



President and CEO Executive Search

About the Position

Position Title: President and Chief Executive Officer
Department: Administration
Reports To: Explore Fairbanks Board of Directors

Status: Full-Time, Exempt
Date: Revised January 2021

Explore Fairbanks Mission: To be an economic driver in the Fairbanks region by marketing to potential visitors and optimizing the visitor experience.

Position Summary: The President and CEO is a catalyst for the growth of the travel and tourism segment in the Fairbanks North Star Borough's economy through the development and execution of effective marketing and sales strategies. In accordance with Board directives, the CEO is responsible for strategic vision and has oversight on programs, staff and financial management. The CEO fosters a culture of collaboration that contributes to successes. The CEO ensures ethical best practices and accountability in the operations of the organization.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

Strategic Leadership

1. Foster a culture of collaborative alliances with a wide range of stakeholders.
2. Represent and advocate for the travel industry and the organization in public arenas.
3. As the primary spokesperson for the organization, establish and maintain on-going effective communications and relationships with government, community and business leaders, media and the public at large.
4. Serve as liaison among private-sector and visitor-related business partners and statewide travel industry.
5. Display sensitivity to political and non-political issues affecting the organization and its partners.
6. Initiate and/or facilitate the development and communication of public policy positions that benefit the travel industry and the community.
7. Initiate and/or facilitate the development of infrastructure projects that benefit the travel industry and community.

Strategic Planning, Marketing and Development

1. Rebuild Explore Fairbanks by stimulating growth in the current and post-pandemic travel environment.
2. Catalyst of and collaborator with the professional team to promote the Fairbanks region as a year-round destination through the creation, planning, implementation and performance assessments of the marketing program to targeted domestic and international audiences that employs tactics in advertising including digital media, social media and other on-line vehicles, sales and other promotions.
3. Oversee the preparation and execution of an annual strategic plan and budget.
4. Recommend reserve allocations for future projects and programs to the Board for their consideration.

Financial Planning and Monitoring

1. Monitor revenue and expenditures to ensure the organization stays within approved budget.
2. Evaluate financial resources in relationship to supporting staff capacity and tools for efficiency.
3. Oversee annual budget preparation and presentation of funding request to the City of Fairbanks, City of North Pole and the Fairbanks North Star Borough.

Administrative and Human Resources

1. Foster a culture of teamwork with cross-departmental cooperation, results-driven performance, attentiveness to detail and striving for best practices in association management.
2. Plan, organize and evaluate the success of the day-to-day operation of the organization.
3. Provide information, analysis and recommendations to assist the Board in their deliberations and decision-making as required.
4. Oversee the preparation of regular reports and special information reports.
5. Serve as advisor and regular participant in organization's committees and functions.
6. Coordinate and prepare for Board and Public Policy Advisory Committee meetings and Nominations Committee.

Education/Experience/Skills Requirements:

- Five years minimum of upper-level management experience within the travel and tourism industry. Destination marketing experience preferred.
- Bachelor's degree in marketing, public relations, business or related field required or a minimum of eight years of experience in the tourism and hospitality fields.
- Demonstrates results-driven marketing prowess in both domestic and international leisure as well as meetings and conventions markets.
- Excellent analytical and problem-solving skills that anticipate future consequences and trends.
- Experience with budget management of \$2 million or more.
- Experience with management and direct supervision of personnel.
- Adept at working with elected officials and community leaders.
- Strong verbal, written and presentation skills.
- Strong interpersonal communication skills.
- Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite, including Word and Excel, and familiar with database software.

Work Requirements:

- Possesses the discipline and stamina to manage a demanding work schedule that requires flexible hours, including early mornings, evenings and weekends as needed.
- In-state, national and international travel.
- Professional dress and demeanor.
- Must possess, or secure in a reasonable amount of time, a valid Alaska driver's license and have an acceptable driving record.
- Must have reliable transportation and show proof of car insurance.

Explore Fairbanks is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Disclaimer: The above information on this description has been designed to indicate the general nature and level of work performed by the employee(s) within this job. It is not designed to contain or be interpreted as a comprehensive inventory of all duties, responsibilities, and qualifications required of employee(s) assigned to this job.

