

Denali Commission Planning Work Group

Next meeting: 5/22/08

Draft - Notes for the meeting held 4/24/08

Berney Richert, Economic Development Administration – Federal Co- Chair (presiding)
Tara Jollie, Division of Community & Regional Affairs – State Co-Chair

In attendance: Berney Richert – U.S. Economic Development Administration; Tara Jollie, Peter McKay, Nicole Grewe, Jo Grove, Ruth St. Amour – Division of Community & Regional Affairs; Krag Johnsen, Tessa Rinner, Sharon Lind, – Denali Commission; Janet Hall – RurAL CAP/Denali Commission; Deb Alston – HUD; Norm Stadem – USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service; Charles Parker – Alaska Village Initiatives; Lisa Von Bargaen – City of Valdez; Midge Clouse, Betsy Hamm – Chenega Corporation; Kathryn Dodge – Fairbanks North Star Borough; Gregory Kellogg – EPA; Chad Padgett – USDA Rural Development; Lynne Curry – The Growth Company; Christi Bell, Linda Ketchum – UA Center for Economic Development

Via teleconference: Ingrid Zaruba – Department of Labor; Merlaine Kruse – USDA Rural Development; Clair Heise – Copper Valley Development Association

U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey and Implications for Alaska – Nicole Grewe, DCRA

- Several members of the Census Bureau staff from Seattle and Washington, D.C. were in Alaska this week, and visited Atmautluak and Bethel.
- The decennial census long form has been discontinued. Descriptive information will now be gathered by the American Community Survey (ACS), a national survey conducted every month for a sample of households. Please see “The 2005 American Community Survey” at www.denali.gov/Program_Documents.cfm?Section=Planning
- Planners will need to take a “statistics moment” to understand the sampling used in ACS.
- Census data is used by many agencies to determine program eligibility.
- Recommendations for improving the ACS for Alaska include:
 - o Collect long form data during the 2010 census to validate ACS data.
 - o Increase the sample size in rural communities.
 - o Conduct outreach to encourage responses to the ACS.
 - o Articulate our idiosyncrasies to the Census Bureau.
 - o Form a task force to develop a strategy (Nicole Grewe, Kathryn Lizik, Charles Parker, Lisa Von Bargaen, Tessa Rinner, Janet Hall, Christi Bell).

Project Coordination – Agency Updates on Project Funding – Berney Richert, EDA

- There is strong agreement among participating agencies that the sharing of information on projects and grantees may lead to improved delivery of services and facilities in a more coordinated, cost-efficient and client-focused way.

- Berney Richert shared lists of funded projects, including potential projects. Chad Padgett shared a list of USDA Rural Development projects, and Deb Alston had prepared information on HUD program funding.
- Tessa Rinner will have Denali Commission staff compile lists of upcoming projects, as well as potential projects, and will forward the lists to Ruth St. Amour within two weeks.
- Care must be taken in sharing project lists to be sure that communities are not receiving inaccurate information about their project status. Agencies must “first, do no harm.”
- Denali Commission staff is expanding its consideration of sustainability beyond the project itself, to consider how the project they fund will impact the sustainability of the community as a whole.
- Agency heads should convey to their staff the value of sharing information and having good communication with other agencies. As few programs fund a project in its entirety, there is a need for agency collaboration.
- Agencies are encouraged to share project lists at upcoming Planning Work Group meetings, to better develop a coordination process. There was great interest in improving communication and collaboration.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 22 at 9 a.m., at the Denali Commission, and is to be chaired by Tara Jollie.