



Fall 2026, Issue 3

IRHA

Community Newsletter

**Interior Regional
Housing Authority**
828 27th Ave.
Fairbanks, AK 99701
907-452-8315
www.irha.org

Mission

**Provide tribal housing
opportunities to positively
impact housing needs.**

Vision

**Families with quality
affordable housing.**

Our Core Values

> **Innovation**

> **Respect**

> **Honesty**

> **Accountability**

> **Service**

Working Together to Build Stronger Communities

As we move through another busy year, IRHA continues to partner with tribes, community members, and organizations across Interior Alaska to address housing needs and create opportunities for future generations.

This quarter has brought many exciting developments. IRHA successfully submitted the 2027 Indian Housing Plan to HUD, construction continues on five new homes in South Fairbanks, and the Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) projects in Allakaket and Beaver are nearing completion. These accomplishments reflect the strength of tribal partnerships and a shared commitment to providing safe, affordable, and sustainable housing throughout our region.

We are also exploring new opportunities, including a Utility Assistance Program designed to help families manage rising energy costs, while continuing to advocate for fair housing funding and resources for our communities.

Housing is more than just buildings. It provides stability for families, supports community growth, and helps preserve the strength and future of our tribal communities. Thank you to all the tribal leaders, community members, partners, and IRHA staff whose dedication makes this work possible.

Together, we are building homes, strengthening communities, and creating opportunities across the IRHA region. Dogi'dinh, Anaa Baasee, Mahsi Choo and thank you for your continued partnership.



Eugene Paul, IRHA CEO, at Denakkaneage's Annual Culture Camp at Howard Luke's camp outside of Fairbanks . August 6, 2026.



OFFICE HOURS:

Monday – Thursday 8:30 am – 4:30 pm
Closed to the public on Fridays.

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Eugene Paul, IRHA CEO



Above:
CEO, Eugene Paul and Construction
Staff built stairs at the Howard Luke
Camp for Denakanaaga's Elders
Mentoring Elders Culture Camp in
August 2026.

Letter from the Chief Executive Officer

As we move through another successful year, I want to extend my gratitude to the Tribal leaders, councils, and community members who continue to partner with the Interior Regional Housing Authority. Your leadership, collaboration, and commitment to your communities help guide our work and ensure that housing resources are directed where they are needed most.

Housing remains one of the most significant challenges facing our region. While the need continues to grow, IRHA remains focused on creating opportunities that support safe, healthy, and affordable housing for Alaska Native families, Elders, and future generations. Despite a reduction in our 2026 Indian Housing Block Grant allocation due to changes in HUD's funding methodology, we continue to maximize resources and pursue new opportunities to meet the housing needs identified by our Tribes.

This construction season has been one of our busiest in recent years. Across Interior Alaska, IRHA is managing 17 new construction projects, 15 rehabilitation projects, and two (2) opioid remediation projects. These projects represent more than housing units. They represent families remaining in their communities, Elders living in safer homes, and Tribal communities strengthening their future through local housing investment. Projects are underway in communities throughout the region.

A highlight of this year has been our partnership with the U.S. Marines through the Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) Program. Working together in Allakaket and Beaver demonstrates how collaboration can create meaningful benefits for rural communities while supporting a national training mission. Partnerships such as these help us stretch limited resources and deliver projects that might otherwise be difficult to achieve.

IRHA is also planning for the future. We are actively working on securing land within the City of Fairbanks, and the Fairbanks North Star Borough as IRHA is continuing to explore additional opportunities for housing development. Land availability remains one of the largest barriers to housing growth, and these opportunities are important steps toward expanding housing options for our people.

Our commitment extends beyond construction. Through our Tribal Development programs, we continue to assist families pursuing homeownership, homeowners seeking rehabilitation assistance, and Elders in need of rental support. We also continue to provide emergency, homelessness

prevention, and transitional assistance to eligible clients facing unexpected hardships.

Supporting Tribal self-determination remains central to our mission. Our Tribal Development team work closely with Tribes throughout the year, providing assistance with housing planning, project development, land and site control issues, funding opportunities, partner coordination, and grant writing efforts. Through quarterly reports and monthly outreach, we strive to ensure Tribes have the information and support needed to make informed decisions for their communities.

