



An Introduction to
The City's new
Economic Diversification Commission

Introduction

During the community's two-year Strategic Planning process one of the four goals established was "Valdez will have a healthy, diverse economy." In February of this year the City Council determined development of a comprehensive economic diversification program to be a top priority. To that end the City has adopted what are being called "Interim Measures." To address economic diversification and development opportunities in a comprehensive manner the community needs an economic diversification strategy, and a way to implement it. Implementation includes having the appropriate resources and organizational structure to address needs and opportunities. The community currently lacks both of these key components.

Interim Measures

Through Interim Measures (IM) we hope to solve these deficiencies. During IM the newly formed Economic Diversification Commission will lead the public process to develop an economic diversification strategy and determine the best permanent structure for organizational implementation of the work associated with the strategy. It is anticipated IM will last between 12-18 months. The Commission will accomplish this with the assistance of leadership/mentorship by the University of Alaska Center for Economic Development (UACED), likely with the use of a process called Strategic Doing. Temporary staff (either City or contract) will also be assigned to work with the Commission.

Strategic Doing

Strategic Doing is a process developed by Ed Morrison with the Purdue University Center for Regional Development that guides groups through accomplishing action items associated with long term goals, rather than just developing another "shelf-sitter" plan. During mid-April Mr. Morrison was in Valdez and provided an introduction to the process at both a Council work session and a community workshop. Strategic Doing is very simple in concept, but takes considerable discipline. Once appointed, the Commission will go through an intensive training workshop on Strategic Doing. That is anticipated to happen sometime in June or July. There will also be another community workshop to provide an additional opportunity for the public to learn about the process. Information about Strategic Doing is included on the City's website as one of the downloadable documents available with the information about the new Commission.

Commission Longevity

The Council established the Economic Diversification Commission through ordinance. A copy of the ordinance is also available for review on the website. While the Commission is initially being seated as an interim body, the ordinance was written such that the Commission could remain in place in perpetuity if necessary. The role and responsibility of the Commission, as outlined in the ordinance, is also suggestive of long-term engagement. But it is important that prospective commissioners understand that the Commission may sunset following the completion of work on Interim Measures. The development of an organizational implementation plan will include exploring all options of economic development organizations (EDO). This will include, but certainly may not be limited to, a private non-profit organization, a public-private partnership, or a new/expanded City department. The preferred structure may, or may not include the continuation of the Commission.

Initial Commission Roles & Responsibilities

During Interim Measures (again 12-18 months) the Commission will be responsible for leading the public process in:

- ✓ Development of a Comprehensive Economic Diversification Strategy
- ✓ Determination of a preferred permanent organizational structure for strategy implementation
- ✓ Recommendations for implementation funding
- ✓ Oversight of gathering and tracking of baseline socio-economic data for the community and region
- ✓ Oversight of some economic diversification/development opportunities currently in play

Estimated Timeline

The estimated timeline for tasks leading up to the "official" start of work by the Commission is outlined in the following table. These dates are subject to change.

Task	Timeline Estimate
Advertise for Economic Diversification Commission Members	Early May 2014
Council Appointment of ED Commission Members	Early June 2014
Negotiation of Agreement with UACED	Early June 2014
Council Approval of ED Budget	June 2014
Council Approval of UACED Agreement	June 2014
Advertise RFP or Position for ED Staff	June 2014
RFP Review or Interviews for ED Position	Late June 2014
Additional Strategic Doing Community Workshop	TBD
Council Approval of ED Staff Contract (if necessary)	Early July 2014
Strategic Doing Intensive Training for Commissioners & Staff	Early July 2014
Interim Measures Work Officially Begins	Late July 2014

Commission Membership

The Commission is made up of seven members. Each member must work within one of 15 industry sectors identified in the ordinance. No more than one person from each sector may serve on the Commission at the same time. Those 15 sectors are:

- ✓ Accommodations
- ✓ Commercial Fishers
- ✓ Contracting/Trades
- ✓ Food & Beverage
- ✓ Healthcare
- ✓ Micro Business/Non-Professional Sole Proprietors
- ✓ Oil & Gas
- ✓ Professional Services (attorney, engineer, banker, real-estate, media, etc.)
- ✓ Retail
- ✓ Seafood Processing
- ✓ Sport Fisheries
- ✓ Summer Tours & Attractions
- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Utilities
- ✓ Winter Tours & Attractions

Commissioner Appointment & Terms

In the event the Commission survives the IM process, the term of each Commission seat will be for three years. To keep all Commission seats from expiring at the same time the initial terms will be staggered (2-1 year terms; 2-2 year terms; 3-3 year terms). The Council will appoint seven members from the pool of candidates, again only one from each industry sector. At the time of appointment the term length for each seat will be drawn randomly. Please remember, the Commission may sunset at the completion of Interim Measures.

Applications

An application may be downloaded from the City website. Fully completed applications should be returned to the City Clerk's office either by email to Holly Wolgamott at hwolgamott@ci.valdez.ak.us or in person at the Front Counter in City Hall located at 200 Chenega Avenue. Applications are due by 5:00pm on Wednesday, May 28, 2014.

Questions

Questions should be directed to Lisa Von Barga in the Community Development Department by email at lvonbarga@ci.valdez.ak.us or by phone at 834-3425.