About Explore Fairbanks

For more detailed information, click on the "About Explore Fairbanks" section of the website:

<https://www.explorefairbanks.com/about-explore-fairbanks/>

Explore Fairbanks is a non-profit 501(c)(6) destination marketing and management organization (DMMO) with the mission to be an economic driver in the Fairbanks region by marketing to potential visitors and optimizing the visitor experience. The Board of Directors is comprised of 15 voting members, including 13 elected members with three-year terms that represent specific industry sectors and two one-year appointed seats. These seats have term limits. The three *ex officio* members are elected officials representing the City of Fairbanks and the Fairbanks North Star Borough as well as the President and CEO. There are three committees mandated in the by-laws: Executive, Finance and Planning, and Nominations. Six standing committees, each coordinated by a staff liaison, are advisory to the Board.



Explore Fairbanks markets Fairbanks as a year-round destination by promoting local events, attractions and activities to domestic and international independent travelers, group tour operators, travel advisors, meeting planners and the media as well as by developing public policy and infrastructure to achieve marketing objectives. Explore Fairbanks is honored to work for the economic betterment of the Fairbanks North Star Borough including the cities of Fairbanks and North Pole, Alaska's Interior and Arctic, and all Alaska destinations. Explore Fairbanks encourages travelers to "Explore Fairbanks Responsibly."

The Board, in tandem with the professional staff, has established five Long-Term Strategic Priorities:

1. Establish a strong brand identity for the Fairbanks region.
2. Focus marketing efforts on markets defined by Alaska tourism as well as opportunity markets specific to the Fairbanks region.
3. Focus efforts on stimulating year-round visitor spending.
4. Provide leadership and serve as a catalyst for strategic product development and infrastructure improvement.
5. Advocate on behalf of the travel industry for the benefit of the Fairbanks region.

Explore Fairbanks is primarily funded from the reinvestment of a portion of an eight percent Hotel/Motel Tax remitted to three governments in this order of magnitude: City of Fairbanks, Fairbanks North Star Borough and City of North Pole. The total number of hotel/motel rooms in the area is 2,875 year-round which increases to a total of 3,675 rooms in summer. These counts do not include AirBandB and other vacation rentals.

The Explore Fairbanks staff is a highly functional and skilled team with longevity in senior team members. The current CEO has served in this capacity for more than 21 years. The team is supported by a cadre of Golden Heart Greeter volunteers who assist meeting planners and special event organizers. However, the organization has undergone dramatic changes beginning in April 2020 due to the devastating impact of COVID-19 on the travel industry. Coming from five prior years of record growth in Hotel/Motel Tax collections, Explore Fairbanks' budget was projected to be \$4.2 million in 2020. The 2019 budget was \$4.0 million with a peak of 25 full- and part-time as well as seasonal staff. In comparison, it is currently hovering at a \$2.9 million budget with 12 team members.

Explore Fairbanks is headquartered at the Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center in downtown Fairbanks, the hub for year-round staffed visitor information and services. The 38,720 square-foot building is in partnership with the National Park Service and Tanana Chiefs Conference Cultural Programs. Explore Fairbanks also staffs the welcome center at Pioneer Park from Memorial Day through Labor Day weekends. The organization also maintains the visitor information racks at the Fairbanks International Airport and the Alaska Railroad Depot.



Explore Fairbanks has been the recipient of numerous awards, including but not limited to: Silver Award in “Big Ideas” category for Aurora/Midnight Sun Tracker Widget, North American Travel Journalists Association (2018); Bronze Adrian Award for Website, Hotel Sales and Marketing Association International (2017); Downtown Star Award, Downtown Association of Fairbanks (2017); Outstanding Non-Profit Partner, Partners in Education Award, Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (2017); Silver Award for Destination Videos, North American Travel Journalists Association (2014); 1st Place Award of Excellence for Video Material, Public Relations Society of America-Alaska Chapter (2015); Governor’s Exporter of the Year Award, State of Alaska for securing direct charter flights from Japan (2006); Destiny Award, Destinations Council, United States Travel Association for securing direct charter flights from Japan (2005); Agency of the Year, Arctic Alliance for the People for securing and hosting the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention (2005); Best of Show and First Place Advertising Awards, Western Association of Convention and Visitors Bureau for branding strategy (2000); Alaska Highway Award for outstanding contributions to the highway visitor industry (1995).

In 2014, the organization was the first DMMO in Alaska to be accredited through Destination International’s Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP). In 2017, it was and continues to be the first and only destination to receive an Adventure Green Alaska certification.