At the national level, IRHA continues to support the reauthorization and modernization of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA). Thirty years after its original passage, Tribal housing needs have evolved significantly. Modernization of the program is needed to strengthen Tribal self-determination, expand housing opportunities, streamline administrative requirements, and provide the flexibility Tribes need to address today's housing realities.

I am also proud of the ways IRHA supports our broader Tribal community. Whether participating in regional meetings, collaborating with organizations and local governments, supporting Elder safety projects, or helping share information and resources throughout our service region, our staff remains committed to serving communities beyond the walls of our offices. Together, these efforts strengthen relationships and create opportunities that benefit the entire region.

The success of IRHA is built on partnership. On behalf of our Board of Commissioners and staff, thank you for the trust you place in us to serve as your Tribally Designated Housing Entity. We remain committed to working alongside Tribes to provide housing opportunities that positively impact the lives of Alaska Native people today and for generations to come.

Dogi'dinh,



Eugene Paul

Chief Executive Officer

Interior Regional Housing Authority

Below:

IRHA staff, Alyssa Briggs-Nash and Brian Leal, at the Sister Org Gubernatorial Mixer with Doyon staff, Angela Ludwick.
August 5, 2026.



Below:

Association of Alaska Housing Authorities (AAHA) Annual Meeting in Dillingham, Alaska.
July 28-29, 2026.





Albert Lawson

Board of Commissioners

Patricia MacDonald

Chairperson

Dot Lake

Seat E – Exp. 3/2029

William Chaaiy Albert

Vice-Chairperson

Northway

Seat A – Exp. 3/2027

Alfred Joseph Demientieff

Secretary/Treasurer

Holy Cross

Seat B – Exp. 3/2027

Kimberly Carlo

Commissioner

Ft. Yukon

Seat C – Exp. 3/2028

Leah Woods

Commissioner

Manley

Seat D – Exp. 3/2028

Employee Highlight

Celebrating 15 years of Service: Albert Lawson

This year, IRHA proudly celebrates Albert Lawson's 15 years of dedicated service to our organization and the communities we serve throughout the region.

For the past fifteen years, Albert has been a valued member of the IRHA team, contributing his knowledge, experience, and commitment to improving housing opportunities for Alaska Native families and communities. His dedication to IRHA's mission has helped support countless projects and initiatives that strengthen housing conditions and enhance the quality of life throughout the region.

Albert's professionalism, reliability, and willingness to support both coworkers

and community partners have made a lasting impact on the organization. His years of service reflect a strong commitment not only to IRHA but also to the people and communities we are honored to serve.

On behalf of the Board of Commissioners, management, and staff, we extend our sincere appreciation to Albert for his many contributions and congratulate him on this important milestone.

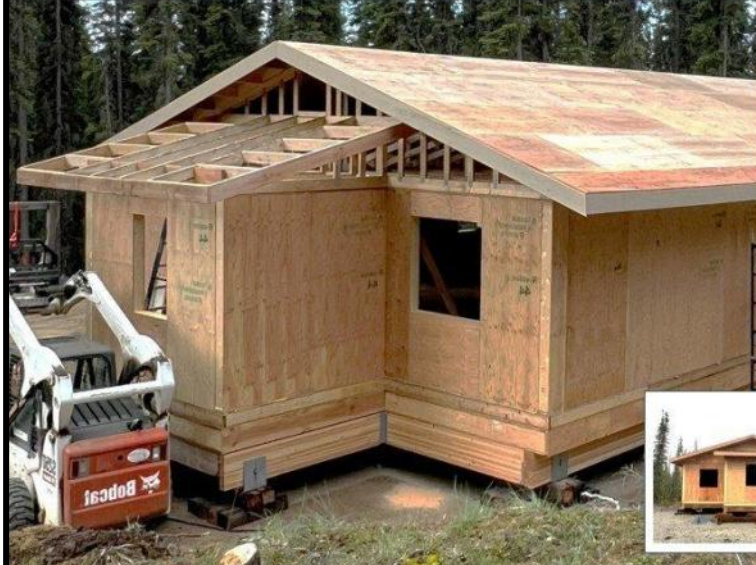
Thank you, Albert, for 15 years of outstanding service and dedication to IRHA. We look forward to many more years of success together!

Congratulations, Albert, on 15 Years of Service!

INTERIOR REGIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

Join our team for 2026

Find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/interiorregionalhousing/>



The IRHA is now accepting applications for the upcoming 2026 construction season for the following positions:

- Carpenters**
- Laborers**
- Electricians**

Applications are available at www.irha.org.

