



## **Old Harbor Airport**

To benefit their community, the City of Old Harbor, Old Harbor Native Corporation, and the Alutiig Tribe of Old Harbor have worked collaboratively on a multi-pronged economic development effort that incorporates improved infrastructure. They recently completed the Old Harbor Safety & Expansion Project and hosted a celebratory ribbon cutting ceremony on August 7, 2018.

At the ceremony, they had distinguished guests from the Congressional Delegation, United States Marine Corps, and State of Alaska. The United States Marine Corps flew in a C-130 Hercules and it was the first to land on the newly constructed airfield. At the gathering, a brief overview of the project and a community tour was provided, followed by a delicious luncheon at the Old Harbor School with community members. Plaques were presented to their partners who made the project a success and then the group proceeded to the airfield. Old Harbor's Orthodox Priest Father Joseph said a prayer and blessed the airfield extension following the ceremonial ribbon cutting. It was a beautiful day for the community to gather and celebrate with their partners for the completion of yet another infrastructure project!

This project improved the safety of the State of Alaska DOT&PF airfield and ultimately will support a fish processing facility that their community has been pursuing for over 20 years. The Old Harbor Airport Safety & Expansion Project extended the airfield from 2,700 feet to 4,525 feet. This project was initiated in 2012 as a public-private partnership with their community entities, the State of Alaska, and the Federal Government.

The community collaborated with the Innovative Readiness Training Program (IRT) for the construction of this project (see <https://vimeo.com/233889045> for a short video on the project). IRT is a Department of Defense program that provides real world training opportunities for our service members and units to prepare them for wartime missions while supporting the needs of America's underserved communities. The United States Marine Corps (USMC) was the IRT lead on the project and had support from the United States Army, United States Navy, United States Air Force, Alaska Army National Guard, Arizona National Guard, and United States Coast Guard. This was an excellent project for a joint-services training.

The village is working hard to develop a healthy community with a strong economy and the Old Harbor Airport Safety & Expansion Project was paramount to their success. They are striving to have a sustainable community where families can make a decent living and raise their children close to their cultural roots and subsistence lifestyle.

If you are interested in learning more about the Innovative Readiness Training program, please visit <https://irt.defense.gov/>

