

JULY 7, 2026 • KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY PRESENTATION



STRENGTHENING THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

Implementing the Kenai Peninsula Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
(CEDS) 2026-2031

KENAI PENINSULA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (KPEDD)



STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

Demographic trends and strategic priorities reshaping the Kenai Peninsula labor market.

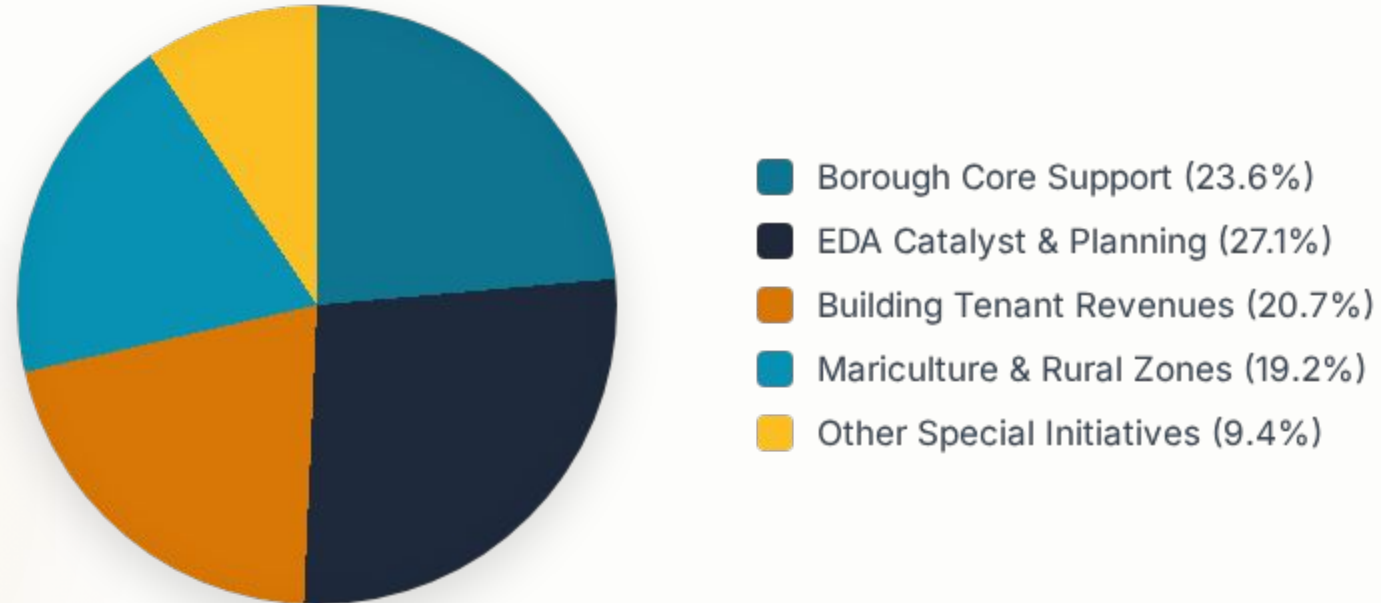


FY27 FUNDING ALLOCATION

Funding Source	Strategic Purpose	Amount
Kenai Peninsula Borough Support	Borough Core Operating Funding	\$180,000
EDA Community Catalyst	Federal / Industrial Growth Initiative	\$131,413
Building Tenants & Facilities	Private / Facilities Operations Support	\$158,000
EDA Planning Grant (CEDDS) 2026	Federal / Regional CEDDS Implementation	\$75,000
RBDG-BDO Economic Zones	Federal / Rural Economic Support	\$75,000
Alaska Mariculture Cluster	Federal / Blue Economy Integration	\$71,160
Other Grants & Partnerships	Childcare, Housing, State Commitments	\$72,075
Total Annualized Resources	Strategic Leverage Ratio of 4.2x	\$762,648



FY27 REVENUE COMPOSITION



The Kenai Peninsula Borough's \$180k operating support serves as essential seed funding, effectively leveraging over \$582k in external federal, state, and private investments.



CEDS 2026-2031 PRIORITIES

TOP STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The newly updated Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (2026-2031) highlights key local levers to create stability:

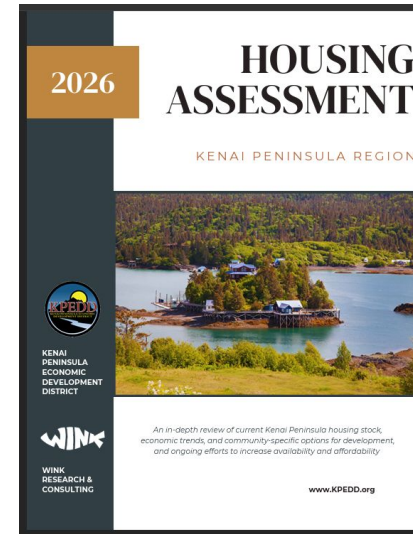
- Promoting industry diversification and growth.
- Removing housing availability and cost barriers.
- Sustaining physical and digital infrastructure.
- Aligning vocational training to regional requirements.