If you previously applied, you must submit a new application for 2026 to be considered for the current season employment opportunities.

Submit your application to vcruger@irha.org or drop off to our primary office located at 828 27th Avenue, Fairbanks.




**IRHA is 95% Alaska
Native/American Indian Hire**

Why Census Counts Matter for Tribal Housing

Every person counted in our communities matters. Census data does more than provide population statistics. It helps determine how federal resources are distributed and can directly impact housing funding available to tribes.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) uses population, income, and housing data as part of the formula for allocating Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG) funding. This funding supports housing development, rehabilitation, infrastructure improvements, housing services, and other programs that benefit tribal members.

As HUD continues to incorporate updated Census information and population estimates into its funding calculations, it becomes increasingly important that tribal communities are counted as accurately as possible.

"Every person counted helps tell the story of a community's housing needs. An accurate Census count helps ensure tribal housing funding decisions are based on the best available information."

Why an Accurate Count Matters

Consider a community with 200 residents. If only 150 people are counted during the Census, the data may suggest there are fewer households and less housing need than actually exists. This can affect how housing needs are measured and may influence future funding allocations.

When all residents are counted, federal agencies have a more accurate picture of the community's population and housing challenges. Accurate data helps demonstrate the need for housing rehabilitation, new construction, overcrowding relief, and other essential

housing services.

More Than Just Numbers

While Census population data is only one component of HUD's funding formulas, it helps tell the story of a community. Accurate counts can support a better understanding of:

- Housing shortages
- Overcrowding conditions
- Infrastructure needs
- Population growth trends
- Future housing demand

These factors help ensure that tribal communities are represented as fairly and accurately as possible when housing resources are distributed.

Every Person Counts

Participating in the Census is one of the simplest ways residents can help support their community's future. A complete and accurate count helps ensure that housing

needs are visible and that decision makers have reliable information when allocating resources.

IRHA continues to work with tribes to monitor HUD formula changes, advocate for tribal housing resources, and provide information on opportunities for tribes to review and challenge certain census and housing data used in funding calculations.

Simply put, when people are not counted, community needs may not be fully reflected in the data. When everyone is counted, tribes are better positioned to demonstrate housing need and compete for resources that support safe, affordable housing for their members.

Below:
Marines IRT and IRHA staff
working on new construction home
in Beaver.
July/August 2026



Below:
New construction—duplex being
built in Minto.
October 8, 2026



Building Homes, Strengthening Communities: Five New Homes Added to South Fairbanks

Below:

Two (2) new construction houses being built on 23rd Ave. in Fairbanks. October 15, 2026.



IRHA is excited to share the progress of five new homes being developed in the South Fairbanks area. These homes represent an important investment in expanding affordable housing opportunities for families in our region and helping address the ongoing demand for quality housing.

The development includes three new homes on 23rd Avenue and two additional homes located near the corner of 24th Avenue and Mercer Road. As construction progresses, these homes will provide safe, modern, and energy-efficient housing designed to serve families for years to come.

Housing continues to be one of the most pressing needs across Interior Alaska, and projects such as these are an important part of IRHA's commitment to increasing housing opportunities and supporting

stronger, healthier communities. By adding new housing stock within Fairbanks, IRHA is helping create more options for families seeking stable and affordable homes.

The project reflects the hard work and collaboration of IRHA staff, contractors, funding partners, and community stakeholders who have helped move the development from planning to construction. Once completed, these homes will provide not only housing but also opportunities for families to build stability and put down roots in the community.

IRHA looks forward to welcoming future homeowners and residents and will continue providing updates as construction advances.

Stay tuned for more progress updates as these exciting new homes move closer to completion!

IRT Projects Nearing Completion in Allakaket and Beaver

IRHA is pleased to report that the 2026 Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) projects in **Allakaket** and **Beaver** are nearing completion. These projects have provided important housing improvements while demonstrating the value of partnerships that help address rural housing needs throughout the region.

Over the course of the projects, work crews have made significant progress on planned rehabilitation and improvement activities, helping enhance the safety, efficiency, and overall condition of participating

homes. As final project tasks and inspections are completed, both communities are expected to benefit from improved housing conditions that support residents and families for years to come.

The progress made in Allakaket and Beaver reflects the strong collaboration between IRHA, community leadership, project partners, and local residents. Their cooperation and support have helped keep the projects moving forward and have contributed to the successful completion of work in both communities.

