	33,385	5.3%	1.2%
United States	1,243,945	7.9%	3.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2023, B08105C

Similar to the case of demographic data, there are gaps in tribal business data, with no comprehensive data on tribally owned enterprises.[40] It is also important to note that the creation of tribally owned businesses can provide economic benefits to both AIAN and non-AIAN residents in the Reservation alike. However, due to the unique set of barriers and challenges that tribal business owners face, such as access to sufficient financing, it can be difficult to get enterprises up and running and generating revenue.[41] According to research carried out by the Center for Indian Country Development, 70% of all non-gaming tribal enterprises are located away from reservations, and the overall number of these enterprises has steadily grown over the last 25 years.

It is important to note that these tables are approximations of occupational trends in Ketchikan, Alaska, and the United States. Figures between tables will be similar to each

[40] M. Gregg, C. Lozar, R. Nunn, "An urgent priority: Accurate and timely Indian Country data", Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, accessed January 30, 2026, https://www.minneapolisfed.org/article/2022/an-urgent-priority-accurate-and-timely-indian-country-data

[41] Susan Woodrow, "Growing Economies in Indian Country: Taking Stock of Progress and Partnerships," *Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System*, April 2012, https://www.federalreserve.gov/newsevents/conferences/GEIC-white-paper-20120501.pdf.

other but may not compare perfectly. Data limitations also mean that the level of specificity is decreased. For example, AIAN occupations have been reduced to five categories.

Of the five categories, the service occupations are the largest for AIAN people in the Ketchikan area. Service occupations are followed closely by management and sales occupations. Natural resources are the smallest occupations among AIAN people in the area. To help specify what positions AIAN people may be holding in Ketchikan, we can look at an employment breakdown by National American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes.

Table 7.12: AIAN Occupations, 2023

Region	US	Alaska	KGB	Ketchikan ANVSA	City of Ketchikan
Management, business, science, and arts	354,986	10,190	141	133	78
Service	294,868	7,240	191	183	148
Sales and office	238,293	7,238	123	118	92
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance	174,464	4,425	24	24	6
Production, transportation, and material moving	202,808	5,258	99	74	65

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2023, C24010C

Shown in Table 7.13 is employment by industry, or employment by North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code. Unfortunately, the data for NAICS industry employment was limited to an update from 2021. The local data was also only available for the Ketchikan ANVSA area as well. However, the data can still give insights into what industries are the largest employers for AIANs in Ketchikan. The Accommodation & Food Services industry employs the most AIANs in the Ketchikan ANVSA, followed by Public Administration & Health Care & Social Assistance. It is possible that much of this employment comes from the many departments of KIC itself. Tribal entities are often the largest employers of their own members on many reservations. While KIC doesn't have a reservation, there is no reason that KIC wouldn't be one of the largest employers for Tribal members.

Table 7.13: AIAN Employment by Industry, 2021

Industry	United States	Alaska	Ketchikan ANVSA
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	21,805	825	17
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	10,107	853	0
Construction	99,566	2,266	41
Manufacturing	90,835	552	16
Wholesale trade	22,444	547	5
Retail trade	123,465	3,676	53
Transportation and warehousing	50,711	2,345	80
Utilities	11,393	947	6

Information	12,214	455	7
Finance and insurance	25,403	170	3
Real estate and rental and leasing	17,454	453	26
Professional, scientific, and technical services	39,127	742	10
Management of companies and enterprises	1,181	322	8
Administrative and support and waste management services	54,052	918	16
Educational services	89,979	3,537	40
Health care and social assistance	152,906	5,895	94
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	46,623	641	0
Accommodation and food services	102,911	1,991	117
Other services, except public administration	47,869	1,445	22
Public administration	89,473	6,653	126

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2023, C24030 AIAN Tables

Finally, using expenditure data provided by KIC, PC was able to generate a list of Tribal businesses that KIC spend on. For privacy reasons, business names have been removed and replaced with their respective NAICS code. Overall, KIC spend approximately $71K on Tribal businesses in Ketchikan. Given the small scale of Ketchikan and the relatively large business dealings of KIC, this is still a significant figure.

Table 7.14: Tribal Business Spending

NAICS	NAICS Description	Spending Total
722513	Limited-Service Restaurants	$20,389
459920	Art Dealers	$23,606
811111	General Automotive Repair	$1,172
445292	Confectionery and Nut Stores	$83
335132	Lighting Fixture Manufacturing	$3,000
312112	Bottled Water Manufacturing	$22,402
Total		**$70,653**

Source: PC using Data from KIC

Economic Impact Assessment

PC also conducted an Economic Impact Assessment (EIA) that ran parallel with the CEDS. This assessment identified the overall contributions of KIC's expenditures into the KGB economy. The most important findings from this study are the direct, indirect, induced, and multiplier effects, which identify how KIC impacts the economy both directly and downstream in the supply chain. The exact definitions of these effects are:

- **Direct spending:** spending by KIC on vendors/suppliers in the region
- **Indirect spending:** spending by those vendors/suppliers on other businesses within the region
- **Induced spending:** spending by households who receive income from KIC, direct spending, and indirect spending
- **Multiplier effects:** the full supply chain effect of all rounds of spending attributable back to KIC

Table 7.15 shows the expenditures KIC made in 2024, which ultimately result as a driver of the economic impact model. Of these expenditures, the PC team found that approximately **$12.5 million** is non-salary spending that occurs within the Ketchikan Gateway Borough.

Table 7.15: KIC Expenditures by Department, 2024

Category	Total Expenditures	Program Count
IHS Healthcare	$17,051,756	20
General Government	$9,407,736	21
Cultural Resources	$4,402,809	13
Housing	$2,564,451	19
Transportation	$1,337,986	13
Social Services	$427,450	6
Behavioral Health	$207,846	3
Education & Trainings	$66,002	8
Total	**$35,466,037**	**103**

Source: PC using Data from KIC

Table 7.16 displays the total wages paid in 2024 by KIC. Across 266 employees, this figure averages to approximately **$65K per employee,** which is far above the median American Indian and Alaskan Native median household income. These payments were also a part of the economic impact model as induced effects but were first allocated by a household spending model.

Table 7.16: Total Wage Payments by Department, 2024

Category	Total Wages
IHS Healthcare	$8,963,705
General Government	$4,899,159
Cultural Resources	$2,247,197
Housing	$874,267
Behavioral Health	$202,146
Transportation	$80,356
Education & Trainings	$9,230
Total	**$17,276,061**

Source: PC using Data from KIC

Finally, Table 7.17 shows the Ketchikan Gateway Borough's economic impacts. Included in the direct impacts are KIC's initial expenditures and hiring, as well as the initial direct impacts caused by KIC spending, totaling 261 jobs.

For more information regarding the EIA, please reference the EIA report.

Table 7.17: Ketchikan Gateway Borough Economic Impacts

Type	Direct	Indirect	Induced	Total
Output	$30,871,000	$5,108,000	$2,673,000	$38,652,000
Jobs	527	38	17	582
Earnings	$29,938,000	$1,926,000	$996,000	$32,859,000

Source: PC using Data from KIC

Location Quotients

Table 7.18 presents employment by industry in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough, changes in employment over the past 10 years, and each industry's Location Quotient (LQ). To maintain consistency across geographic areas, industries in the following tables are ranked according to their federally designated NAICS code classification. While the data presented in this section is not focused on AIAN employment, it will still provide insights into what industries the KGB specializes in. This is important when considering the broader economy that KIC responds to when considering action plans and future goals.

The LQ ratio is a ratio that compares the concentration of a specific industry's employment in a particular area to the national level. It provides a metric for evaluating how prevalent jobs in a given industry are within a region relative to the entire United States. For instance, an LQ of 1.0 for a specific industry indicates that its share of employment in the region matches the national average. An LQ greater than 1.0 means the industry has a higher concentration of jobs in the region compared to the national level, and vice versa. Transportation and Warehousing in the KGB has an LQ of 2.23, meaning the County has significantly more transportation jobs than the United States overall.

As shown in Table 7.18, most jobs in the KGB fall under the Government category, followed by Health Care & Social Assistance, Retail trade, and Accommodation & Food Services. Only seven industries in the KGB exceed that national average, meaning that employment in the KGB is clustered heavily in certain industries. Surprisingly, the Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting industry has shrunk in the KGB over the last 10 years considering the region's reliance on fishing to the local economy. However, employment remains proportionally higher than in the US.

Table 7.18: Employment by Industry, KGB, 2-Digit, 2024

Industry	2024 Employment	% Change Since 2014	Location Quotient
Transportation and Warehousing	795	13.6%	2.23
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	185	(18.2%)	1.93
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	273	24.1%	1.84
Government	2,176	(6.0%)	1.82
Retail Trade	987	5.9%	1.28
Accommodation and Food Services	804	21.3%	1.17
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	166	18.7%	1.15
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	26	117.8%	0.92
Health Care and Social Assistance	987	0.9%	0.90
Construction	401	(22.4%)	0.84
Utilities	20	121.7%	0.70
Manufacturing	410	(30.1%)	0.66
Finance and Insurance	215	(13.0%)	0.65
Other Services (except Public Administration)	244	28.4%	0.60
Information	70	(24.4%)	0.47
Wholesale Trade	109	(18.2%)	0.37
Management of Companies and Enterprises	42	75.7%	0.34

Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	152	(2.0%)	0.31
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	154	0.1%	0.27
Educational Services	27	(34.4%)	0.13

Source: Lightcast, 2025

Utilities, Management of Companies and Enterprises, and Government jobs are the highest paying industries in the KGB. The Utilities industry, while high paying, only held 20 employees in 2024. Similarly, Management of Companies and Enterprises only had 42 employees, meaning that many of the highest paying jobs are not readily available to the broader KGB public. Alternatively, Government jobs are extremely abundant and have a high average wage, although outliers may affect the quality of this data point, considering the KGB's low median wages.

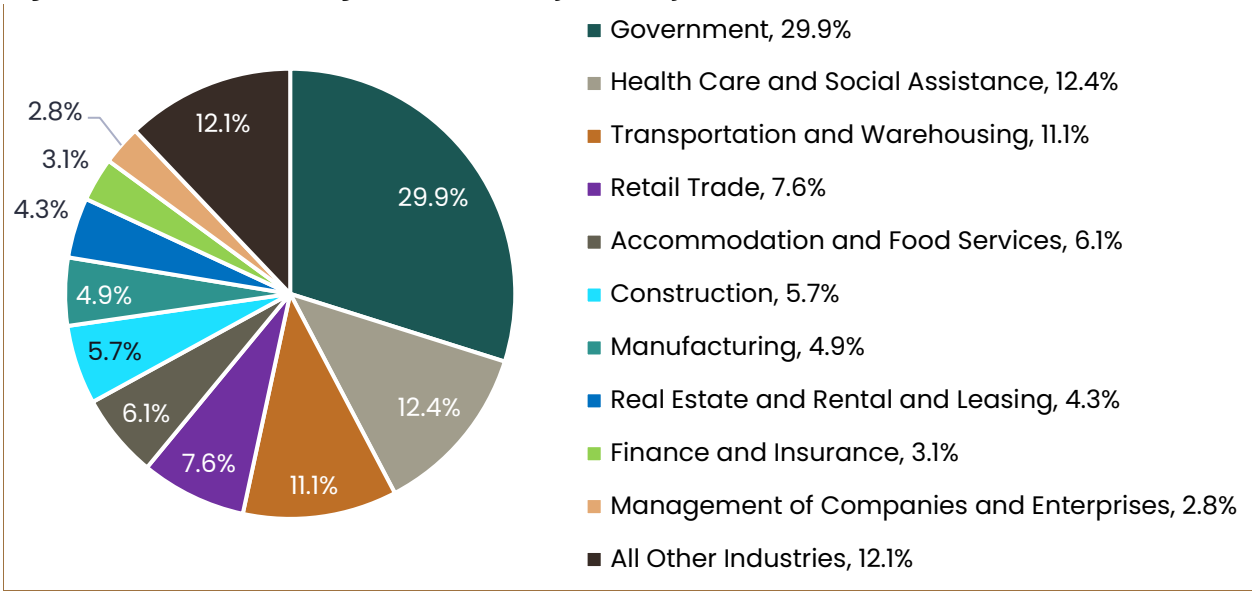
Table 7.19: Average Wages per Job by Industry, 2024

Industry	Avg. Wage per Job
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	$61,800
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	$92,715
Utilities	$185,425
Construction	$90,015
Manufacturing	$87,973
Wholesale Trade	$73,553
Retail Trade	$49,619
Transportation and Warehousing	$88,158
Information	$44,000
Finance and Insurance	$81,836
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	$80,515
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	$68,393
Management of Companies and Enterprises	$181,825
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	$45,204
Educational Services	$31,493
Health Care and Social Assistance	$86,348
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	$44,977
Accommodation and Food Services	$44,100
Other Services (except Public Administration)	$37,497
Government	$100,881

Source: Lightcast, 2025

Gross Regional Product (GRP) is a monetary measure of the market value of all final goods and services produced in a region or subdivision of a country over a specific period (Figure 7.17). It is conceptually equivalent to Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Jobs in Government, Health Care, and Transportation and Warehousing account for over half of the Borough's GRP. The Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting industry only accounts for 2.0% of the local GRP.

Figure 7.17: KGB Gross Regional Product by Industry, 2024



Source: Lightcast, 2025

Table 7.20 provides more context for the employment in 2-digit NAICS codes by expanding to 6-digit NAICS, which are the most specific industry descriptions. Unsurprisingly, many aquatic and fishing-based industries are concentrated in the KGB at a much higher volume than the U.S. averages. Notably, Seafood Product Preparation & Packaging, which is a subset of the Manufacturing Industry, has the highest LQ in the area at 178, meaning that seafood preparation is much more prevalent in this region than others. Fishing in general is a common theme throughout the remainder of the top 20 list. Sightseeing is also an important industry to the KGB, both on water and in land.