About the Visitor Destination

For more detailed information, go to the Explore Fairbanks website: <https://www.explorefairbanks.com>

Online and social media includes: Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, TripAdvisor

For photos: www.fairbanksphotos.com

Deep in the wilds of Alaska, tucked in between two immense mountain ranges and nestled up against the winding Chena River, you will find a gem of a little city known as Fairbanks. The magical northern lights dance across the sky nine months of the year during Aurora Season and the sun shines up to 24 hours a day during the Midnight Sun Season. Winter Season takes on a storybook like quality, the Chena River freezes over, snow blankets the ground and lighted snowflakes adorn lamp posts.

Bold and resourceful locals have created a spirited city in the Golden Heart of Alaska. Where else can you travel to such a remote setting and still enjoy all the amenities of a delightful downtown, a thriving arts community, dynamic Alaska Native culture, outstanding Alaskan activities and attractions and endless opportunities for exploration?

Bursting with energy and things to do, visitors find Fairbanks inviting, engaging and awe-inspiring—the heart of the last frontier. Get lucky panning for gold, float the Chena River, mingle with reindeer and musk oxen, cool off in an ice museum, take a refreshing hike and look for birds and wildlife. Be inspired by art galleries, museums, open-air markets and historic sites.

With Fairbanks as a basecamp, you can journey to Denali National Park and Preserve, cross the Arctic Circle and discover spectacular Interior Alaska landscapes, towns and destinations. Whether you want to scan the skies for the aurora borealis, bask in the everlasting sunshine, or take a trip inside a snow globe—Fairbanks is an extraordinary destination.

Explore Fairbanks messages three distinct “seasons”:

Aurora Season: August 21 through April 21

In the Fairbanks region, the aurora borealis (northern lights) often appear when the sky is relatively dark and clear. Check out the online Aurora Tracker that correlates aurora forecast, weather conditions and time of day to determine aurora viewing possibilities in multiple locations.

Midnight Sun Season: April 22 through August 20

This period is infused with light and Fairbanks experiences 24 hours of sunlight for seventy days from May 17 to July 27. Check out the online Midnight Sun Tracker that calculates the number of daylight hours, also known as civil twilight, 365 days a year in multiple locations.

Winter Season: November 1 through March 31

During this time period, the Fairbanks region has reliably colder temperatures and snow cover. Winter offers remarkable activities and events like dog mushing, snowmobiling, ice fishing, snowshoeing and ice sculpting.

Meetings and Conventions

Relative to other communities throughout the country of a similar size, Fairbanks benefits from a larger than typical supply of full-service hotel properties, which is directly attributable to the cruise industry and associated summer season tourism. As an example, without cruise service in Fairbanks, it is easily argued that the community's largest conference hotel, the Westmark Hotel & Conference Center, would not exist. Additionally, Fairbanks also offers a diversity of other types of hotel properties beyond full-service hotels, such as small and mid-sized limited-service hotels, focused/quasi-full-service hotels, lodge-oriented properties and bed-and-breakfasts.

Within the community, there is approximately 175,000 square feet of exhibit space. In lieu of a *bona fide* convention center, the borough-owned Carlson Community Activity Center is occasionally adapted for large gatherings. The center's 45,000 square feet of space is primarily used as a hockey arena. The borough is currently determining future uses of the Carlson Center with a focus on heavier use by community residents as a more versatile athletic center. Over the course of two decades, Explore Fairbanks has commissioned three studies to analyze the feasibility of a convention center; all three have determined that there is market demand for such a facility. The most recent study completed in 2019 included a Preferred Program Arrangement on Blocks 11 and 12 in downtown Fairbanks for arts and convention facilities. A prerequisite for the arts center would be the demolition of the Polaris Building which has been shuttered for two decades. To that end, Explore Fairbanks coordinates a Polaris Work Group. Funding a convention center would require leveraging several funding sources, including an increase in Hotel/Motel Taxes which is not feasible in this pandemic.

Transportation Hub and Modes

Due to the ramifications of COVID-19, transportation linkages have been reduced since April 2020. Just 140 air miles or 195 road miles below the Arctic Circle, Fairbanks is the farthest north city in Alaska and in the United States accessible by air, road and rail. Explore Fairbanks has led and collaborated with community partners to develop domestic and international air service as well as winter rail service. As a remote destination, access is a key element in infrastructure strategies.