IRT Projects continued

IRHA extends its appreciation to everyone involved in these efforts and looks forward to celebrating the

completion of the projects and the positive impact they will have on the communities.

Indian Housing Plan (IHP) Update

IRHA is pleased to announce that the 2027 Indian Housing Plan (IHP) was successfully submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on Friday, October 16, 2026. The submission marks the completion of several months of planning, tribal outreach, and coordination with participating tribes throughout the IRHA region. The plan was developed using tribal resolutions, housing activity selections, certifications, community priorities, and housing needs identified by tribal governments.

The Tribal Development staff worked closely with tribes throughout the summer and fall to gather the required documentation necessary for inclusion in the 2027 IHP. This collaborative process ensures that each participating tribe has the opportunity to identify housing priorities and determine how their NAHASDA funding will be utilized to address local housing needs. Eligible activities identified through the planning process include rehabilitation, new construction, housing needs assessments, essential family initiatives, grant development, and other housing related projects authorized by

participating tribes.

The IHP serves as the foundation for IRHA's housing programs and activities during the upcoming program year. Through this process, tribes identify local housing needs, establish priorities, and authorize housing activities that support safe, affordable, and culturally appropriate housing throughout Interior Alaska. The submitted plan reflects the continued commitment of tribes and IRHA working together to address overcrowding, rehabilitation needs, health and safety concerns, accessibility improvements, and future housing development opportunities.

IRHA would like to thank all participating tribes for their timely submission of resolutions, certifications, housing activity forms, and valuable input during the planning process. The success of the 2027 IHP is a direct result of strong tribal partnerships and a shared commitment to improving housing opportunities for tribal members throughout the region. IRHA looks forward to continuing this work as project planning, implementation, and program activities move forward during the 2027 program year.

Below:

Inside of one of the new construction houses on 23rd Ave.
October 15, 2026



IRHA Housing Q&A

Below:
IRHA staff laying foundation for
three (3) houses in Fairbanks, on
24th Ave.
October 15, 2026



Below:
New construction house built with
IRHA and IRT Marine staff.



Finding a home can feel overwhelming, but the first step is simply learning what programs are available, then submitting an application. Here are answers to common questions about seeking housing assistance through IRHA.

Q: How do I get a house through IRHA?

A: Start by contacting IRHA and asking about the housing programs and eligibility. Staff can explain the available options, eligibility requirements, documents you will need, and how to submit an application. Applying does not guarantee housing; availability and wait times vary by program and location.

Q: What should I have ready before I apply?

A: Requirements depend on the program, but applicants will be asked for identification, household information, proof of income, and other supporting records. Ask IRHA for the current application checklist so you know exactly what to provide.

Q: What happens after I apply?

A: IRHA will review your application and may contact you for additional information. Keep your phone number, mailing address, email address, income, and household information up to date. Respond promptly to requests so your application can continue to be processed.

Q: How long will I have to wait?

A: Wait times depend on housing availability, the program, the community, and your household's

circumstances. IRHA staff can explain how the applicable wait list works, but an exact move-in date may not be available.

Q: What can I do while I am waiting?

A: Stay in contact with IRHA, report changes to your household or contact information, and provide any requested documents. You can also ask whether other rental, homeownership, repair, or emergency housing resources may fit your needs.

Q: What housing programs does IRHA offer?

A: IRHA's housing opportunities include the programs below. Funding, service areas, open application periods, and eligibility can change, so applicants should confirm current availability with IRHA before applying.

Tribal Equity Advantage Mortgage (TEAM)

TEAM program helps eligible Alaska Native and American Indian buyers in the Fairbanks area with down-payment and closing-cost assistance. IRHA states that the grant may be up to 20% of the purchase price for an eligible single-family home, townhouse, or condominium, with a maximum purchase price of \$300,000. Applicants first meet with a mortgage lender, obtain a preapproval letter, and then submit a complete TEAM application. Funds are offered on a first-come, first-served basis; as available.

Home Ownership Program (HOP)

HOP is intended for eligible low-income Alaska Native and American Indian families who cannot obtain a

IRHA Housing Q&A continued

conventional mortgage. Qualified participants may purchase a home from IRHA through a 20-year agreement, with monthly payments based on household income. IRHA's qualifications state that applicants are required to have steady income of at least \$20,000 per year, must complete an Alaska Housing Finance Corporation homebuyer course, required down payment and processing fee, and are subject to IRHA and HUD requirements. Ask IRHA whether a suitable home and program funding are available in your community.