Table 7.20: Top 20 Sectors by Location Quotient, KGB, 6-digit, 2024

Description	Employment	Location Quotient
Seafood Product Preparation and Packaging	276	177.75
Coastal and Great Lakes Freight Transportation	75	161.91
Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation, Water	153	156.28
Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation, Land	67	120.62
Port and Harbor Operations	52	111.59
Nature Parks and Other Similar Institutions	71	101.24
Finfish Fishing	56	97.35
Navigational Services to Shipping	76	87.30
Other Marine Fishing	<10	72.79
Nonscheduled Chartered Passenger Air Transportation	157	72.60
Shellfish Fishing	38	67.40
Recreational and Vacation Camps (except Campgrounds)	127	65.62
Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation, Other	<10	48.09
Hydroelectric Power Generation	18	46.34
Other Performing Arts Companies	19	33.84

Inland Water Freight Transportation	35	31.08
Copper, Nickel, Lead, and Zinc Mining	26	27.93
Marine Cargo Handling	61	20.21
Small Electrical Appliance Manufacturing	<10	16.85
Construction, Mining, and Forestry Machinery and Equipment Rental and Leasing	76	16.34

Source: Lightcast, 2025

Location Quotients can also be applied to occupations using Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes, following the same methodology used for industries by NAICS codes. Military & fishing are proportionally the most prevalent in the KGB. Similar to the trends observed in NAICS-based findings, Farming, Fishing, & Forestry have declined over the last decade. The most common occupations in the region are Office & Administrative Support roles, which likely help explain the significant presence of the Government industry noted earlier.

Table 7.21: Employment by Occupation, KGB, 2-Digit, 2024

Description	2024 Jobs	% Change Since 2014	Location Quotient
Military-only occupations	156	24.5%	3.50
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	140	(24.5%)	2.53
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	142	(6.9%)	1.80
Personal Care and Service Occupations	370	22.0%	1.60
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	495	7.1%	1.54
Community and Social Service Occupations	231	(13.3%)	1.53
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	861	11.5%	1.24
Construction and Extraction Occupations	441	(3.8%)	1.19
Protective Service Occupations	211	(10.3%)	1.16
Management Occupations	686	35.5%	1.10
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	988	(13.1%)	1.07
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	651	14.5%	0.99
Sales and Related Occupations	682	(4.0%)	0.97
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	271	(10.1%)	0.96
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	139	21.1%	0.92
Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	395	(25.1%)	0.84
Health Care Support Occupations	297	17.0%	0.76
Health Care Practitioners and Technical Occupations	351	12.0%	0.73
Legal Occupations	43	0.9%	0.60
Production Occupations	256	(42.2%)	0.59
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	74	(19.2%)	0.57
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	280	2.6%	0.52
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	90	(12.2%)	0.35

Source: Lightcast, 2025

Federal Contracts

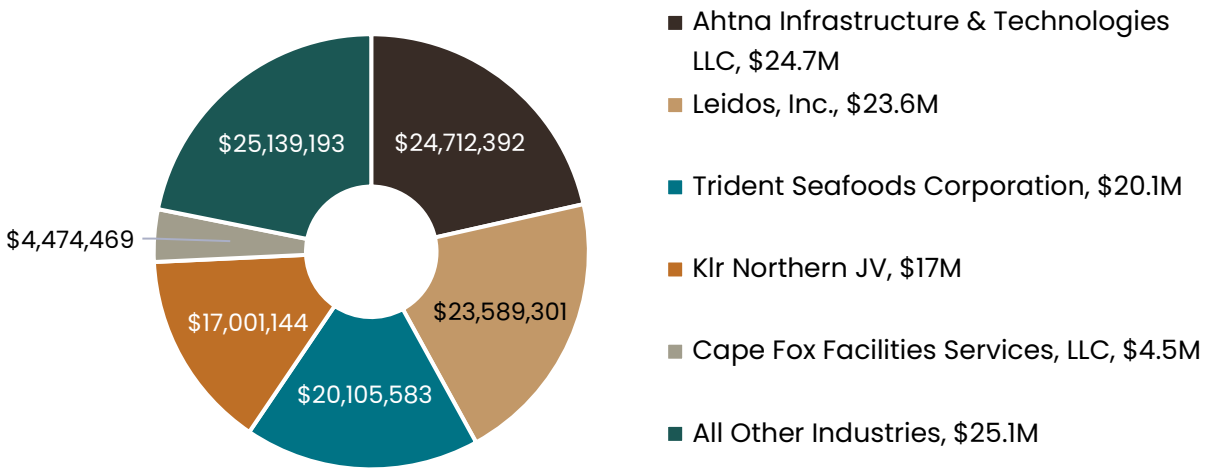
Federal contract awards in the KGB provide valuable insight into the flow of federal investment and economic opportunity in the region. This data highlight which local entities are successfully accessing federal resources and which sectors are prioritized for investment. Contract awards often translate directly into jobs, infrastructure, and business capacity growth. Information on AIAN-owned businesses can reveal which companies near KIC have high growth potential or, alternatively, indicate over-reliance on certain federal programs that may require diversification.

Analyzing federal contract data for AIAN-owned businesses sheds light on the extent to which tribal enterprises leverage government programs designed to support Native economic development. Strong participation in contracting can serve as an important indicator of tribal self-determination and economic sovereignty. The data can also reveal gaps that planners may address in the future.

The data in the following tables and figures track awards that were awarded back to 2018. However, each of these awards is still being received as recently as 2024, and many in 2025. This means that the awards displayed are updated and current.

Figure 7.18 shows the recipients of the largest federal contracts in the entire Ketchikan Gateway Borough. The top recipient is Ahtna Infrastructure and Technologies LLC, primarily focused on the Construction industry, along with KLR Northern JV, which ranks as the fourth-largest contract winner. Trident Seafoods Corporation, a seafood packager and distributor, is the third-largest recipient. All other industries outside the top five contract recipients account for less than 25% of the total dollars awarded.

Figure 7.18: Largest Award Recipients in the KGB

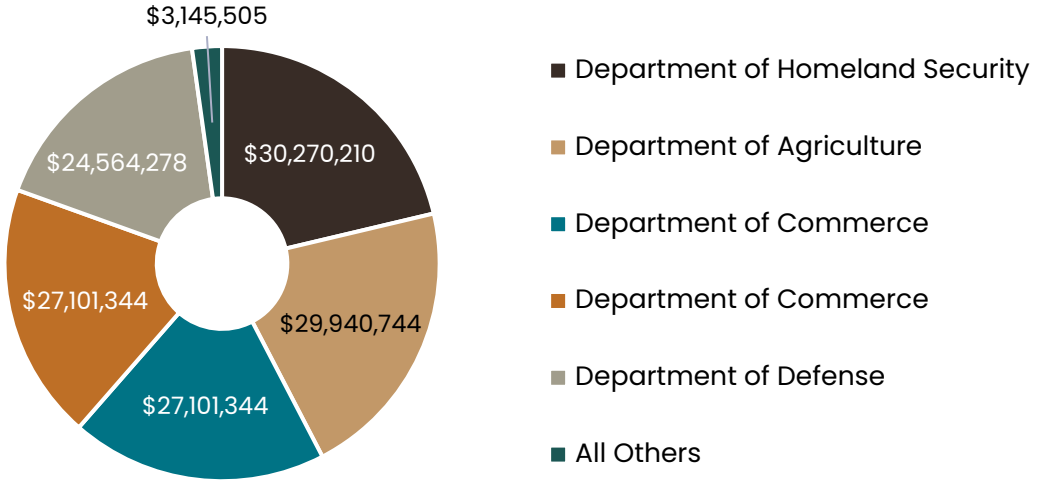


Source: USA Spending, 2025

Figure 7.19 provides a breakdown of federal contracts awarded to companies in the KGB. The Department of Homeland Security accounts for the largest share of awarded funds,

followed by the Departments of Agriculture and Commerce. The majority of federal contracts are directed to the Construction and Manufacturing industries.

Figure 7.19: Largest Awarding Agencies in the KGB



Source: USA Spending, 2025

AIAN-owned businesses in the KGB are also recipients of large sums of federal contract dollars. The largest of these is Ahtna Infrastructure & Technologies LLC, which is also the largest recipient in the entire Borough as mentioned earlier. The award for Ahtna was awarded for "Fairweather Homeport Recapitalization." Cape Fox Facilities Services LLC is also a recipient of a multi-million dollar federal contract, which was intended to provide funds for "Full Food Services at Base Ketchikan." Other various contracts awarded included janitorial services and a site walk of the Salt Chuck Mine.

Table 7.22: AIAN-owned Business Recipients of Federal Contracts

Industry	Recipient	Total Value of Award
Accommodation & Food Services	Cape Fox Endeavor, LLC	$572,961
	Cape Fox Facilities Services, LLC	$4,474,469
Admin, Support & Waste Mgmt.	Bethel Engineering & Consulting, LLC	$439,497
	Brice Engineering, LLC	$533,741
	Cape Fox Facilities & Services, LLC	$430,134
	Environmental Quality Management, Inc.	$13,598
Construction	Ahtna Infrastructure & Technologies, LLC	$24,712,392
Manufacturing	Tec Pro, LTD	$71,675

Source: USA Spending, 2025

The Department of Commerce is the largest contributor to AIAN businesses through Ahtna's award of over $24M. The Department of Homeland Security has been responsible mostly for the Base Ketchikan food services, as well as field work at Brice Engineering.

Table 7.23: Awarding Agencies to AIAN-owned Businesses

Industry	Awarding Agency	Total Value of Award
Accommodation and Food Services	Department of Homeland Security	$5,047,429.73
Admin, Support, and Waste Mgmt.	Department of Defense	$533,741.00
	Department of Homeland Security	$430,134.24
	Department of Transportation	$439,497.00
	Environmental Protection Agency	$13,597.57
Construction	Department of Commerce	$24,712,391.70
Manufacturing	Department of Commerce	$71,674.84

Source: USA Spending, 2025

Infrastructure

Broadband Internet Access

High speed internet access has become more and more of a necessity in the modern world. It can provide connections across continents and oceans, or even just throughout the state. Especially in a place that is more difficult to access due to its geography, broadband can be an important lifeline providing opportunities for better information, education, health care, or even remote work.

Ketchikan has positioned itself well in this regards. About 72.7% of households in the city have broadband which is over three percentage points than Alaska overall. KIC also is positioned well to help increase this number by reaching out to tribal members and helping with last-mile broadband, contributing infrastructure or helping with costs to connect more individual households to the existing infrastructure as needed.

Table 7.24: Households with Broadband and Computers

	Households that have Broadband (High-Speed Internet Subscription)	Households that Have a Desktop Computer or Laptop
City of Ketchikan	72.7%	79.0%
Ketchikan ANVSA	75.4%	81.4%
KGB	74.7%	81.0%
Alaska	69.0%	81.4%
US	74.6%	79.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, S2801, 2023

Energy and Transportation

The City of Ketchikan's power supply is currently focused on hydropower systems supported by multiple projects. More specifically, hydropower is the primary generation source, which is supplemented by diesel generators during low reservoir periods, with

additional supply tied to the Southeast Alaska Power Agency (SEAPA) projects.[42] Ketchikan is able to supply approximately 50% of its power requirements with its own hydropower. The additional 50% comes from a power sales agreement with SEAPA. Unfortunately, this does expose Ketchikan to some risk, as not all power is supplied through their own means. KIC has some opportunity to contribute to the resiliency of the electric grid. Through grant opportunities from the Department of Energy, KIC is able to continue to assist in making it more reliable and less susceptible to outages.

Measuring the relationship between income and utility costs provides a more accurate assessment of the burden they may be placing on residents. Table 7.25 illustrates the household energy and transportation costs in Ketchikan, as measured by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL).

In terms of housing energy burden, Ketchikan has a very low burden compared to the national average. This metric includes the costs of electricity, gas, and other fuels, such as oil and wood.

Considering transportation burden, Ketchikan also ranks low at 3.58%. This metric accounts for annual household miles traveled, stock-weighted fuel efficiency (miles per gallon), and fuel prices.

Table 7.25: Ketchikan Gateway Borough Energy and Transportation Burden, 2020

Category	Value	Range
Housing Energy Burden	3.11%	Low
Transportation Burden	3.58%	Low
Total Energy Burden	6.69%	--

Source: National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), State and Local Planning for Energy (SLOPE) Platform, 2020

[42] "KPU and Hydro-Electric Generation," City of Ketchikan, accessed January 30, 2026, https://www.ketchikan.gov/hydro-electric.

Appendix A: Community Survey Summary

The PC project team conducted an electronic survey of community residents from August 18th to October 16th, 2025. The survey was open to all residents of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough but is specifically targeted at Tribal members. Those that are not members of KIC were asked to answer a different set of questions that gauged their perceptions of KIC from an external perspective. Members of KIC were subjected to the PC team's standard Tribal CEDS survey. The survey included a mix of fixed-response questions (e.g. multiple-choice and scaled responses) and open-ended questions. PC, in collaboration with KIC, promoted the survey widely both online and offline using various methods such as flyers, email, and social media to maximize participation.

A total of 291 individuals began the survey and provided unique responses, which were collected both via paper and electronic surveys. Of these respondents, 86.9% are noted to be enrolled Tribal members, while 78.7% of respondents live in Ketchikan. For quality assurance, the project team identified and removed suspicious responses (e.g., fast completions, strange device locations, or irrelevant input). PC also excluded responses if the survey taker did not live in or around Ketchikan or had no connection to Ketchikan or KIC.

KIC CEDS Survey Flyer, 2025

Survey Findings

The Community Survey received 291 qualified responses from across Ketchikan and KIC. Residents, members, and employees shared strong sentiments related to economic and community development, strengths, and challenges.

Economic Development

The survey included multiple questions on economic development to gauge the community's sentiments about KIC's current economic status and future. One economic development question asked, "What economic development activities does KIC need most within the next five years?" The top response identified available affordable housing as the most important development activity, followed by the need for increased cultural activities and events. The remaining answers detailed community wants for economic/financial trainings and master planning for the Tribe.

Respondents prioritized the Craft Arts and Entertainment and Fisheries industries as the most important industries to cultivate for the Tribe. In the "Other" category (which prompted survey takers to fill in their own answer), Tourism was the number one answer. Craft Arts and Entertainment and Tourism are heavily related in Ketchikan's economy and

provide a possible avenue for future Tribal revenue generating activities. Health care, another large part of KIC's operations, was another top answer in the "Other" category.

