



City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.
Valdez, AK 99686

Legislation Text

File #: 16-0197, **Version:** 1

ITEM TITLE:

Discussion Item: Regrouping & Prioritizing Prior to Work Session with Council

SUBMITTED BY: Lisa Von Bargaen, CED Director

FISCAL NOTES:

Expenditure Required: N/A

Unencumbered Balance: N/A

Funding Source: N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

None. Discussion item only.

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

The anticipated timeframe for Economic Diversification Interim Measures is about to sunset. The Commission has overseen the scope and contracts for several milestone tasks including 1) Baseline Socio-Economic Indicator Study; 2) Year-Round Mountain Recreation Site Study; and 3) Visitor Statistics Study. The Commission has also informally determined the best on-going route forward is to keep the Commission in place and hire a full time economic development staff person. The Commission has worked a number of issues in some or great detail. At this time though it is appropriate to re-group and meet with the Council to determine clear direction moving forward.

Staff has been trying to schedule a joint work session with the Council to have this discussion, but it is important the Commission have a clear and united voice going in to meet with Council. This is an opportunity to start that discussion within the Commission.

In addition to charting a way forward the Council would like to have a recommendation from the Commission about staffing. The City Manager has requested an economic development position for the 2017 budget. The Council has asked for the Commission to weigh in on this decision. Is a contractor (like we have had) or a dedicated FTE better? Is a position within Community & Economic Development answering to the existing director the right place for that staff person; or is it better to bring someone in at the Department Head level? How does the Commission envision the existing strategic initiatives worked by the Commission fitting into the newly proposed planning effort to be led by consulting firm Kimley Horn? What role will the Commission play in this planning effort?

These are just a few questions to get the conversation started. As a reminder, the existing strategic initiatives are:

- Promote housing affordability and availability

- Enhance senior and developmental disability services and opportunities
- Downtown beautification and redevelopment
- Improve marine-related facilities and industries
- Link and expand College programs to existing and new industries
- Reduce energy costs and increase access to power
- Improve year-round recreation and tourism opportunities