Home Ownership Program for Elders (HOPE)

HOPE offers an ownership pathway for eligible Alaska Native and American Indian Elder applicants, age 62 or older. IRHA's HOPE home has a 10-year purchase agreement, payments based on 15% of monthly household income, a minimum annual income of \$20,000, completion of an Alaska Housing Finance Corporation homebuyer course, along with a required down payment and processing fee. Applicants should contact IRHA for current home availability and the complete eligibility checklist.

Housing-Based Rental Assistance

This year-round program provides rental assistance in the Fairbanks North Star Borough, subject to funding. It primarily assists eligible tribal elders, and may serve other approved eligible tribal members. Applicants must meet HUD income limits, be Alaska Native or American Indian, and live in a unit that passes housing-quality standards. A

household cannot receive another housing subsidy for the same unit. Approved participants must recertify annually. Contact IRHA's Housing Department for the full eligibility list and application.

Tribal Housing Activities Through NAHASDA

IRHA serves as the Tribally Designated Housing Entity for participating tribes in the Doyon region and administers housing activities supported by the Indian Housing Block Grant under NAHASDA. Depending on each participating tribe's Indian Housing Plan, activities may include affordable housing development, operation, maintenance, rehabilitation, energy-efficiency work, or other approved housing assistance. These are planned with participating tribes and may not be open as a standing individual application. Contact IRHA or your tribal office to ask which current activities serve your community.

Q: Who should I contact?

A: Contact:

Interior Regional Housing Authority
(IRHA)
828 27th Avenue,
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
(907) 452-8315 or toll-free at (800)
478-IRHA (4742).

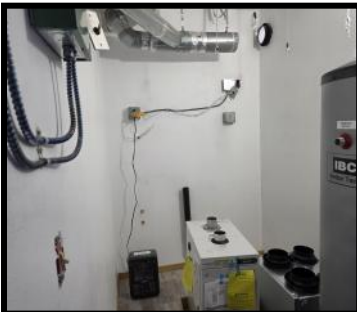
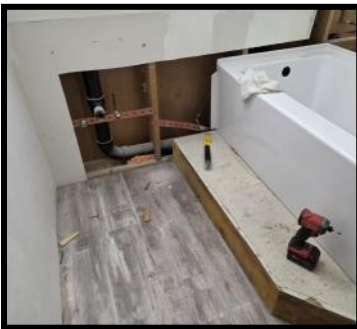
The office is open to the public Monday–Thursday, 8:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Call the Tribal Development department to schedule a meeting or an appointment. Current applications and forms are available on the IRHA website.

Below:
IRHA CEO & Construction staff building stairs for the Elder's at Howard Luke's Camp.



Below:
Rehabilitation project-
vacant house in Beaver.
October 2026



New Utility Assistance Program Under Development

IRHA's Board of Commissioners and executive leadership are currently exploring the development of a Utility Assistance Program to help address the utility costs faced by many families throughout the region. This new tribal program will use Tribe's NAHASDA funds.

Under the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA), HUD provides tribes and Tribally Designated Housing Entities (TDHEs) with flexibility to develop housing-related programs that respond to local needs. This flexibility allows housing organizations to create eligible housing assistance activities that support safe, decent, and affordable housing for tribal members.

Recognizing the significant impact that rising energy and utility costs have on households across Interior Alaska, IRHA leadership is evaluating a program that could provide assistance to eligible families struggling with utility expenses. The goal is to create a program that supports housing stability, helps prevent hardship, and allows families to remain safely housed while managing

increasing utility costs.

The proposed program is currently in the planning and development stages. IRHA's Board of Commissioners and management team are reviewing program design options, eligibility requirements, available funding sources, and long-term sustainability to ensure the program can effectively serve communities throughout the region.

As development continues, IRHA will work to ensure the program aligns with HUD and NAHASDA requirements while meeting the unique needs of rural Alaska communities. Additional information will be shared with tribes and community members as the program framework is finalized.

IRHA remains committed to identifying innovative solutions and leveraging available resources to support tribal communities and improve housing outcomes across the region.

More information on the Utility Assistance Program will be provided as planning efforts progress and program details become available.