Similarly, when asked what goods and services are missing in the Ketchikan Indian Community, Culture, Arts, Regalia and Traditional Knowledge was the most selected answer. This further indicates a need for KIC to tap into its rich cultural heritage not only to provide economic benefits from potential tourism opportunities, but to revitalize membership within the Tribe and bring excitement through celebration and continuation of the culture.

Strengths

Respondents highlighted community size, strength, and unity as one of KIC's strongest assets, while also boasting praise for support of the membership, health and wellness, and employment workforce, all sentiments that are echoed throughout the rest of the survey.

Weaknesses

Respondents identified lack of/poor communication as the number one weakness facing KIC, followed by neglection of duties and members and lack of health care and stable providers.

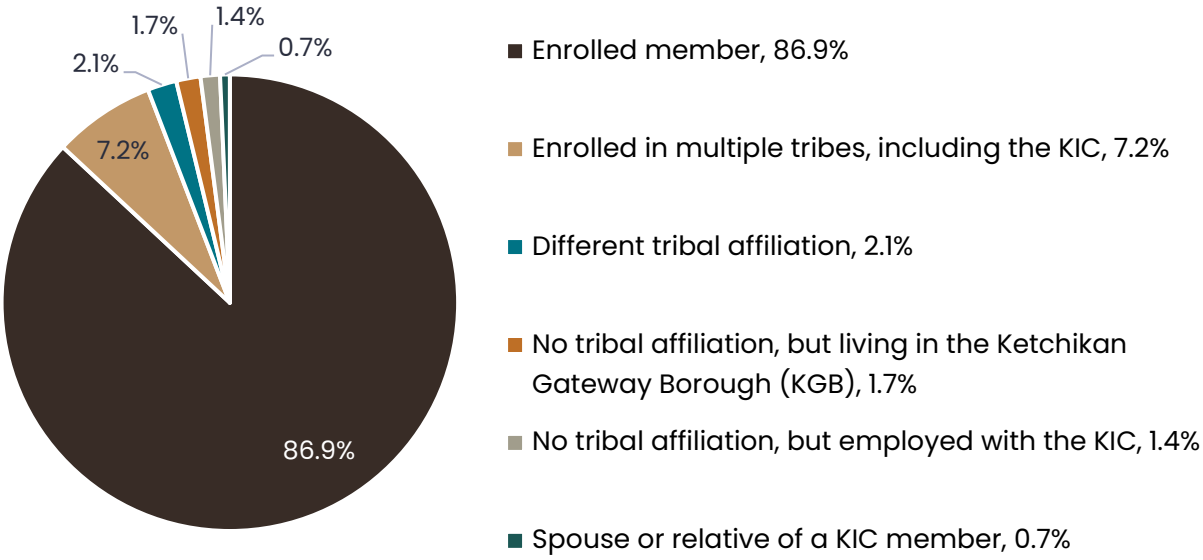
Opportunities

Respondents claimed that the largest opportunities available to KIC are potential future investments in housing/construction, employment and business development, whole community improvement, and education/training. These priorities indicate that KIC members see meaningful untapped potential for both community development and personal growth, as well as infrastructural changes to provide housing to members in need.

Threats

Respondents largely answered that poor governance was the biggest threat to KIC, followed by funding, poor health care policies, and too rapid growth.

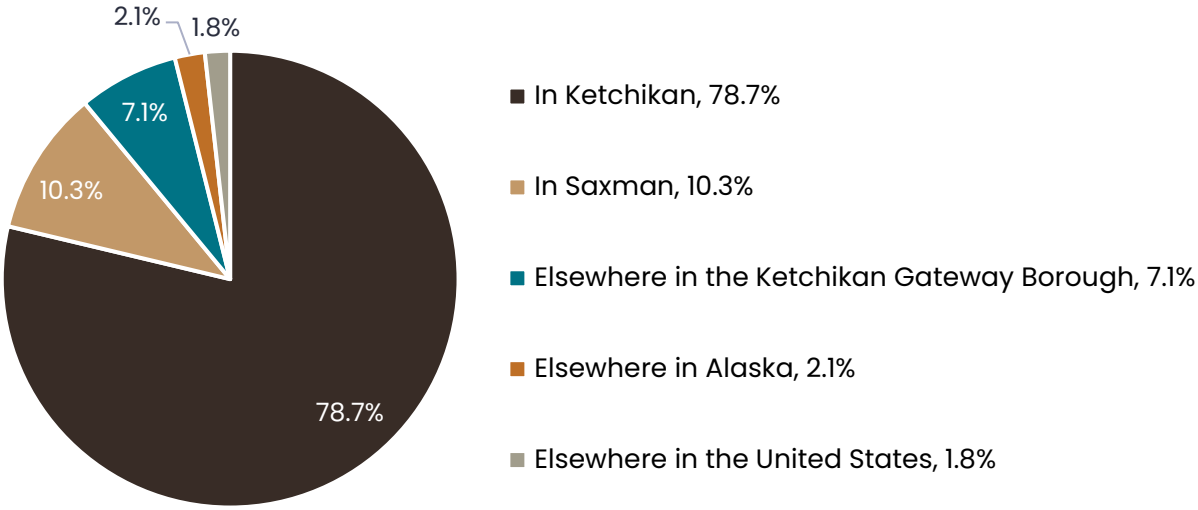
Figure A.1: In what way are you affiliated with Ketchikan Indian Community (KIC)?



N=291

Source: Points Consulting, 2025

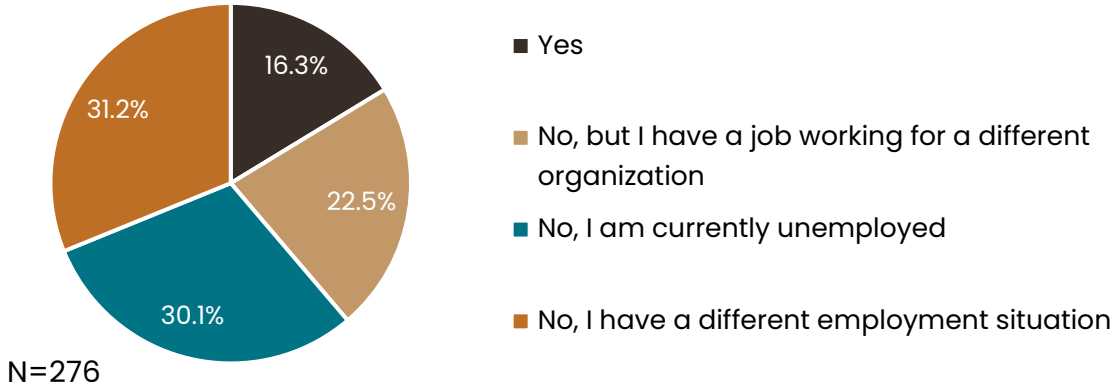
Figure A.2: What best describes where you live?



N=282

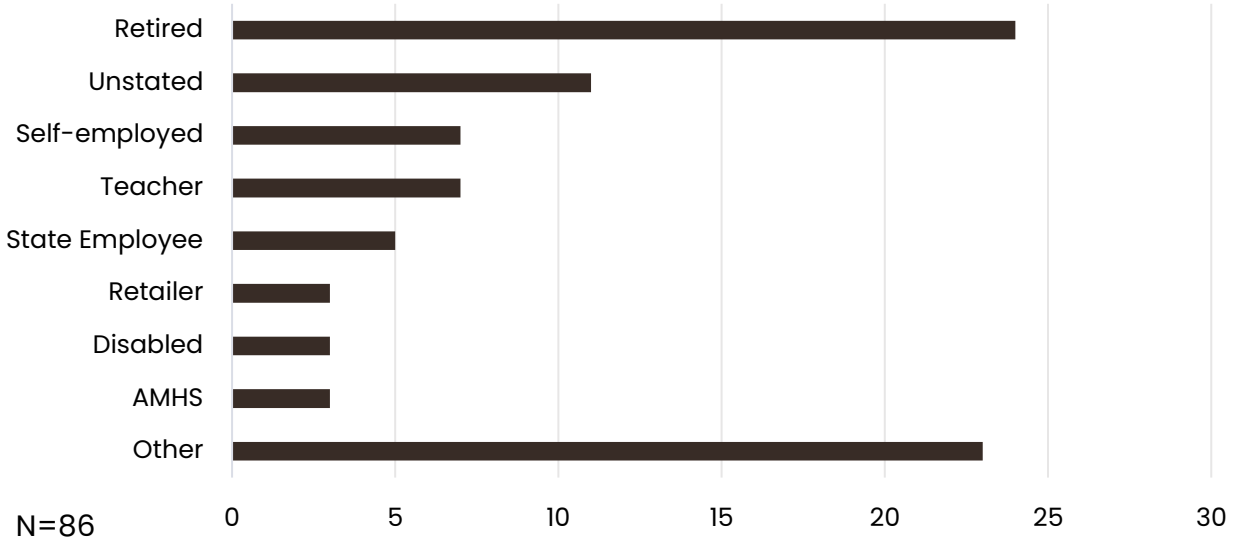
Source: Points Consulting, 2025

Figure A.3: Do you work for KIC or the Ketchikan Tribal Business Corporation and its subsidiaries?



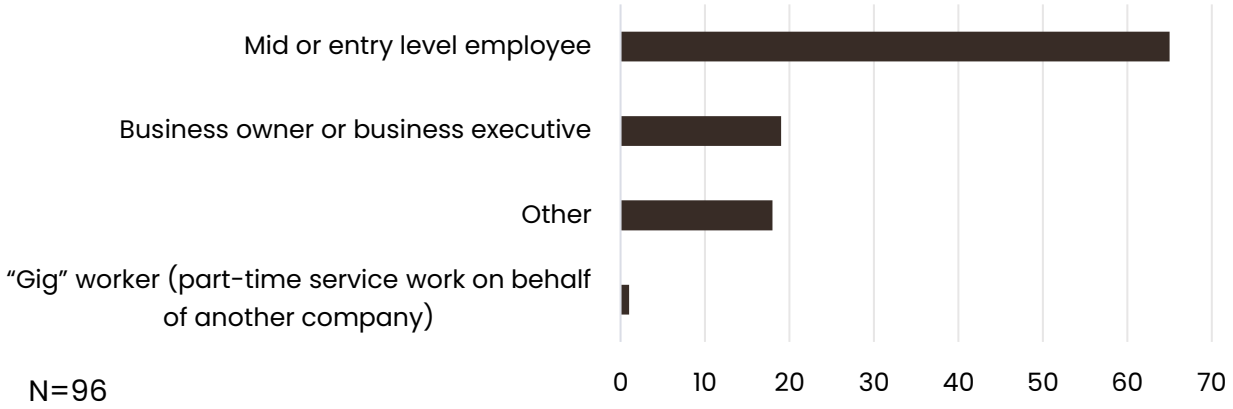
Source: Points Consulting, 2025

Figure A.4: 'No, I have a different employment situation'



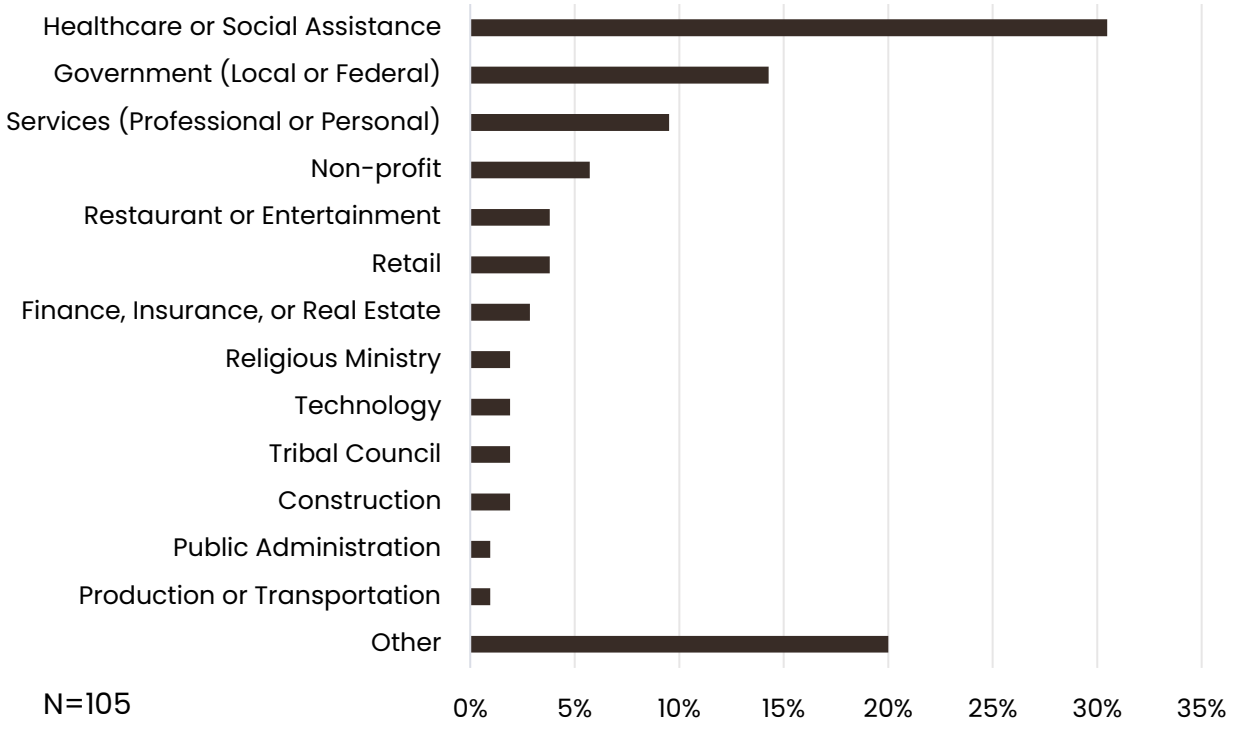
Source: Points Consulting, 2025

Figure A.5: What categories best describe your work situation?