Air – This section describes a more typical, non-pandemic, year of air service. Fairbanks International Airport (FAI) is a key player in domestic and international air travel and has some of Alaska's best weather for flying. Domestic flights include: Alaska Airlines and Delta Airlines offer year-round direct flights to and from Seattle. During the summer season, direct flights are available from Chicago with both United Airlines and American Airlines, as well as from Minneapolis with Delta Airlines, Dallas and Chicago with American Airlines, and Denver flights with United Airlines. There are a variety of connecting flights that make getting to Fairbanks easy from anywhere in the U.S

Regarding international flights, Fairbanks is the smallest U.S. market with nonstop flights to both Europe and Asia. German airline Condor offers once-weekly passenger service during the summer season between Fairbanks and Frankfurt. Japan Airlines and other air carriers periodically offer charter service from Asia-based and other airports. According to the most recent data from the Alaska Visitors Statistics Program (AVSP) for summer (2016), the statewide international visitation is 9% of the total but it's 16% of visitors to Fairbanks, the highest percentage of international in the state, mostly driven by aurora tourism towards the end of the summer. The AVSP data for winter (2011/12) is dated but the majority of international visitors to the state in winter travel to the Fairbanks region. Within the state from FAI, Alaska Airlines and several regional air carriers, including Ravn Alaska, Wright Air Service and Warbelow's Air, provide frequent air service between Fairbanks and numerous Interior Alaska rural

communities, Anchorage and Canada. Fairbanks is home to more than 500 small aircraft equipped with wheels, floats, skis and fat tires, it is not unusual to see a 747 and a Piper Cub on parallel runways.

Rail – The Alaska Railroad provides year-round service to Fairbanks. The daily summer train between Fairbanks and Anchorage is a magnificent 12-hour journey that stops in multiple places including Denali National Park. In the winter, the train offers weekend and some midweek service between Anchorage and Fairbanks, allowing passengers to experience remote winter in Alaska from the comfort of a warm railcar. The winter train stops in Denali for those who have made arrangements with tour companies who provide road trips back to Fairbanks.

Road – Fairbanks is connected by the Alaska highway system and to the Lower 48 via the Alaska and Richardson highways. To get around town, rental cars, shuttles, taxis and ridesharing services are available in addition to the Fairbanks MACS Transit Bus System. Explore Fairbanks initiated a wayfinding signage system in downtown Fairbanks.

Ocean – Most of the one-way cruises across the Gulf of Alaska from Vancouver to Seward or Whittier, Alaska, in the summer months offer land tour packages that bring visitors to Fairbanks and Denali National Park. Passengers opting for a one-way cruise often start or finish their Alaska vacation in Fairbanks, touring the rest of the state by road or rail. Another great option is the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS), which has been operating year-round since 1963. Multiple vessels offer passenger and vehicle service to many coastal communities in Alaska. Amenities vary on each ship.

About the Community: Fairbanks North Star Borough

The 2019 population of the Fairbanks North Star Borough is 97,159 which includes the City of Fairbanks at (31,551) and the City of North Pole (2,740). The City of Fairbanks is the largest city in the Interior region of Alaska. Statewide, only Juneau and Anchorage boast larger populations. As of July 2020, the state population decreased by 3,831 people, while the Fairbanks North Star Borough gained 1,064 people and grew more than any other Alaska borough. The one percent gain in the number of people living in the borough is attributed to growth at Eielson Air Force Base.



Fairbanks has the reputation of being the “Golden Heart of Alaska.” Positioned in the center or “heart” of Alaska, the area has a rich gold rush history. More importantly, its residents are known for their friendliness and spirit of giving back to the community. The City of North Pole is where “the spirit of Christmas lives year-round.”

Fairbanks is also referred to as a river city because of the 100-mile Chena River that runs right through the heart of town. Locals embrace the Chena River, and it is a natural venue offering year-round activities and celebrations. The glacier-fed 570-mile Tanana River, an important tributary of the Yukon River, flows on the outskirts of Fairbanks.

Fairbanks Economic Foundations

Visitor Industry - The Fairbanks region is a popular year-round destination for guests from the U.S. and abroad. With the midnight sun and aurora, quality attractions, robust activities and our Golden Heart hospitality, we’re rocking it! Historic aspects of Fairbanks are revealed through attractions and activities such as gold panning, Alaska Native cultural programs and exhibitions about the Alaska Highway and the pipeline. Fairbanks’ continued development as a visitor destination makes the local economy stronger and our lives here better.