KPEDD IMPLEMENTATION

KPEDD actively works to build solutions and secure actionable pathways to meet these CEDS objectives:

- Deploying targeted federal and state grant dollars.
- Establishing deep cross-sector collaborations.
- Publishing key regional research (e.g. Housing).
- Securing critical localized processing assets.

REGIONAL HOUSING LEVERS



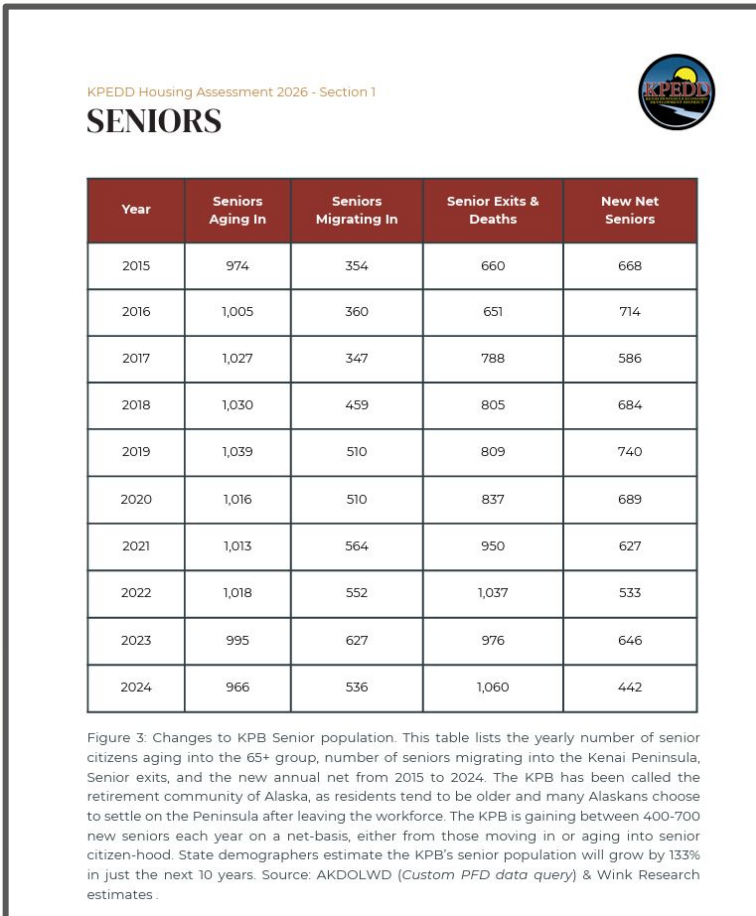
KPEDD 2026 REGIONAL HOUSING ASSESSMENT



Municipal Planning lever	What to advance	Outcome
Land affordability	Expand discounted lots + build-ready terms	Lower entry cost for residents
Utilities & infrastructure	Targeted water/sewer extensions	Unlock feasible higher density
Zoning & permitting	Enable ADUs, missing-middle, infill	More unit types, faster delivery
Seasonal & project housing	Temporary workforce capacity plan	Protect local rentals from displacement
CEDs alignment	Tie housing to workforce + diversification	Stabilize labor and service capacity



OUR DEMOGRAPHIC MANDATE



THE RETIREMENT BOOM


According to regional projections, the Kenai Peninsula Borough is entering a critical demographic transition point. Our senior population (65+) is projected to increase by 133% over the next decade.


We must prioritize and accelerate a shift toward attracting a robust workforce for our diverse industries to invigorate the regional economy before this demographic shift takes full effect.



REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

 **Harbor & Port Expansions** Homer Harbor expansion & Port of Nikiski improvement projects to facilitate large-scale blue economy commerce.

 **Hydroelectric & Utilities** Critical utility energy transmission upgrades and hydroelectric developments (Chugach, Seward, HEA).

 **Broadband Connectivity** Comprehensive digital upgrades to high-speed broadband, improving accessibility across remote communities.

 **Housing & Landfill Expansion** Residential housing developments to support workforce retention, alongside Central Peninsula Landfill expansion.