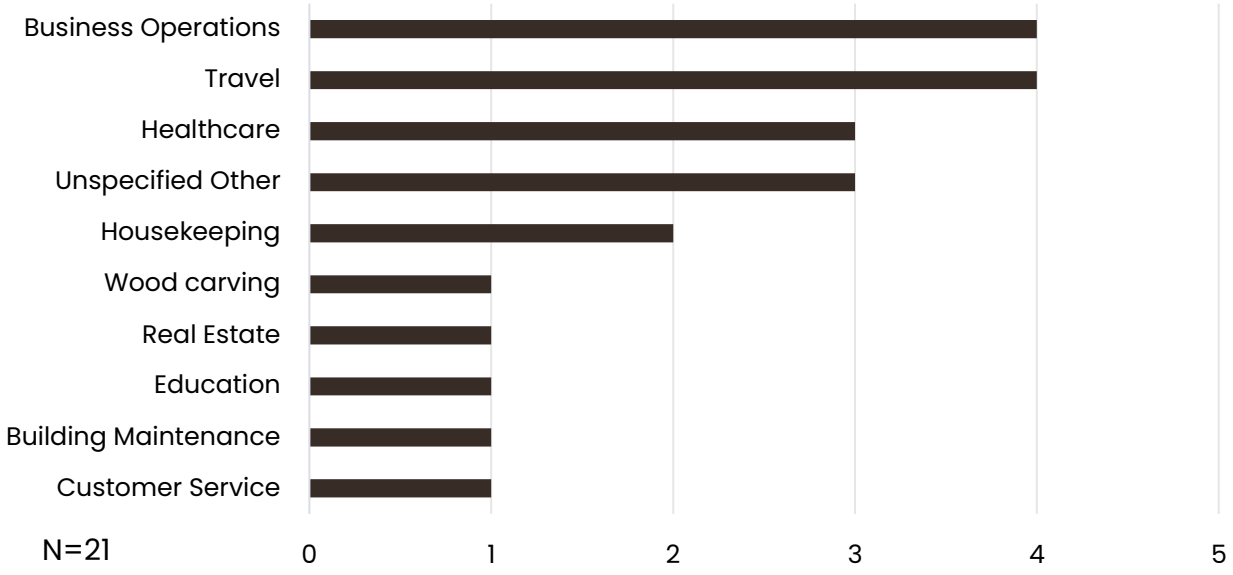
Source: Points Consulting, 2025

Figure A.6: What type of business are you involved in?



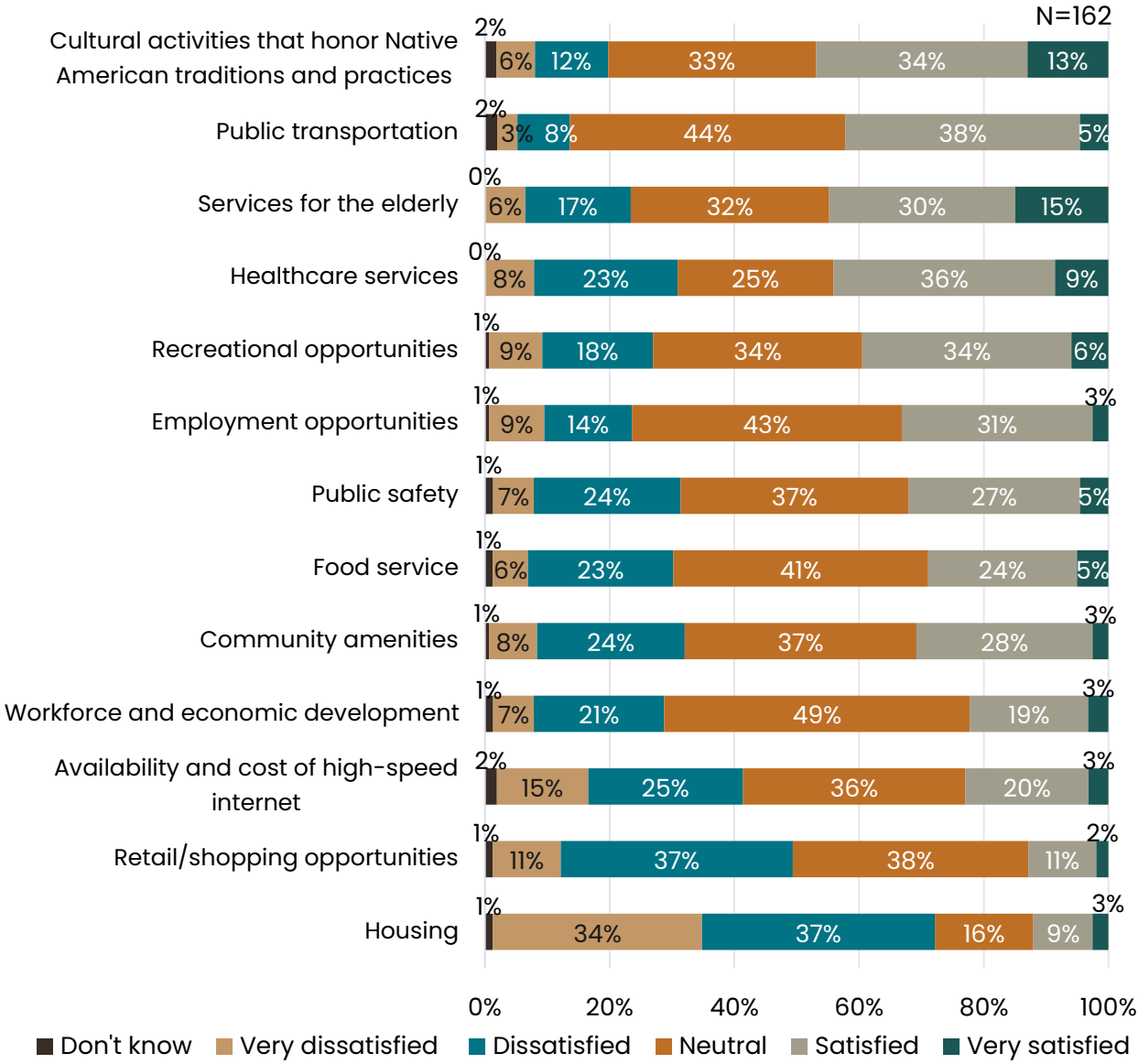
Source: *Points Consulting, 2025*

Figure A.7: Open-Ended Other: What type of business are you involved in?



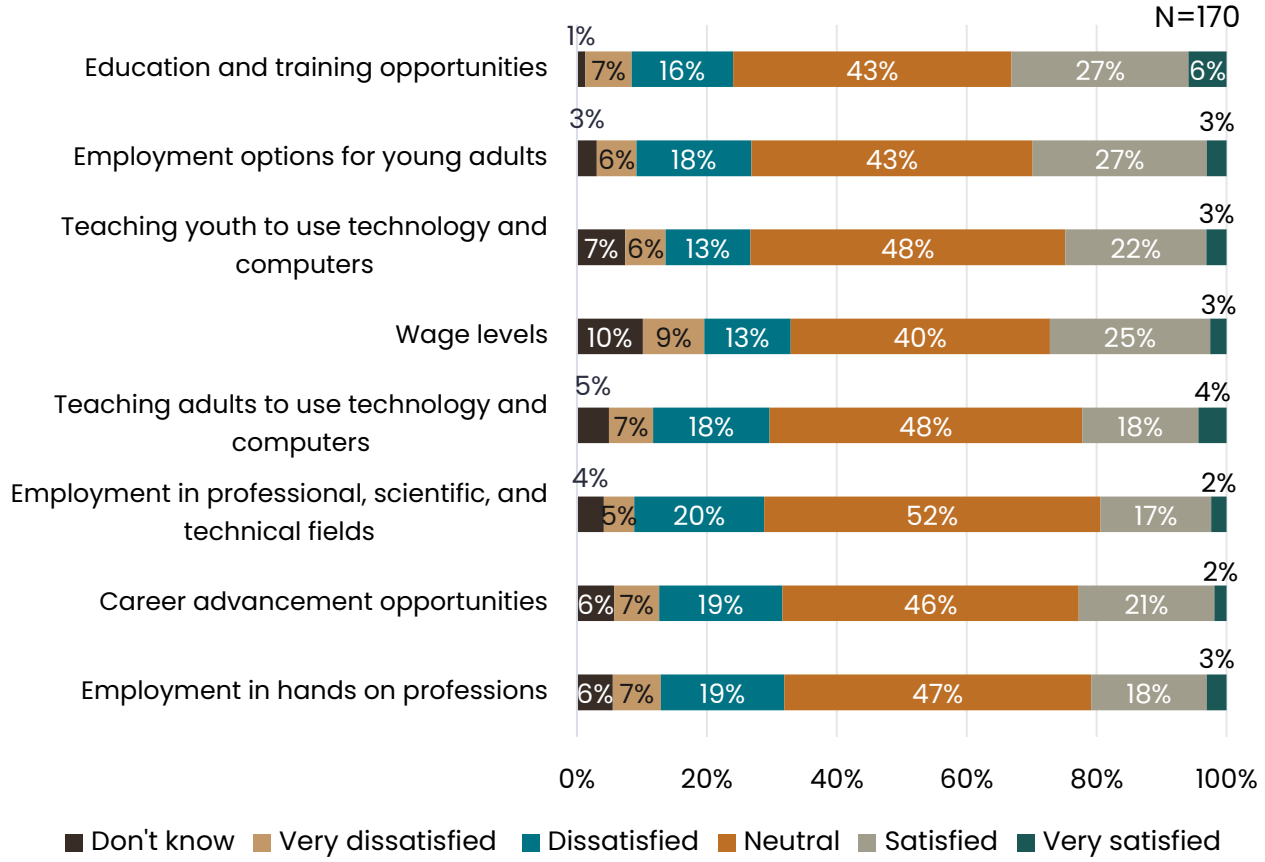
Source: *Points Consulting, 2025*

Figure A.8: How satisfied are you with the following factors in your community?



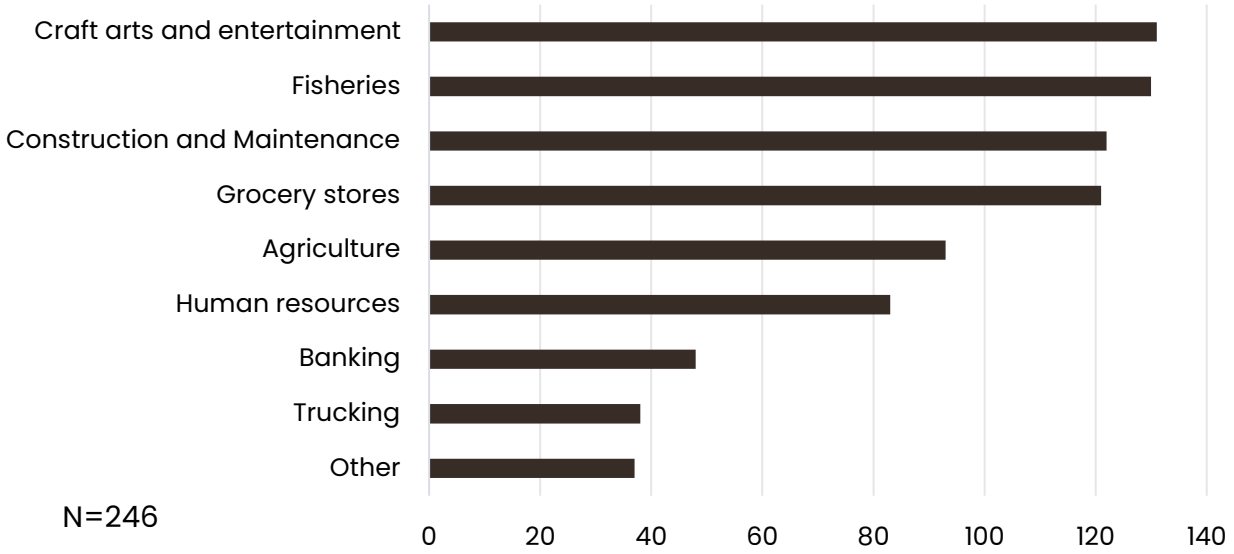
Source: Points Consulting, 2025

Figure A.9: How satisfied are you with KIC related to the following wage and employment topics?



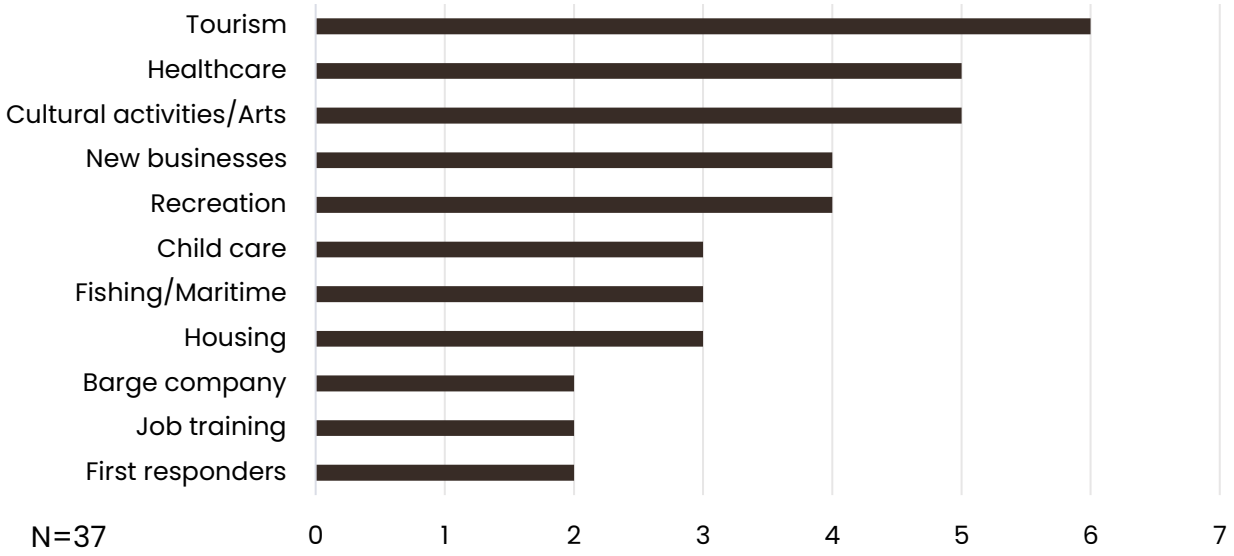
Source: Points Consulting, 2025

Figure A.10: What industries should KIC seek to grow and support?