Did You Know?

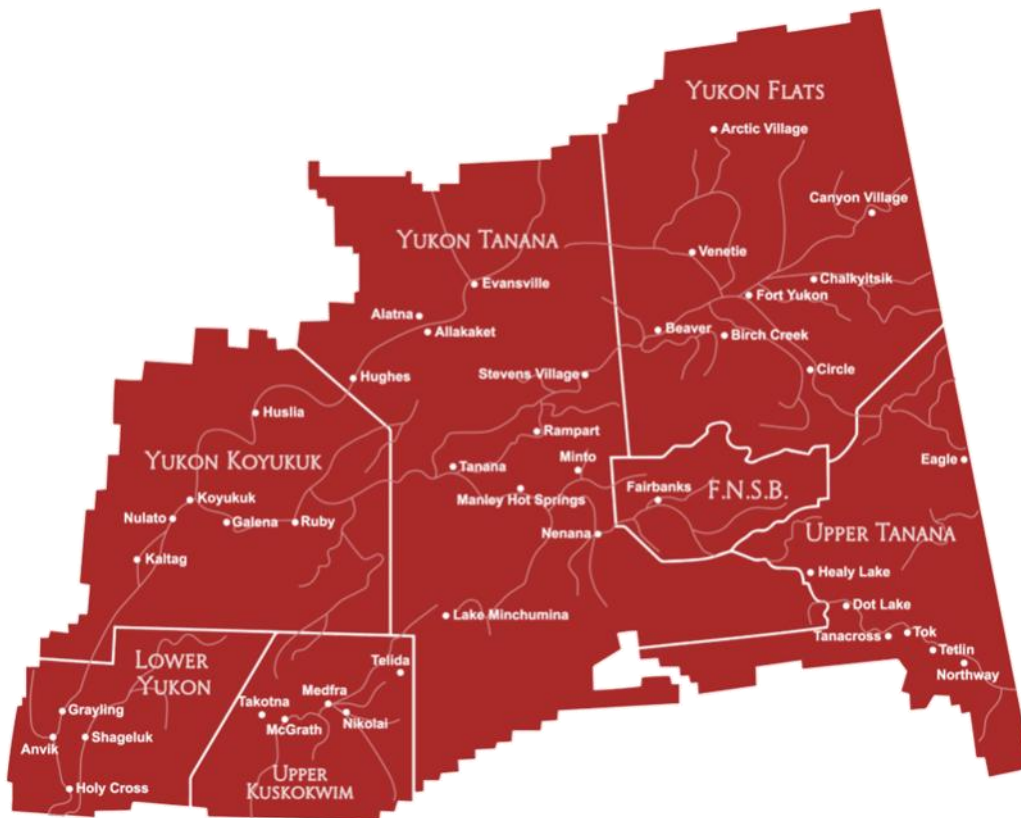
Tribal housing funds can do more than build new homes.

Through NAHASDA funding, tribes can support a variety of housing activities, including home repairs, housing rehabilitation, new construction, homeownership programs, and housing planning efforts. These funds help communities address local housing needs and improve housing

opportunities for tribal members.

Each year, tribes identify their housing priorities through the Indian Housing Plan (IHP) process, helping ensure funding is used where it is needed most.

Did you know? A tribe can choose multiple housing activities in its annual housing plan, giving communities flexibility to address their unique housing needs.



Communities We Serve

Alutna	Holy Cross	Shageluk
Allakaket	Huslia	Stevens Village
Anvik	Hughes	Takotna
Beaver	Kaltag	Tanacross
Birch Creek	Koyukuk	Telida
Chalkyitsik	Manley	Tetlin
Circle	Minto	Doyon:
Dot Lake	McGrath	Tok
Eagle	Nenana	Canyon Village
Evansville	Nikolai	Medfra
Grayling	Northway	Fairbanks
Healy Lake	Ruby	Lake Minchumina

Below:
New Construction of duplex in
Minto.
September 30, 2026



Joke Time:

How does a penguin
build its house?

Igloos it together!

Thank you to our Community Partners

We thank all of these partners and the generous support they offer those we serve.



Interior Regional Housing Authority
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Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
Main Phone: 907-452-8315
Toll Free: 1-800-478-4742
www.irha.org



Find us on Facebook at
<https://www.facebook.com/interiorregionalhousing>

Proudly Serving The Doyon/Tanana Chiefs Region