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Planning Work Group

Status Report to Government Coordination Sub-Committee

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Goals and objectives:

In order to increase efficiencies and coordination among the MOU partners, the Planning Work Group meets regularly as a clearing house for projects and center of discussion of interagency initiatives.

Accomplishments and continuing Coordination:

- Design of a Comprehensive Community Plan Template¹
- Enhanced Community Access to Agencies through Funding Summits & Conferences²
- Development of Basic Business Plan for Demonstration of Project Sustainability³
- Development of Community Mapping as basis for Planning and Development⁴

Background:

The Planning Work Group began as the Denali Commission MOU Panel in 2001. Through regular meetings, the Work Group stays current on a range of issues as well as discussing application of interagency procedures. In addition to the above, the Planning Work Group has focused on coordination in the following areas over the last six months:

- Support of Borough Organization and its role in Regional Planning⁵
- Support of Regional Planning for Economic & Workforce Development⁶
- Support of Development of a Multi-Agency, Pre-Construction Checklist⁷
- Support of Common Principles and Guidelines⁸

See notes for status reports

In addition, the Work Group has had organizational briefings from ANTHC, ARDORs, Rural Development Council, DCED's IT Plan, and its ACCESS to the FUTURE - Rural Development Strategy. The Group has also received regular briefings on economic development projects and communities of interest.

Regular federal participants in the Planning Work Group include: EPA, EDA, HUD, and USDA RD. Regular state participants include: Office of the Lt. Governor, DCED DCA and RUBA, DOT&PF, AIDEA/AEA, and AVEC.

Analysis:

The Planning Work Group builds awareness of parallel initiatives and collaborative opportunities. It serves as an informal multi-agency distribution system of information regarding growing issues and agency-specific interest in outcomes. In addition, many personal relationships have resulted among participants which can streamline cross-agency access, enhance teamwork and efficient delivery of government services.

Unfinished Business:

The Planning Work Group provides consistent input to the "points of understanding" of the Denali Commission MOU.

Denali Commission Staff Recommendation:

The Government Coordination Sub-Committee continue support of the Planning Work Group as a vehicle to implement Commission approved principles, policies and guidance; build on MOU partner parallel initiatives; and pursue overall Commission mission and core values.

Specific items for Government Coordination Sub-Committee endorsement:

1. Recognition of Borough Organization:

As an incentive to organization, infrastructure projects brought forward with borough endorsement from areas capable of supporting borough organization* will receive additional scoring points on Denali Commission projects. Conversely, points will be withheld on projects from areas capable of supporting borough organization, but choosing not to organize. Some unorganized areas without the strength to organize would be point-neutral.

2. Pre-Construction Checklist:

The MOU partners agree to implement a co-ordination mechanism to document that all funding agencies have accomplished critical procedures - prior to the lead agency commencing construction.

3. Adoption of Principles and Guidelines:

As MOU partners increase collaboration and co-funding of projects, it will become more valuable to hold common operational standards. The DCED DRAFT *Access to the Future* Report 9/03 distributed the *Principles and Guidelines* to encourage multi-agency adoption.

* per Local Boundary Commission: *Un-Organized Areas of Alaska that meet Borough Incorporation Standards 2/03*.

Planning Work Group Chairman is Gene Kane, Director Division of Community Advocacy-DCED.

NOTES:

¹ A Table of Contents has been established as a guideline for a Comprehensive Community Plan.

² In 2003, Funding Summits have been organized in Barrow, Cordova and Juneau to facilitate agency access by local project proponents. In May 2004, a second *Building Our Communities Conference* will be held to enhance agency access and build capacity among project proponents.

³ The Basic Business Plan has been developed and Beta-tested by DCED. There has been regular briefing and collaboration on this tool to streamline the application process for government-funded infrastructure projects.

⁴ The Initiative for Accelerated Infrastructure Development (IAID) is designed to produce 209 community maps over 5 years (new numbers include Kodiak communities). These maps provide basic data and land information, critical to community planning and interagency coordination. At this time, 14 community maps are complete. 19 are in progress. 34 are poised to begin in 2004. Funding partners are Denali Commission, USDA RD, ADOT & PF, and DCED.

⁵ DCED staff to the Local Boundary Commission is supporting legislative initiatives to increase borough organization and a heightened responsibility for planning in the currently “unorganized borough” of the state. .

⁶ The Group has regular briefings on DOL/WD initiatives to organize “regions” to coordinate training initiatives in the context of employment on capital projects.

⁷ In response to multi-agency coordination challenges, this checklist has been developed to get sign-off by all project funding partners. Current status: The Group has had preliminary discussions. The goal is to circulate an accepted document for the 2004 construction season.

⁸ A list of Principles & Guidelines for State Capital Projects has been adopted in the DRAFT Access to the Future document developed by DCED. The goal is to circulate the Principles to all MOU partners for their adoption and implementation.