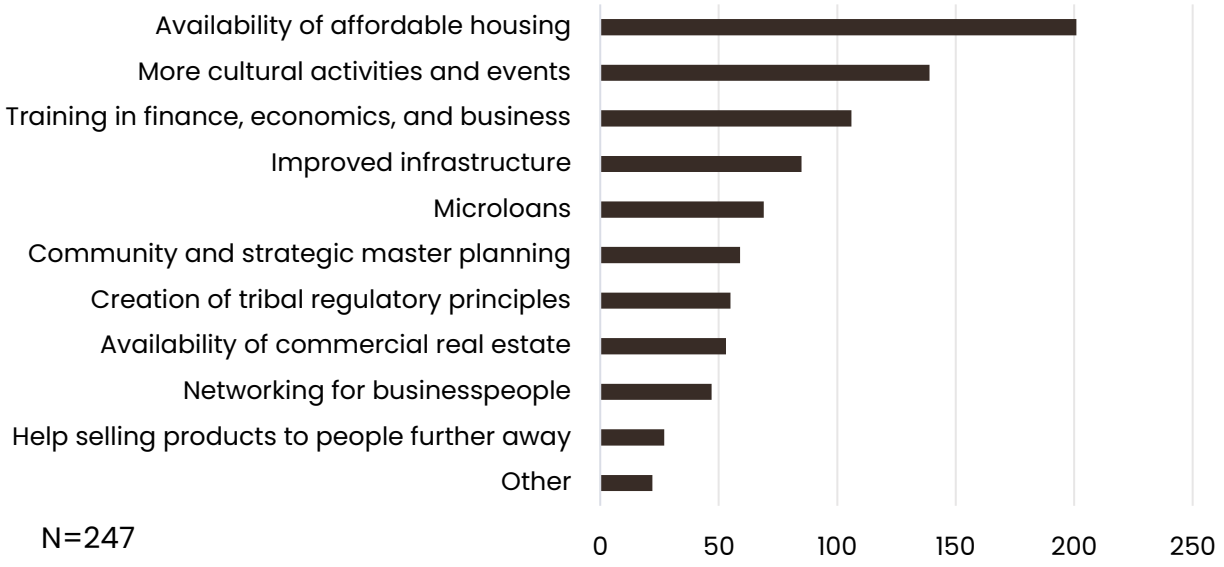
Source: Points Consulting, 2025

Figure A.11: Open-Ended Other: What industries should KIC seek to grow and support?



Source: Points Consulting, 2025

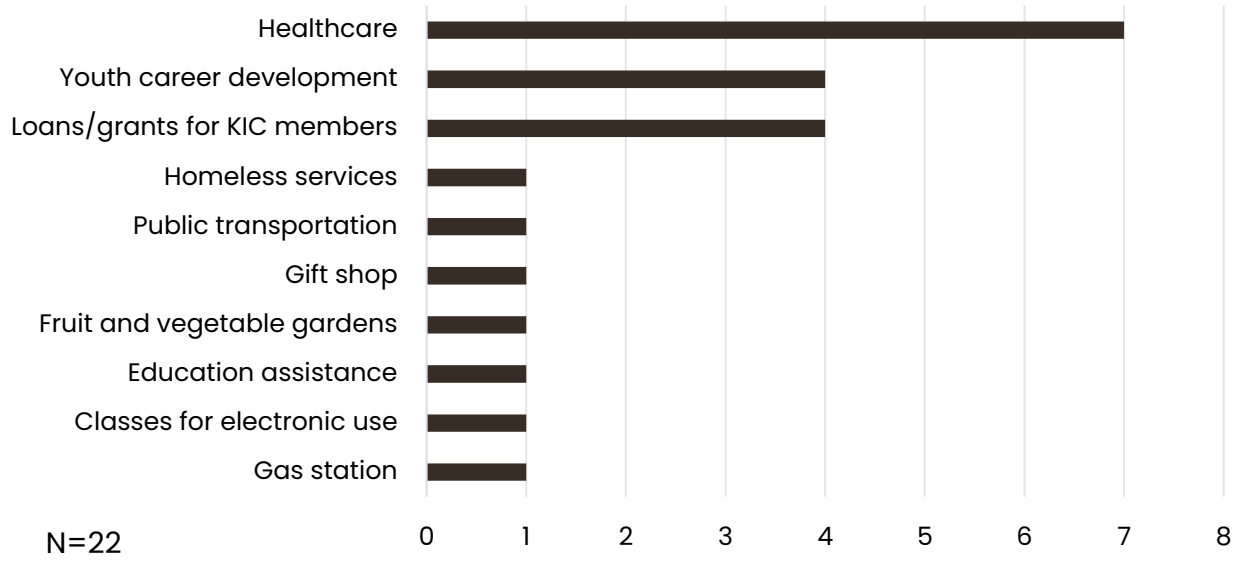
Figure A.12: What economic development activities does KIC need most within the next 5 years?[43]



Source: Points Consulting, 2025

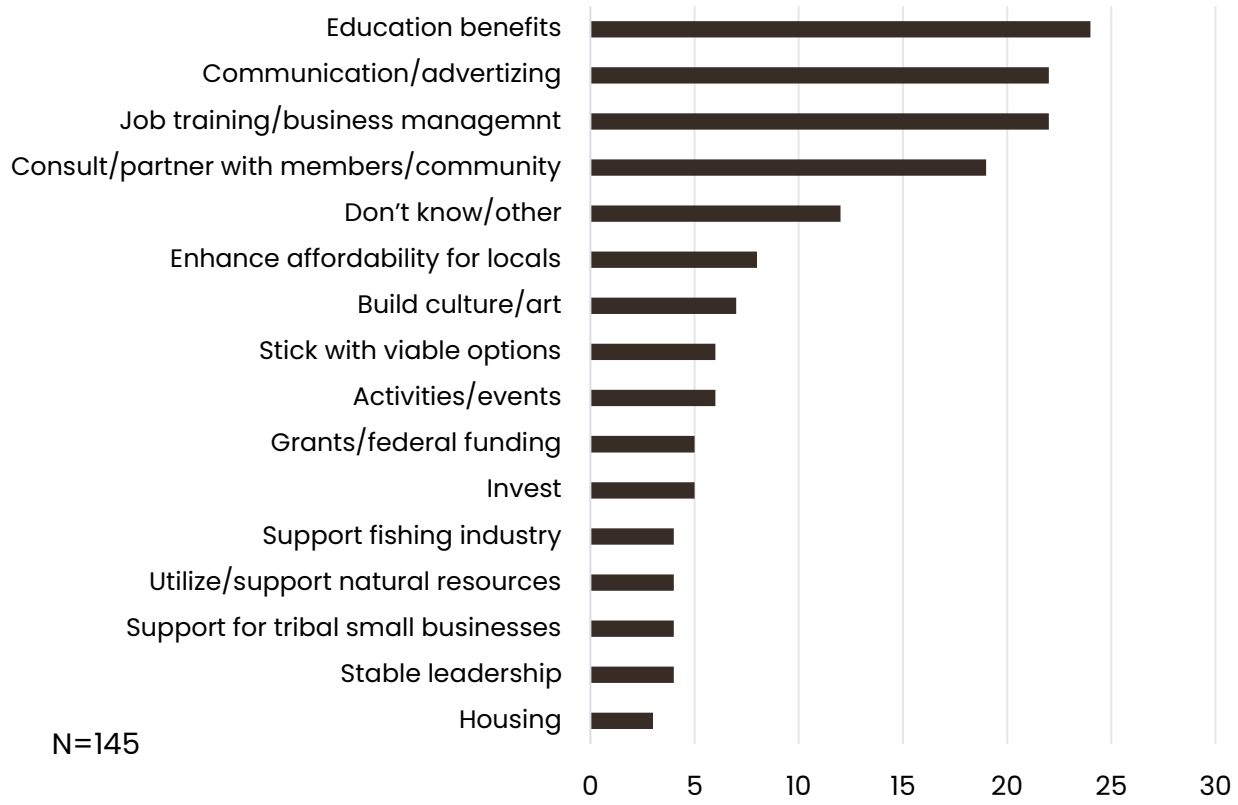
[43] Full text of "Training in finance, economics, and business…" was printed as "Training in financial, economic and business topics" in survey; "Improved infrastructure" was printed as "Improved infrastructure (such as water, electricity, transportation, etc.)"; "Microloans" was printed as "Microloans (business loans of less than $20,000)"; "Creation of tribal regulatory principles" was printed as "Creation of tribal regulatory principles (such as commercial, zoning, and sovereign rights economic opportunities)"; "Availability of commercial real estate" was printed as "Availability of ready-to-use commercial real estate"; "Networking for businesspeople" was printed as "Networking for existing and upcoming businesspeople."

Figure A.13: Open-Ended Other: What economic development activities does KIC need most within the next 5 years?



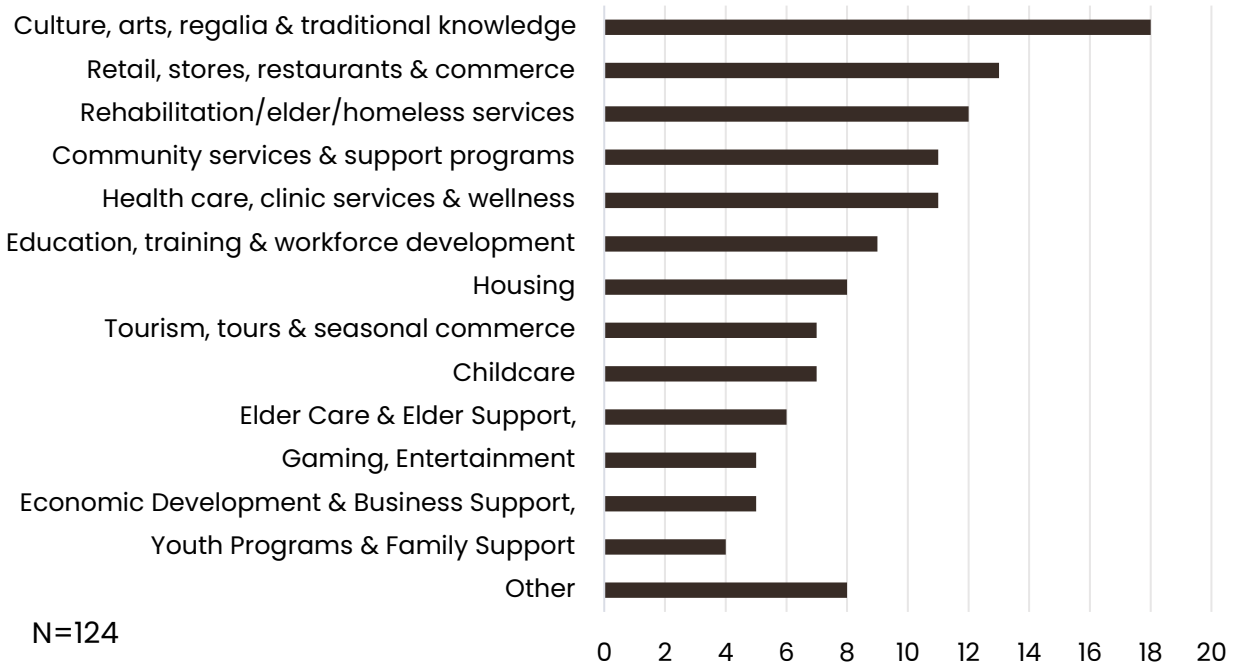
Source: Points Consulting, 2025

Figure A.14: What should KIC do to attract and support these industries?



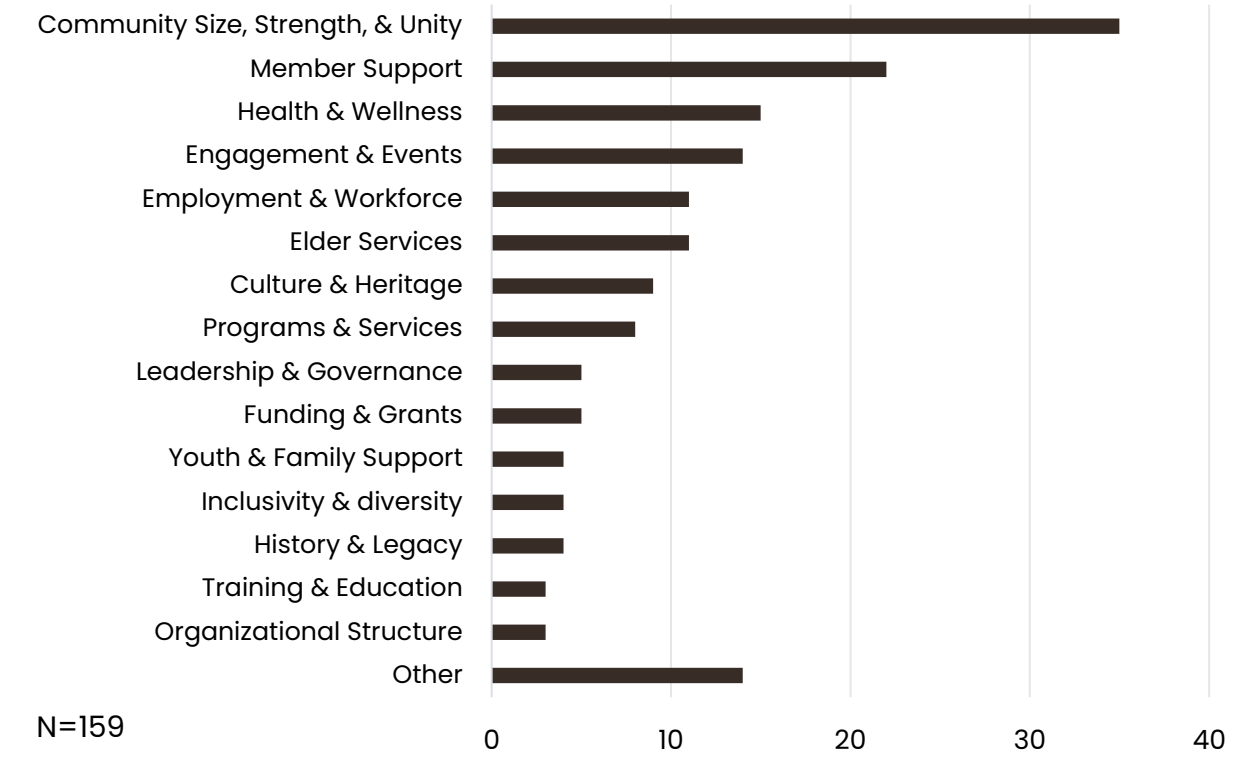
Source: Points Consulting, 2025

Figure A.15: Are there any specific goods and services that are missing from KIC that you think could be successful?



