

Anchorage — Kicarwik

KICARWIGMEN AGKUTARTUA ERNERPAK. – I AM GOING TO ANCHORAGE TODAY.



Photo: Waiting for the plane to Anchorage, Nekeferof Collection.

Anchorage, Alaska's largest city, lies 250 miles north of the Kodiak Archipelago, at the far northern end of Cook Inlet. In many ways, Anchorage is a gateway to the Alutiiq world. Airline flights to Homer, Cordova, Kodiak, and King Salmon, the major hubs in the Alutiiq homeland, originate in Anchorage. To enter or leave the Alutiiq world, one usually travels through Anchorage.

The word Kicarwik is a recently coined term that literally means "place to anchor." For Alutiiq people, Anchorage is a fun place to visit and shop. People travel north to buy cars, purchase clothing, enjoy restaurants, and attend cultural events like the annual Alaska Federation of Natives convention or the Native Youth Olympics. Others go to Anchorage for medical attention, seeking treatment at the Alaska Native Medical Center.

Although Kicarwik lies beyond the limit of the Alutiiq nation in Athabascan territory, it is home to many Alutiiq people, and you can get a taste of Alutiiq heritage there. The Afognak Native Corporation's Anchorage offices feature a gallery with displays of Alutiiq art and artifacts. The Alaska Native Heritage Center has a reproduction of an Alutiiq sod house as well as exhibits, presentations, and performances on Alutiiq culture. You can visit the Anchorage Museum at Rasmuson Center to view Alutiiq artifacts and contemporary works of Alutiiq art, or you can purchase pieces of Alutiiq artwork at the Alaska Native Medical Center gift shop or the Alaska Native Arts Foundation gallery.