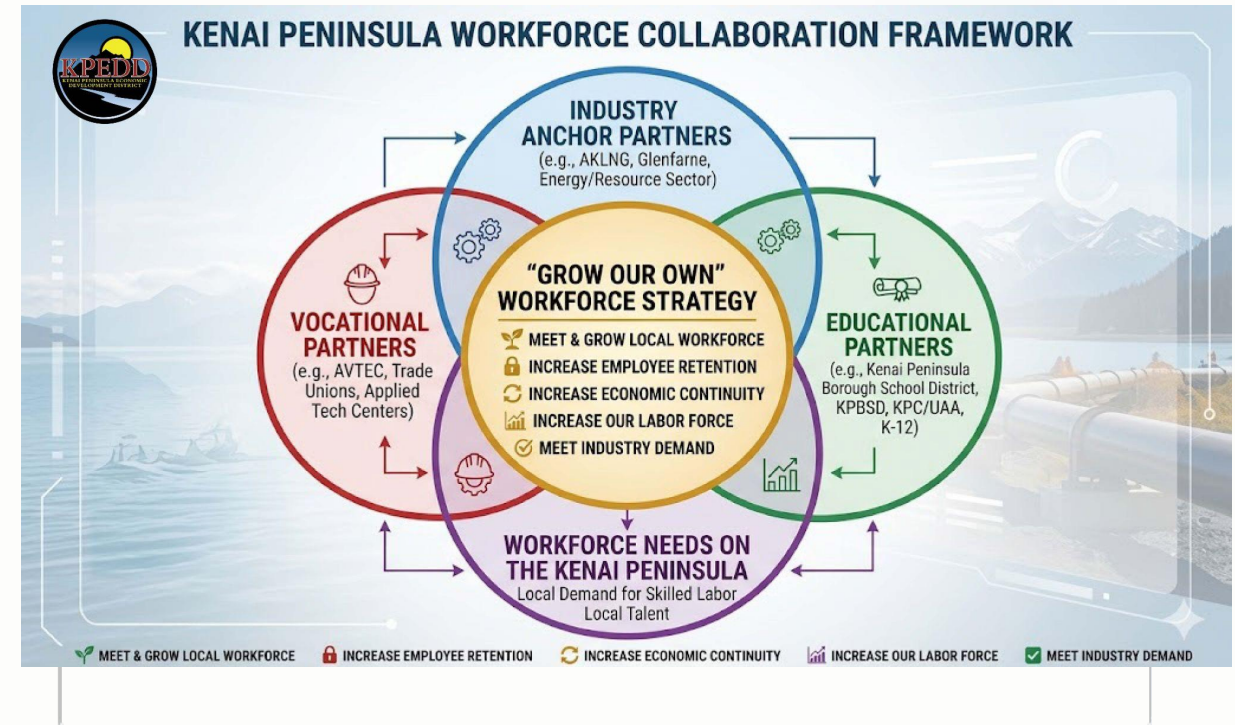


THE P2P WORKFORCE FOCUS

PIPELINE TO PIPELINE (P2P)

The Pipeline to Pipeline workforce development initiative is our primary focus at this moment. We are building viable, accessible, and attractive pathways to career and technical training directly on the Peninsula.

By creating immediate bridges into stable careers, we will reverse the outmigration of our young talent, attract external labor pools, and encourage families to permanently relocate and build lives on the Kenai.





WORKFORCE INVESTMENT TARGETS

\$7.8M

PENDING TARGET CAPITAL

SCALING STRATEGIC CAPACITY

We are actively working to target substantial federal, state, and private capital for the Pipeline to Pipeline workforce initiative, focusing heavily on our federal EDA PWEAA funding applications. We are rolling out Industry Instructional Sabbaticals to lower barriers in finding qualified instructors, while optimizing existing community assets to ensure every dollar builds stable, local career paths.



Governor's Veto Update: The governor recently vetoed the \$1.68M state budget appropriation. KPEDD is reconfiguring match requirements to proceed successfully without the state's fiscal contribution.



BOLSTERING MARICULTURE

KELP PROCESSING SCALE

KPEDD secured two rounds of funding for critical processing equipment to support Kachemak Bay mariculture, procuring nearly \$250,000 in vital processing gear.

We are partnering with the Kachemak Kelp Innovation Hub in Homer to bolster processing, helping local kelp farms meet massive species and yield growth.

AMC EQUIPMENT ANNOUNCEMENT: [Alaska Mariculture Cluster News](#)





KACHEMAK SHELLFISH & SEAWEED

SHELLFISH PRODUCTION DATA

Oyster production is the primary driver of Alaska's shellfish sector. Kachemak Bay is world-renowned for raw, premium half-shell quality:

- The Kachemak Shellfish co-op sells 12,000 to 15,000 dozen oysters per year.
- Direct sales at the Homer Spit Oyster Bar have boosted revenues by up to 500%.
- Pacific oysters require 1 to 3 years to reach consumable harvest size in pristine Alaska waters.