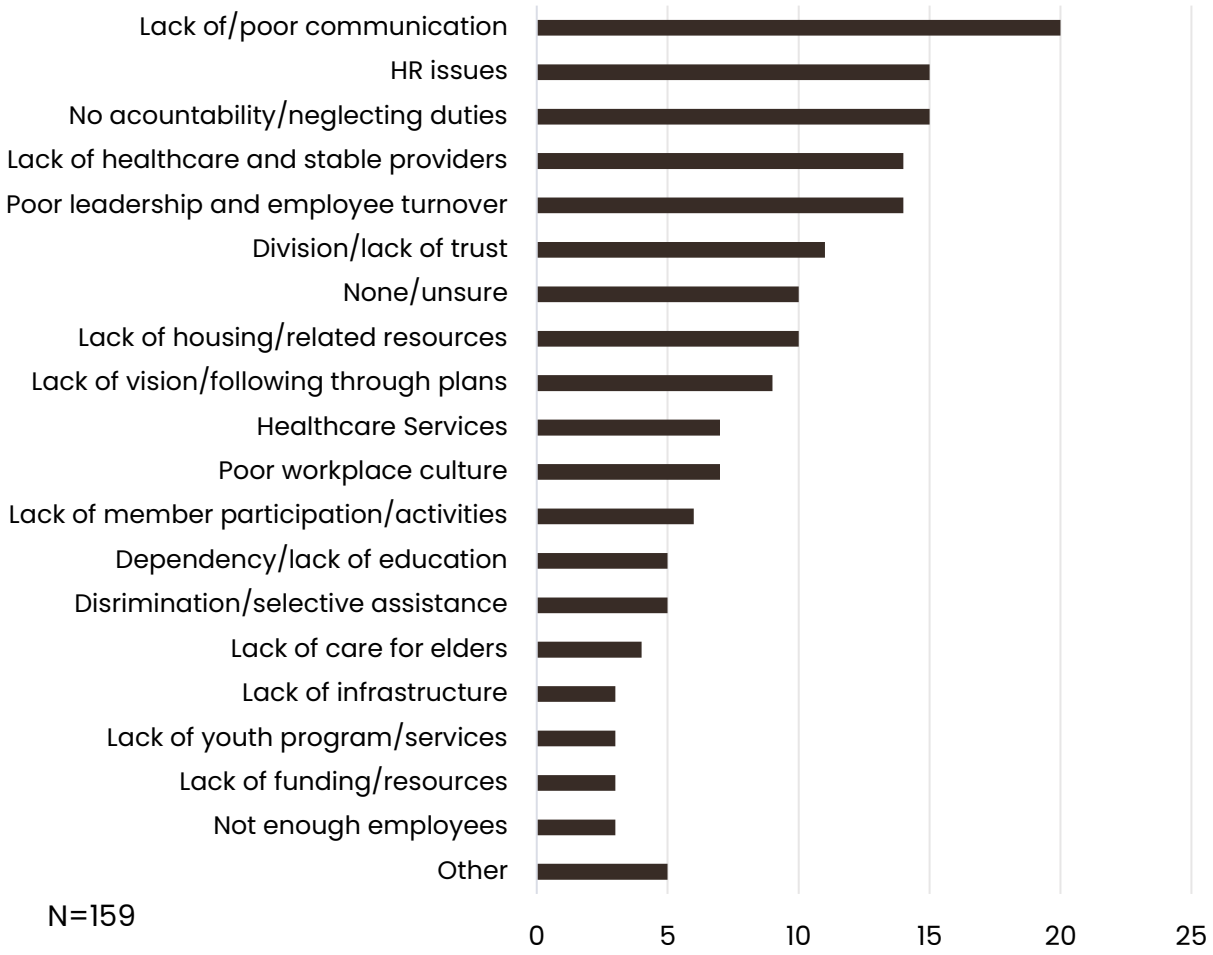
Source: *Points Consulting, 2025*

Figure A.16: Strengths are assets that strengthen KIC and its members. What is a strength of KIC?



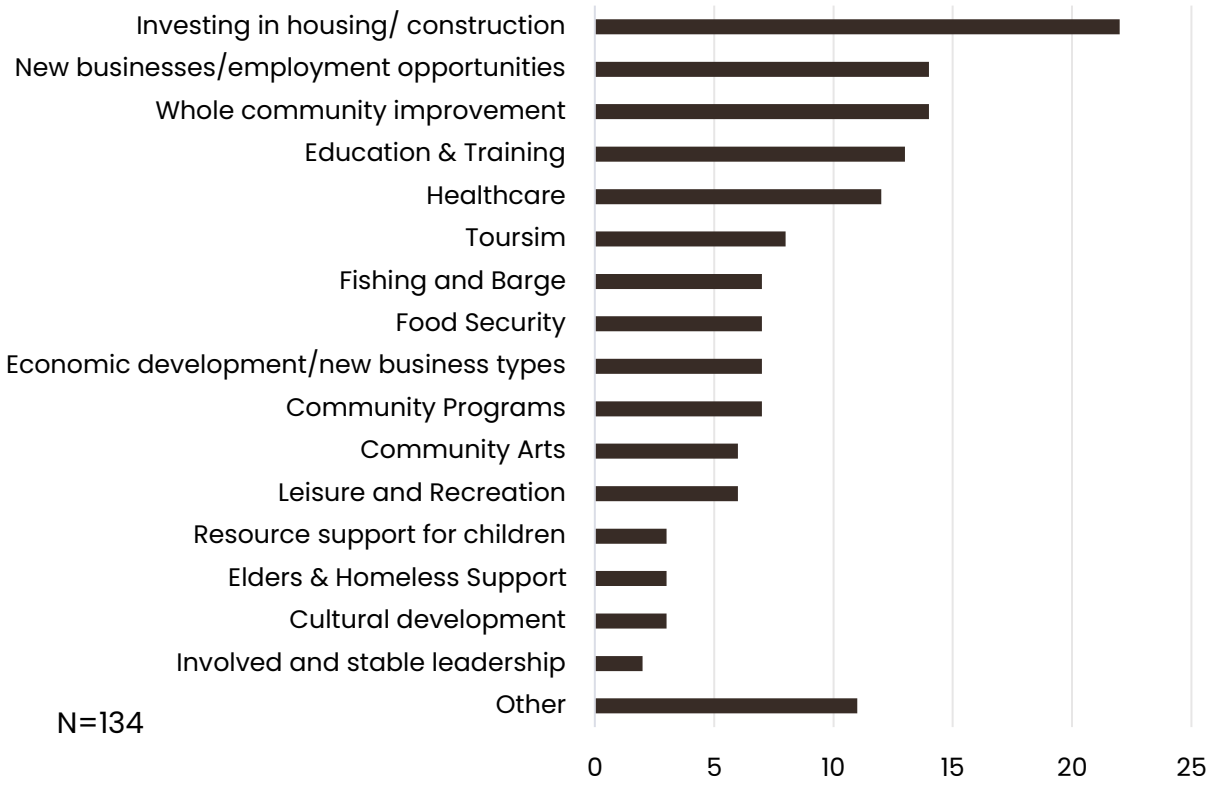
Source: *Points Consulting, 2025*

Figure A.17: Weaknesses are existing issues that limit success for the KIC and its members. What is a weakness of KIC?



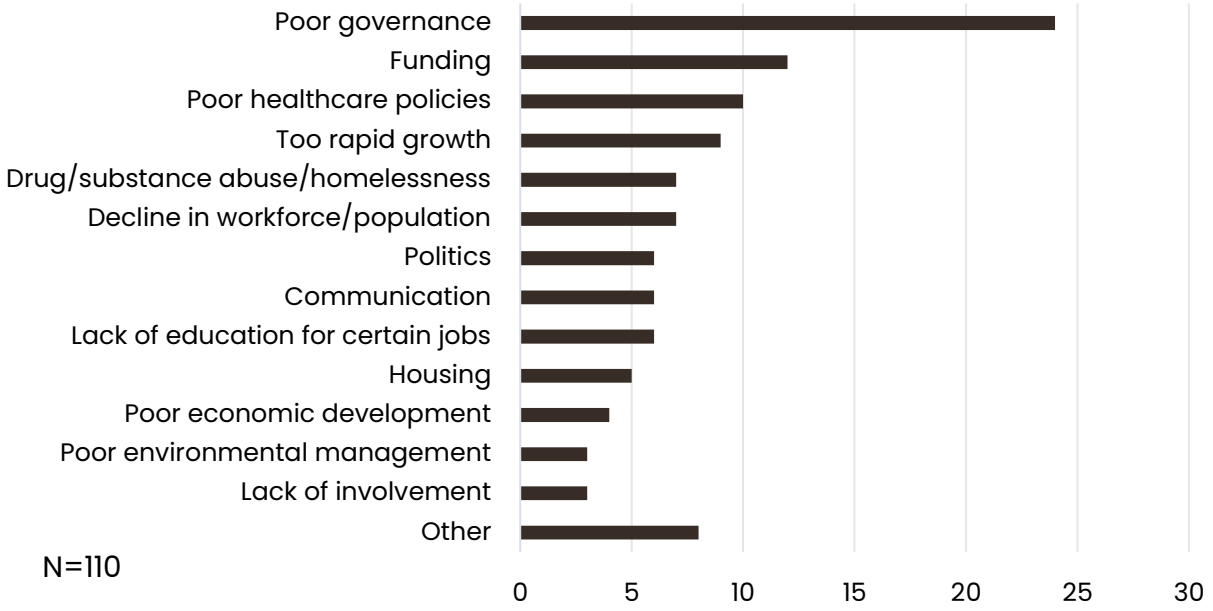
Source: Points Consulting, 2025

Figure A.18: Opportunities are current or future possibilities for the KIC and its members. What is an opportunity for the KIC?



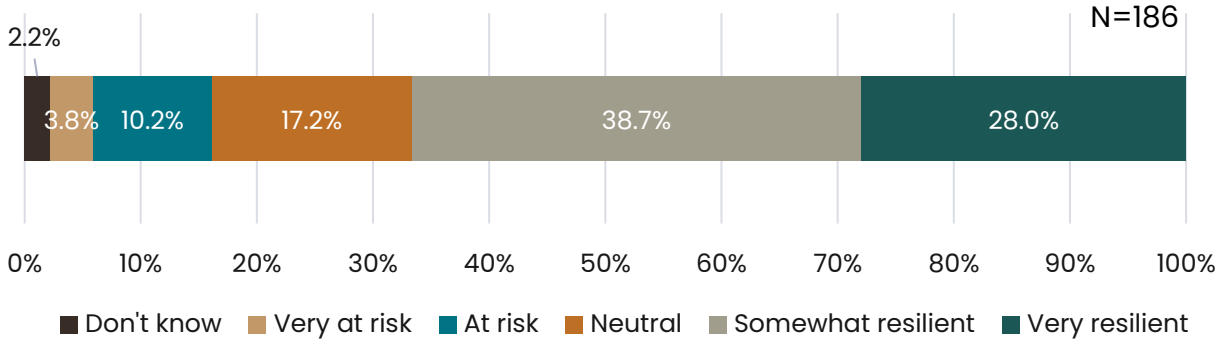
Source: *Points Consulting, 2025*

Figure A.19: Threats are current or future possibilities that could harm the KIC. What is a threat for the KIC?



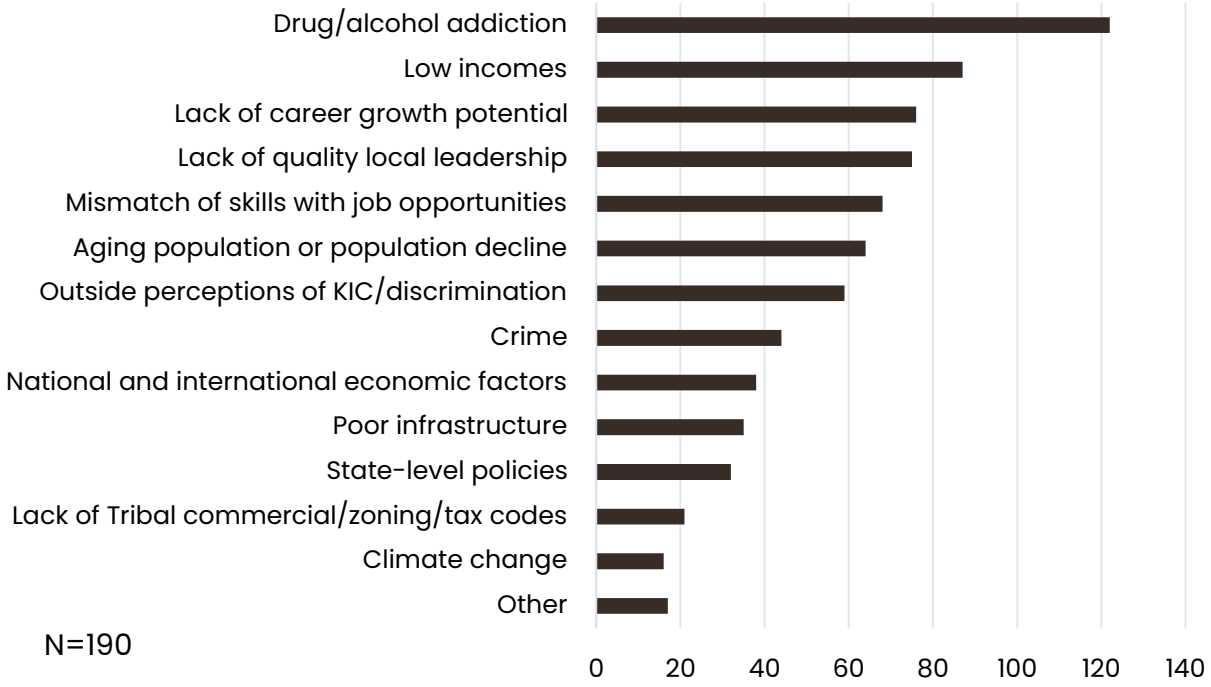
Source: *Points Consulting, 2025*

Figure A.20: Community Resiliency describes the ability to hold up and recover from economic challenges such as the COVID pandemic, economic recessions, and natural disasters. How resilient do you consider KIC to be?