Alaska Native Peoples and Regional Corporations - Alaska Native peoples have been a part of Alaska for more than 14,000 years. Fairbanks, the Interior and the Arctic are home to primarily Athabascan Indians and Inupiaq and Yupik Eskimo people. In these northern climes, honoring your Elders, resourcefulness and reverence for the environment are central to the way of life, enabling indigenous people to thrive over time in one of the harshest climates on Earth.

In 1971, the United States Congress passed the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), settling land and financial claims made by Alaska Native peoples, and established thirteen Alaska Native Regional Corporations to administer those claims. The regional corporations have done great things for their shareholders through numerous investments in multiple industries including oil and gas, tourism, mining and construction.

Gold Rush History Past and Present - In 1902, that proverbial pot of gold was found in Fairbanks by Italian immigrant Felix Pedro. The gold strike prompted Captain E.T. Barnette to build a trading post on the banks of the Chena River and the gold rush to Fairbanks began. The town has grown over the last century, but gold mining remains an important factor in the local economy. Fort Knox Gold Mine, Pogo Mine and tough-as-nails independent miners working claims in summer months prove that gold is still a viable industry for Interior Alaska today. Fairbanks embraces its colorful gold rush roots with attractions and fun-filled events celebrating the historic quest for gold. See the largest public display of gold in the state at the university's museum. Try your own hand at gold panning. Find that perfect gold nugget souvenir to take back home to remember one of many reasons Fairbanks is called the "Golden Heart of Alaska."

Pipeline and Oil Industry - The iconic trans-Alaska oil pipeline is one of the longest in the world and is an engineering feat of the highest order. Built to withstand earthquakes and permafrost as well as to allow caribou migration, the 800-mile (1,288 km) pipeline crosses three mountain ranges and 34 major rivers through some of the most rugged and remote terrain on Earth. Starting at Prudhoe Bay on the Arctic Ocean, the pipeline runs below and above ground to Valdez, the northernmost year-round ice-free port in America. The first oil flowed through the pipeline in 1977 and transformed Fairbanks and the state of Alaska in many ways, providing a large number of jobs and infusing Alaska's government with a huge amount of capital. The Dalton Highway, the road driven by ice road truckers, follows the pipeline north from Fairbanks. Visitors can view the pipeline 10 miles (16 km) north of Fairbanks in Fox. The oil industry continues to have an enormous impact on Fairbanks' economy.

University of Alaska Fairbanks - The University of Alaska Fairbanks' (UAF) past, present and future are integral to the Fairbanks region and beyond. Founded in Fairbanks in 1917, America's northernmost university recently celebrated its centennial anniversary. Students now number over 10,000 strong, hail from all over the lower 48 and the world and enjoy a spectrum of majors and research opportunities at America's Arctic university. Poised on a ridge on the edge of town, the 2,250-acre campus affords exceptional views of the Alaska Range, including Denali. Always engaging and naturally inspiring, Alaska's flagship campus is home to remarkable public spaces. The Geophysical Institute is renowned as the foremost research institution in the world for the aurora borealis. The Museum of the North is a brilliant attraction featuring 2,000 years of art, culture and natural history. The Robert G. White Large Animal Research Station (LARS) studies muskox and reindeer and offers summer tours to see some of these awesome ungulates. At the Georgeson Botanical Garden, you can walk amongst a wide variety of northern flora and enjoy weekly concerts during the summer.

Military Residents, Bases and the Alaska Highway - Adjacent to the city is Fort Wainwright Army Post and to the south are Eielson Air Force Base, Fort Greely Army Post and Clear Air Force Station. These military installations are an integral part of Fairbanks' population and personality. Retired military are 2,000 strong, a significant portion of the populace, and locals are proud to welcome the many people in the armed forces that are stationed here in the Fairbanks region. The military became intertwined with Fairbanks during World War II. During the war, it became evident that a northernmost post was necessary to enable the United States to assist European allies and the desire for a road to Alaska became a priority. Expedited by the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, construction began on the Alaska Highway in March of 1942 at Mile 0 in Dawson Creek, Yukon Territory, Canada, and joined the Richardson Highway in Delta Junction en route to Fairbanks a mere eight months later. An amazing military feat, the 1,390-mile-long (2,237 km) glorious, rough-and-tumble Alaska Highway rambles through some of the toughest, most remote terrain on the planet and still offers a most beautiful and pristine journey today.