

fit their approach to program/project management.

Rural Energy Approach

AEA has employed a two-step approach to bulk fuel project funding that is strongly supported by the Commission. Starting at the top of the AEA priority list, projects are provided 35% design funds one or more years before being eligible for capital funding. This allows for more accurate project cost estimates, resolution of easement and land issues, development of agreements between various local parties in site selection and tank farm ownership/maintenance. This step also serves to filter projects that are not ready for construction, for one reason or another, from advancing to the second step of project funding. This two-step approach ensures that funding does not sit unused by projects that are not ready for construction. Once a project has resolved any obstacles at the 35% design stage, then they are eligible for capital funding.

AEA will reevaluate its priority list from time to time in order to factor in new information, particularly information from the statewide energy strategy. This reevaluation may result in some modification of the list. Funding priorities will also be subject to "readiness to proceed" considerations as described in part above.

Rural Primary Care Facilities Approach

In the past, communities constructed clinics based upon available grant funds (typically community development block grants of \$200,000 to \$500,000). Consequently clinic square footage was based upon available funding and not necessarily upon health care delivery service appropriate for the population and demographics of the community. Many clinics are therefore undersized. In FY99 the Commission allocated \$300,000 to undertake a needs assessment for rural primary care facilities. The needs assessment was completed in October 2000 and included a database of primary health care facility needs statewide as well as a project prioritization methodology. The Commission's investments in rural health facilities is based on this needs assessment.

Job Training Strategy

The Commission realizes that proper and prudent investment in public infrastructure must include a component for training local residents to maintain and operate publicly funded infrastructure. The Commission further realizes that through its investment in public infrastructure, such as bulk fuel

storage facilities, it is creating numerous jobs related to the construction of these facilities and must develop a strategy to ensure local residents are properly trained to receive these jobs.

The Denali Commission's Training Strategy creates a statewide system to increase the local employment rates in Alaskan communities through the development of skills necessary to construct, maintain, and operate public infrastructure.

The Commission has approved 10% of the FY00-FY 02 funding for implementation of the Training Strategy. Through this funding the Commission ensures local residents are employed on public facility construction projects in their communities, while also protecting the Denali Commission's investment in infrastructure by ensuring local residents are properly trained in the operations and maintenance of completed facilities.

The Denali Commission's Training Strategy involves several components that create a statewide system for job training outreach, coordination and delivery in rural Alaska. The Commission has partnered with several statewide organizations that will perform the necessary functions that make up the Denali Commission's Training Strategy.

The Training Strategy provides the Denali Commission the flexibility for future investment in job training needs statewide. Currently the Commission's partners and the Denali Training Fund are focusing on jobs created by the construction of energy and health related projects. In the future, the Training Strategy will focus its efforts on other areas where the Commission is investing.

Economic Development Strategy

The Denali Commission is not a funding agency for traditional economic development activities. The Commission has a strategy that outlines the appropriate role of the Commission in the area of economic development. The strategy includes the following components:

- The Commission, where appropriate will play the role of convener, bringing potential economic development participants together to support projects that meet Commission Standards outlined in paragraph IV below.
- The Commission will act as a facilitator to assist in matching high priority, high potential public or private investment opportunities with available funding sources.

- The Commission will serve as a catalyst for identification and removal of unnecessary economic development barriers by government.

Regional Development Strategy

The Denali Commission encourages communities/tribes to build a local comprehensive plan and strategy, a component of which will be economic development. A comprehensive plan may also be referred to as a Development Strategy.

Communities are encouraged to work with regional organizations such as ARDOR's, Regional Non-Profit Corporations, Borough Governments and Regional for-profit organizations to develop comprehensive strategies of which economic development will be a component. Regional strategies should take into consideration existing regional planning and strategy efforts including, but not limited to, the efforts of the FAA, HUD, Alaska DOT, ANTHC, Alaska VSW, State Division of Public Health, Alaska Department of Public Safety, regional non-profits and others.

The Denali Commission encourages the state to assist with technical support and funding at the local and regional level to build local and regional development strategies. The Denali Commission also encourages state and federal governments to utilize the local and regional development strategies when prioritizing projects in the state or in a region.

Jeffrey B. Staser,

Federal Co-Chair.

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

AGENCY: Department of Education.

SUMMARY: The Leader, Regulatory Information Management Group, Office of the Chief Information Officer invites comments on the submission for OMB review as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before July 30, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be addressed to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Attention: Karen Lee, Desk Officer, Department of Education, Office of Management and Budget, 725 17th Street, NW., Room 10235, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503 or should be electronically