Source: Points Consulting, 2025

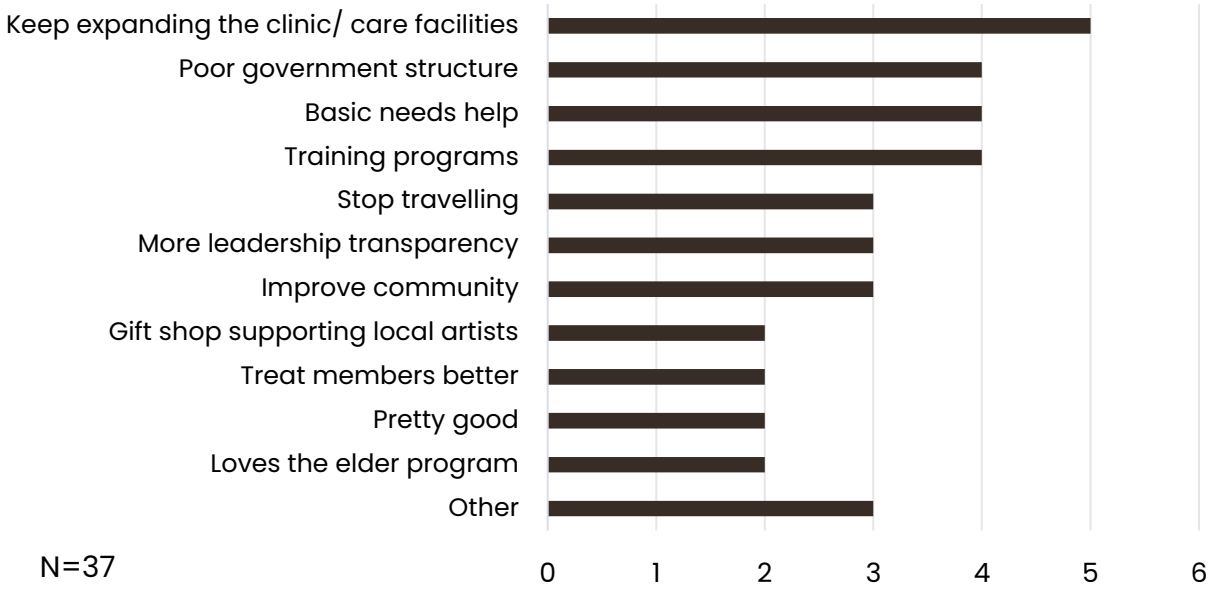
Figure A.21: What are the biggest threats to KIC's resiliency?[44]



Source: Points Consulting, 2025

[44] Full text of "Mismatch of skills with job opportunities" was printed as "Mismatch of workforce skills with job opportunities" in survey; "National and international economic factors" was printed as "National and international economic factors (such as national labor shortages or supply chain issues)."

Figure A.22: Other thoughts/comments?



Source: Points Consulting, 2025

Figure A.23: What best describes where you live?

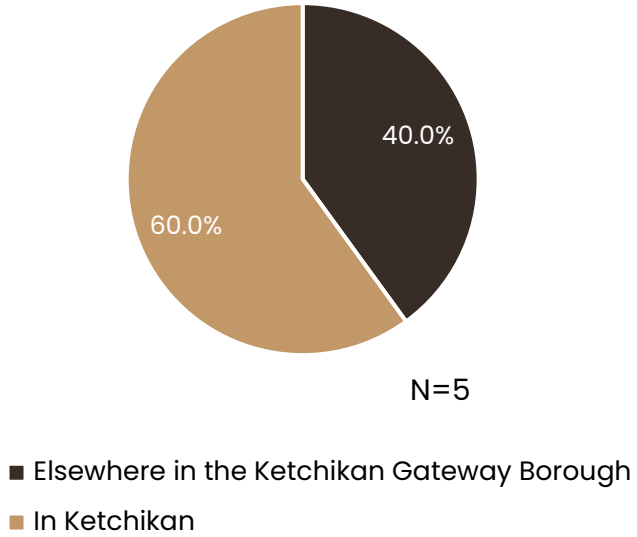
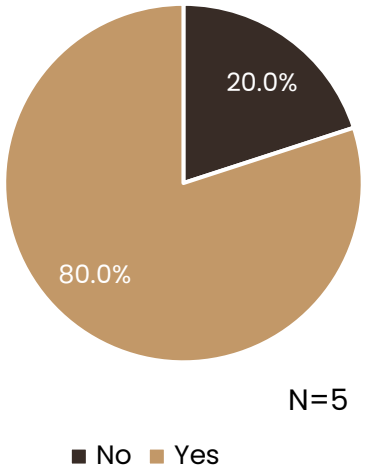
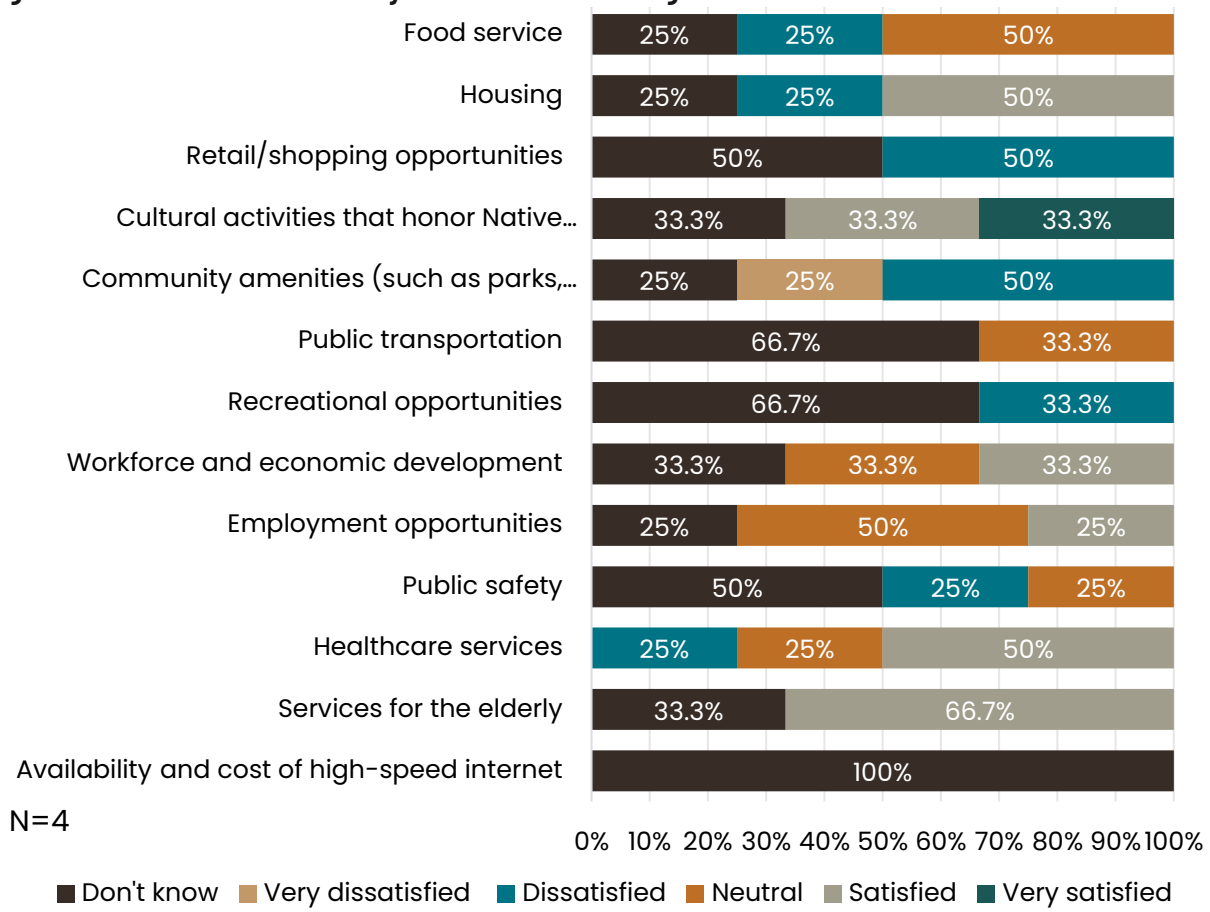


Figure A.24: Have you ever attended a KIC sponsored event?



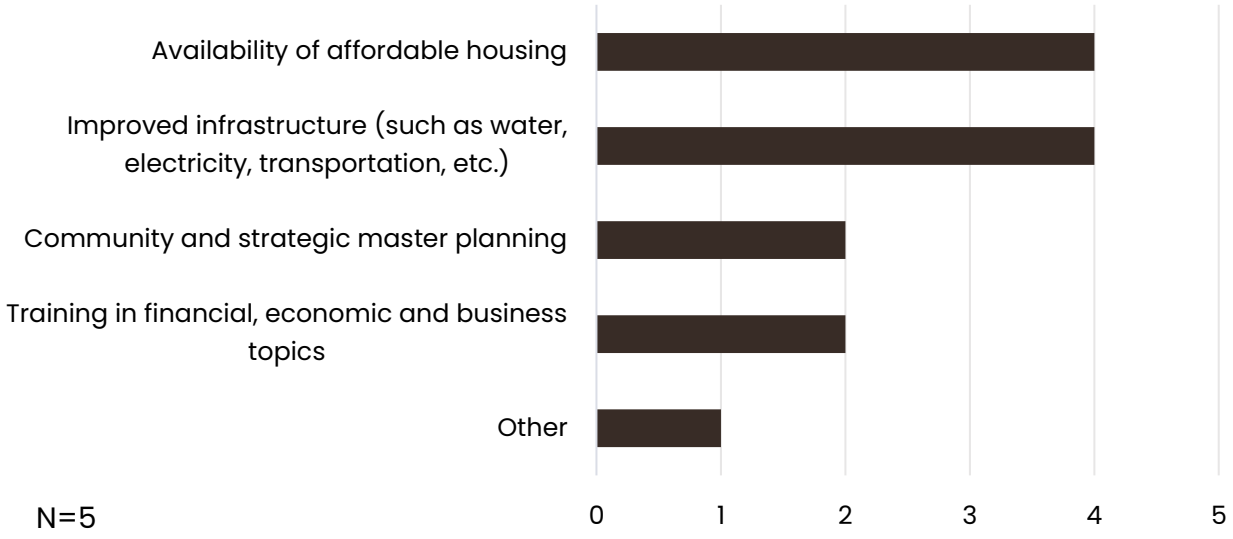
Source: Points Consulting, 2025

Figure A.25: How satisfied are you with the following factors for members of KIC?



Source: Points Consulting, 2025

Figure A.26: What economic development activities does the Ketchikan community need most within the next 5 years?



Source: Points Consulting, 2025

Figure A.27: What is your gender?

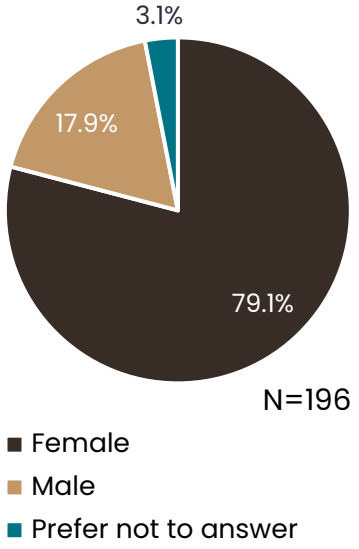
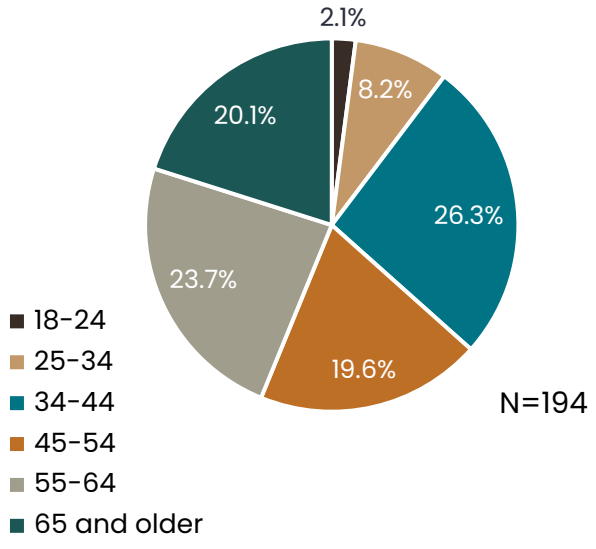
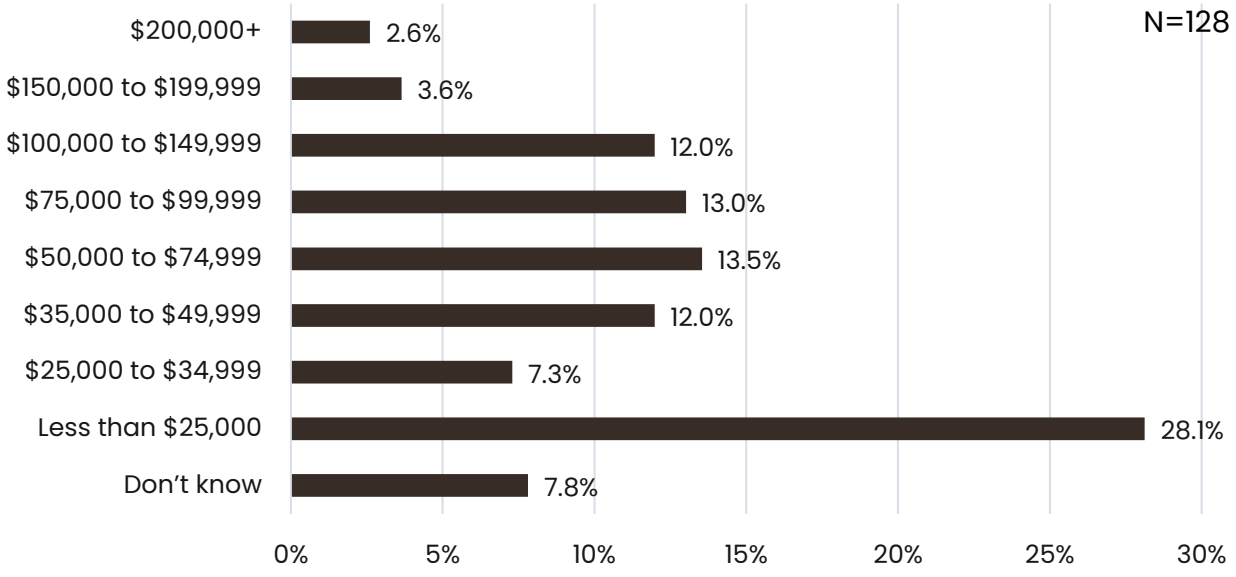


Figure A.28: What is your age?



