

Mayor
Alice Ruby

City Manager
Daniel Decker Sr.



Dillingham City Council
Bertram Luckhurst
Michael Bennett
Steven Carriere
Curt Armstrong
Kaleb Westfall

MEMORANDUM

Date: July 25, 2025
To: Daniel Decker Sr., City Manager
From: Christopher Maines, Planning Director
Subject: June and July 2025 Monthly Report

Upcoming Planning Commission Activity:

The Planning Department, in collaboration with the Planning Commission, has nearly completed the work on the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update, representing one of the most significant planning undertakings for our community. The project timeline includes public engagement meetings scheduled for fall 2025, with the goal of presenting a finalized plan to the City Council for adoption before winter 2025.

Key Planning Issues Identified for Review For Fiscal Year 2026:

Property Management and Code Enforcement:

- Abandoned Property policies and procedures
- Property condemnation policies and procedures
- Setback requirements standardization and clarification

Infrastructure and Right-of-Way Management:

- Classification and documentation of Dillingham-owned roads versus dedicated public use roads
- Clarification of dedicated right-of-way designations
- Road maintenance and responsibility matrices

Development Standards and Procedures:

- Comprehensive review and modernization of subdivision standards
- Streamlining of platting procedures for new plats and replats
- Development of efficient approval processes

Future Growth Management:

- Creation of defined zoning areas to support strategic community expansion
- Establishment of clear development guidelines for different community zones

Collaborative Process: These policy areas will require joint coordination with the Code Committee, as the review process may result in proposed language changes to existing municipal codes. Regular joint meetings will be scheduled to ensure comprehensive review and community input integration.

Planning Department Activity:

Dillingham Community Action Plan

The Dillingham Community Action Plan has been successfully submitted to the Alaska Wellness Association Initiative (AWAI) and has received formal acceptance. The plan is now being forwarded to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for final review and approval. This achievement represents a significant milestone for our community, as CDC acceptance will unlock new federal funding streams for future projects. Many transportation grants now require an approved community action plan as a prerequisite for funding consideration, positioning our community advantageously for future grant opportunities.

Acknowledgments: Special recognition is extended to Conor Downey and the Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation (BBAHC) for their exceptional dedication and collaborative efforts throughout this process. The Planning Department looks forward to continued partnership on future initiatives that promote health and safety for our citizens.

EPA Landfill Appropriation - NEPA Process

Key Milestone: NEPA Process initiated on June 5, 2025

During the reporting period, the Department successfully launched the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review process for the landfill appropriation project with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Despite experiencing staffing transitions with our grants specialist replacement and turnover within the EPA Region 10 offices over the summer months, project momentum has been maintained. The Public Works Director and I conducted a comprehensive meeting with our newly assigned grants specialist, who provided reassurance that all project documentation remains in order and that no negative comments have been received during the initial review phase. Based on current projections, we anticipate receiving the grant agreement within the next 60 days.

EPA Brownfields Inventory Grant

Following the successful award of the Brownfields Inventory Grant through the EPA, the Planning Department participated in the project kick-off meeting alongside CaSandra Johnson from Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA). This collaborative approach ensures comprehensive coverage and expertise throughout the project implementation.

Project Objectives:

- Identify and systematically catalogue sites with potential for Brownfields designation
- Conduct preliminary assessments of identified locations
- Develop strategic plans for seeking remediation funding
- Position sites for future beneficial public use

Regular updates on project status and milestones will be provided to the council as work progresses through the coming months.

Rural Professional Housing Grant Application

The Planning Department has successfully submitted the City of Dillingham's pre-application to the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) for the Rural Professional Housing Grant program. This competitive annual funding initiative is specifically designed to create affordable rental housing for essential rural professionals, including teachers and healthcare workers who are critical to our community's well-being and economic stability.

Program Overview:

- Purpose: Create affordable rental housing for essential rural professionals
- Target Recipients: Teachers, healthcare workers, and other critical service providers
- Eligible Applicants: School districts, local governments, regional health corporations, housing authorities, and nonprofit organizations

Additional Housing Funding Opportunities

The Department continues to actively monitor AHFC's funding cycles, particularly the upcoming round of the Last Frontier Housing Program, which represents another potential avenue for securing resources to develop affordable housing within our community. This proactive approach ensures the City remains positioned to capitalize on available funding opportunities as they become available.

Next Steps: Regular updates on application status and additional funding opportunities will be provided to the Council as information becomes available, and decisions are rendered.

Looking Ahead

The Planning Department remains committed to advancing these critical environmental and community development initiatives while simultaneously undertaking the comprehensive planning process. Upcoming priorities include:

Ongoing Environmental Projects:

- Monitoring the EPA grant agreement timeline for the landfill appropriation project
- Tracking CDC review progress for the Community Action Plan
- Coordinating ongoing Brownfields inventory activities with BBNA partners
- Exploring additional grant opportunities that may become available through newly established funding streams

Comprehensive Plan and Policy Development:

- Coordinating with the Planning Commission on comprehensive plan update activities
- Scheduling and conducting joint meetings with the Code Committee
- Organizing fall public engagement meetings for community input
- Developing draft policy language for identified planning issues
- Preparing final comprehensive plan document for Council consideration