

Coordinated Infrastructure Development

Problem: Small communities (less than 1200 population) often lack the technical expertise and coordination mechanisms to ensure that publicly financed building projects compliment each other, avoid conflicts, and result in cost efficiencies and effective project development. Because Alaska's infrastructure investments in communities are often planned and constructed by separate and independent agencies and organizations they sometimes unintentionally create problems and issues that could be easily avoided if a coordinating influence had been present. In larger communities this influence is frequently offered through the municipal/tribal planning departments and offices of public works. What exacerbates this problem further in Alaska is that we have multiple local entities - state chartered municipalities, tribal governments and often regional organizations too - in many small communities conducting infrastructure development. We also have an incredible array of infrastructure development from other governmental and non profit organizations representing specialized and sometimes narrow fields of service such as Native housing, school districts, utilities, Native non profit corporations, rural energy projects, sanitation projects, BIA's Indian Reservation Roads, as well as development by private and profit corporations. This situation easily can overwhelm a sincere desire by small local government administrations to coordinate development and ensure maximum community benefit from investments.

Proposed Approach: The Coordinated Infrastructure Development (CID) process is a mechanism to assist communities to benefit from maximum coordination. The CID creates and includes a structured process that provides small communities and public funding agencies with the ability to gain maximum benefit from investments. This approach would serve to organize and manage an array of entities and projects by convening developers on a regular basis to make their plans, schedules and commitments known to others. Together, with local government leadership and DCRA's assistance, they would then be able to identify likely economic efficiencies and reduce conflicts among the agencies and organizations. .

CID Benefits and Examples

Examples of benefits from using the CID process are:

- To avoid mobilization and demobilization costs by identifying a contractor already in the community that could be retained for multiple jobs , or
- Early in development reduce costs and find efficiencies by jointly bidding projects.

Avoid conflicts by ensuring utilities can handle ne infrastructure. Frequently, infrastructure is built and then not useable due to utility constraints. Using the CID approach, identifying when a new or major infrastructure expansion will overwhelm current utilities capacity will be identified early, addressed in a timely manner, and ensure that public funds are not spent on a facility that will then not be useable due to utility constraints.

CID Activities

A community with interested and committed leadership will participate in roundtable discussions with agencies and contractors planning developments. The approach of

convening developers in the presence of community leadership relies on the completion of a number of specific tasks:

- Develop an early notification process of project funding and approval.
The DCCED Capital Projects Database can be a starting point for the identification of projects by community. Improvements in this data could be achieved with greater agency participation and more timely updates.
- Sharing of project design and development schedules and updates of subsequent changes
- Sharing of final designs and construction specifications
- Conferencing of other active project developers with the community leadership
- Identification of opportunities for improved efficiencies and cost savings through joint action
- Conflict resolutions with community leadership
- Sharing of project progress reports as building progresses
- Sharing of innovation aspects and realized efficiencies in project design and development
- Monitoring of project's performance following completion by the agency in conjunction with the community

Proposal to Develop CID Procedures

Select a small group of communities that we can test this approach. (Attached is a spreadsheet derived from the Capital Project Database that identifies four communities with the greatest number of capital projects or the largest dollar value of capital projects.)

Volunteer communities should be identified and then selected. The project database would be updated with projects that agencies or community leadership adding projects not found on the database

Convene the known infrastructure developers at a meeting called by the community leadership and arrange a memorandum of agreement with the agencies and organizations. Questions that could be asked to help coordinate activities are:

1. What type of equipment will be needed for each project?
2. What transportation is planned for materials and equipment?
3. How much fuel and electricity will the project require during construction? After construction?

4. What types of jobs and or skills will be required during construction? After construction?

Reluctant developers would be encouraged to follow the wishes of the community to attempt to coordinate.

IAWG could use this approach for imminent threatened communities. We have begun the process but the IAWG certainly it is not a comprehensive evaluation but a effort to address hazards to infrastructure.

Attachments