SEAWEED HARVEST TRENDS

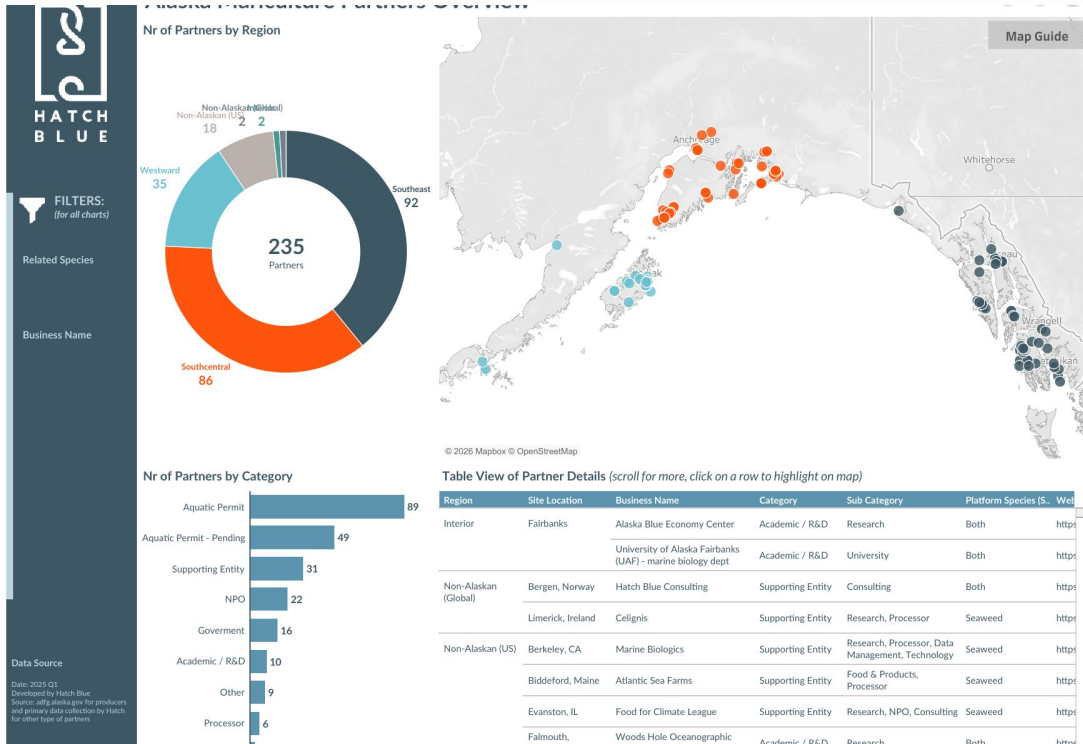
Kelp and seaweed represent high-growth regional sectors with rapid annual turnaround and robust yields:

- Southcentral regional seaweed harvest recovered to nearly 240,000 lbs in 2025.
- Farmed seaweed requires rapid processing and stabilization within a strict 48 to 72 hour window.
- Our farmers utilize advanced drying, salting, and dehydrating technology to access nationwide food and skincare markets.



ALASKA MARICULTURE PARTNERS

To learn more, visit Alaska Mariculture Insights
<https://alaska.seaweedinsights.com/>



14
K-BAY ACTIVE FARMS

86
SOUTHCENTRAL PARTNERS

89
ACTIVE PERMITS

49
PERMITS PENDING

Halibut Cove Spotlight: Premier operators like *Alaska Shellfish Farms* target an annual capacity of 1.2M Pacific oysters (Glacier Point/K-Select) and up to 1.2M lbs of native blue mussels (\$2M retail value), alongside sugar & ribbon kelp.



THE PATH TO STABILITY



True economic stability is built on collaboration. When our partners and stakeholders work side-by-side—fully aware of the economic levers at our disposal—we can drive sustained growth and prosperity across the Kenai.



— KPEDD STRATEGIC VISION



QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

Thank you for your continued partnership and support.

Cassidi Cameron, Executive Director

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IMAGE SOURCES



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/6/63/Seward_Alaska_aerial_view.jpg/1280px-Seward_Alaska_aerial_view.jpg

ALASKA MARICULTURE CLUSTER HIGHLIGHTS- EXTRAS

Exploring the Depths: The Alaskan Seaweed Industry :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iS6SCfGsqzM>

CULTIVATING OCEAN TREASURES: THE ALASKAN OYSTER INDUSTRY

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3MdSj2qfWpA&t=100s>

ALASKA MARICULTURE INSIGHTS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEo0zOEYRUQ>