Source: Points Consulting, 2025

Figure A.29: What is your annual household income?



Source: Points Consulting, 2025

Figure A.30: Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

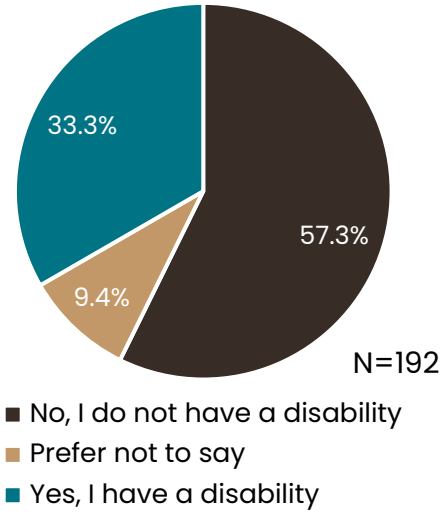
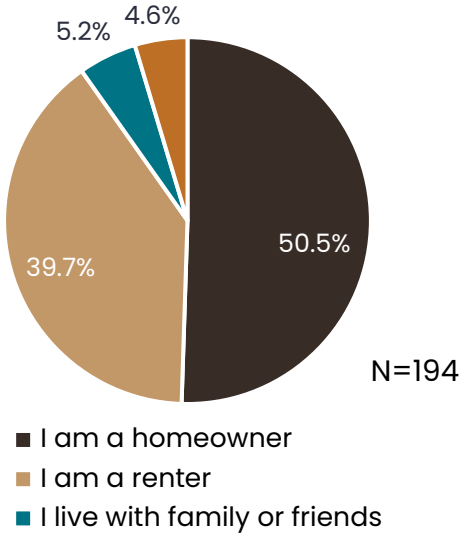


Figure A.31: Do you currently own or rent your home?



Source: Points Consulting, 2025

Appendix B: Background and Literature Review

Southeast Alaska 2030 Economic Plan: Southeast Conference's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2025 – 2030

The Southeast Alaska 2030 Economic Plan is a five-year comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) prepared by Rain Coast Data on behalf of the Southeast Conference, the federally designated Economic Development District (EDD) for the region. It represents the culmination of over 30 regional meetings and direct participation from more than 400 stakeholders spanning across the Alaska Native organizations, municipal governments, small businesses, and nonprofits.

Subjects of importance for the CEDS included economic development, transportation, seafood industry development, natural resources, tourism, and energy. These industries were found to play a large role in the economy of the Southeast area and were given a total of 45 objectives to further the impact of these industries in local economies. Seven priority objectives were addressed spanning across each of the industry sectors. These included:

- Housing
- Childcare
- Support for the Alaska Marine Highway System
- Seafood Market Development
- Seafood modernization initiatives
- Support for local tourism
- Reduction of energy costs

Several thematic challenges surface repeatedly, such as shortage and cost of housing, the decline of the Alaska Marine Highway system, demographic losses, and the collapse of the seafood sector relative to past decades. Concerns about recent federal policy changes have also risen among community leaders in early 2025. Policy changes have weakened the capacity to provide scientific and regulatory expertise to certain sectors of importance.

Empirically, the plan reports that in 2024 the region gained over 700 jobs and $99 million in additional wages, bringing employment near record highs. However, this economic momentum is overshadowed by steep declines in the seafood industry (a 19% drop in value landed and 21% fewer fishermen since 2019) and shrinking population figures. Outmigration of younger families and workforce-aged residents is portrayed as the core structural problem, one that even strong tourism growth cannot offset.

The policy emphasis is notably integrative by pairing infrastructure investments with social strategies, while aligning resource industries with sustainability imperatives. Particularly forward-looking are the objectives on disaster resilience and electrification. The plan positions Southeast Alaska as simultaneously facing deep vulnerabilities and possessing marketable strengths in culture, tourism, and renewable energy.

Tlingit and Haida Southeast Alaska Tribal CEDS, 2018

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for Southeast Alaska Tribal Communities was produced in 2018 by the Business and Economic Development Department (BEDD) of the Central Council of the Tlingit & Haida Indians of Alaska (CCTHITA), and serves as a strategic planning blueprint for the years of 2016–2020.

The Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska is a regional entity representing more than 30,000 Tribal members who share ancestral ties to 19 communities in the region. The CEDS was primarily developed to address tribal issues and concerns, providing a dedicated demographic profile of the Southeast Native community. Its mission is defined as engaging Southeast Alaska Tribes in regional planning to develop a unified strategy supporting tribal economic health and rural economies.

The strategy emphasized maximum stakeholder engagement. The entire process covered 21 communities, involving the participation of 19 tribes and 12 Alaska Native corporations. Furthermore, the community and economic development priorities outlined in the CEDS are directly supported by tribal resolutions passed by the Tlingit and Haida Tribal assembly between 2014 and 2017.

The project area spans 43,000 square miles of the Alexander Archipelago, historically occupied by the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian people. This geographic context is characterized by steep, rugged mountains, ice fields, and over 1,000 offshore islands, which presents significant economic challenges.

These challenges take many forms across a variety of industries. Transportation costs bring serious challenges to the southeastern communities. They are isolated far from markets, and transportation facilities face limited infrastructure funding. Supporting the Alaska Marine Highway System is identified as a priority for this reason. Land availability is also an issue considering the terrain, as about 95% of land in the area is federal or public land.

Alaska Natives face high unemployment, with a high cost and low standard of living, and persistent infrastructure issues. Tribal governments and local municipalities, which represent a key piece of the employment base, are operating on shrinking budgets, severely limiting their capacity for economic development.

The CEDS also investigated the economic condition of the region, which found the conditions for Alaska Natives are considerably worse than other Alaskans and Americans. For example:

- Alaska Natives have lower median incomes (just 50-60% of other Alaskans)
- AIANs are three times more likely to be poor
- AIAN populations have lower educational attainment levels
- AIANs exhibit higher unemployment rates

The overall regional economy has underperformed recently compared to the state and is expected to remain flat due to dependence on state jobs and expenditures. The largest contributing industries include:

- Timber
- Mining
- Fishing
- Tourism

Tourism was found to hold the most promise for tribal communities. It is projected to grow at 4% annually. The Tlingit and Haida CEDS highlights the successful Native-owned ventures in tourism, such as the Icy Strait Point (ISP) in Hoonah, which employs 85% local hire and offers world-class cultural and environmental excursions. The CCTHITA also intends to develop a Cultural Immersion Park in Juneau, which is projected to create 60 jobs during construction and 75 during the operational phase.

The CEDS notes that Tribal members overcome financial challenges through the resiliency of the people, who remain in Southeast Alaska due to family ties, access to subsistence activities, and natural beauty of the surroundings. Resiliency strategies include prioritizing maintaining ferry services, increasing communication with government officials, and protecting existing health and service providers. The CEDS also identifies cultural depth, long history of stewardship of the land, and accumulated traditional knowledge as invaluable assets to the region.

Appendix C: CEDS Steering Committee and Interviews

This CEDS was completed with the guidance and assistance of the following Steering Committee members. Steering Committee members were chosen based on their knowledge of services and programs and expertise within the sectors of the Tribe.

- Richard Harney – Tribal Planner
- Jeremy Weber – Small Business Advisor
- Cynthia Crowl – Grants Accountant
- Emily *Tlaa Kil Xants* Edenshaw – Tribal Administrator
- Riley Vierra – Tribal Planning Assistant

The following business and community leaders were interviewed:

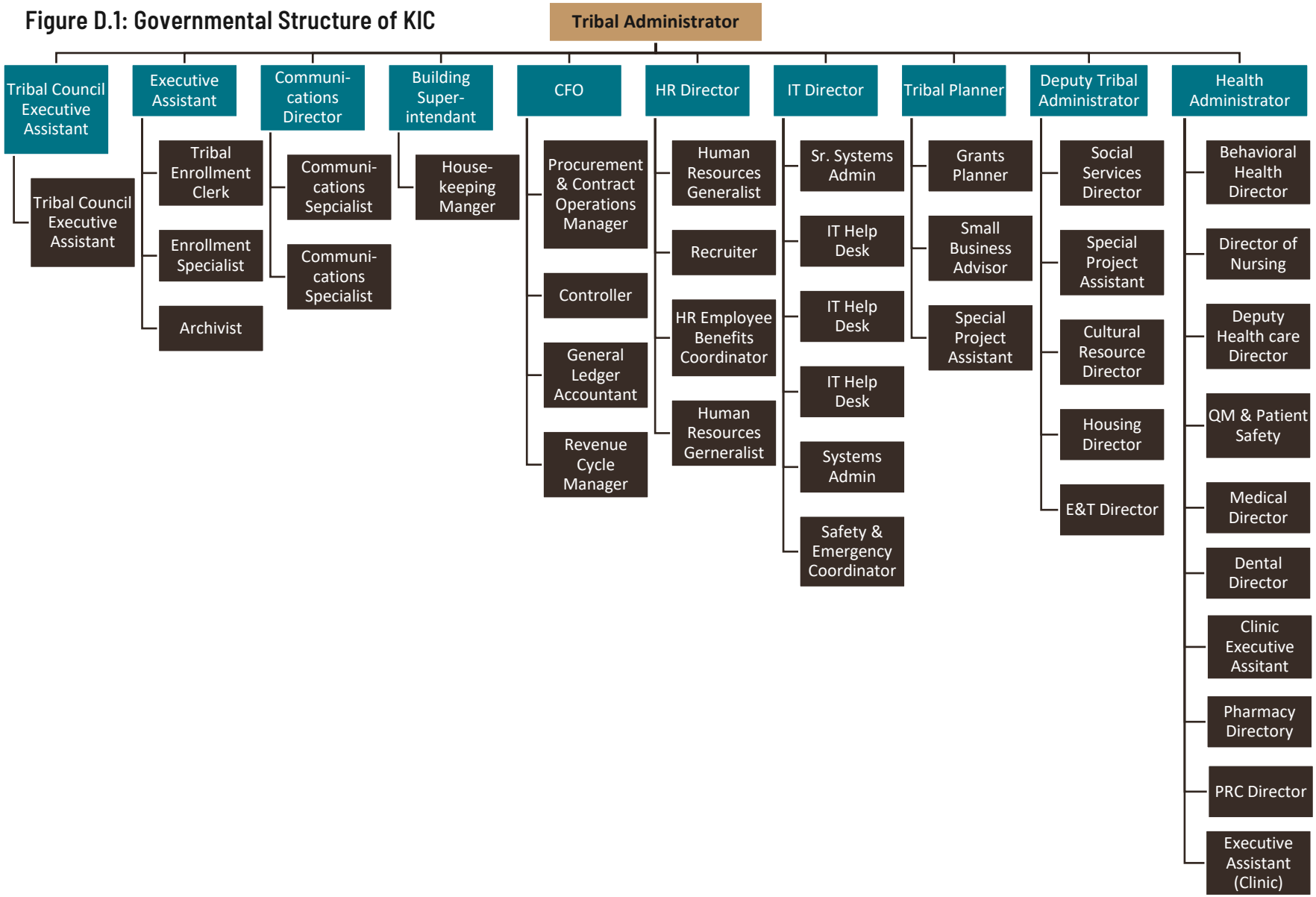
- Cynna Smith – Assistant Borough Manager, Ketchikan Gateway Borough
- Peter Amylon – Economic Development and Lands Manager, Ketchikan Gateway Borough
- Emily *Tlaa Kil Xants* Edenshaw – Tribal Administrator, Ketchikan Indian Community
- Richard Harney – Tribal Planner, Ketchikan Indian Community
- Jeremy Weber – Small Business Advisor, Ketchikan Indian Community
- Irene Dundas – Cultural Resources, Ketchikan Indian Community
- Trixie Bennett – Health Administrator, Ketchikan Indian Community
- Lynn Quan – Social Health Services, Ketchikan Indian Community
- Ron Curtis – Inter Island Ferry
- Robert Venables – Southeast Conference
- Michelle O'Brien – Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce
- Ketchikan Tribal Business Corporation Joint Interview
- Ketchikan Indian Community Housing Department Joint Interview

KIC Tribal Council:

- Gloria *Ilsxileé Stáng* Burns- President
- Judy *Jadailong* Leask Guthrie – Vice President
- Marcie *Gaduu* Haynes – Secretary
- Rushcelle *T' áaw-Xahl* Hull – Treasurer
- Melissa *Tawíi Gulgáas* Johnson – Councilwoman
- Lloyd *Se ju* Ruaro – Councilman
- Chas *Yáahl SGwáansang* Edwardson – Councilman
- Sharyl Yeisley – Councilwoman
- Alexandra *Wudi Háni Yèil* Ginter - Councilwoman
- Shania *Seenkla.at* Murphy – Youth Representative

Appendix D: Governmental Structure of KIC

Figure D.1: Governmental Structure of KIC



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