

Nulato Planning Team Meeting
May 1, 2007
3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

In Attendance

Chief Michael Stickman, Mayor Sharon Agnes, Peter Demovsky, Shirley Kiska, Lisa Patsy, Kim Joyce, Greg Joyce, Jessica Lomer, Ellen Campfield Nelson, Mara Bacsujlaky, Beth McLaughlin

The Nulato Planning Team met with consultants from Agnew::Beck Consulting to begin preliminary planning for the process of drafting the Nulato Comprehensive Plan.

The meeting started with introductions. Attendees were invited to describe their interest in being a part of the planning process and describe community priority issues that the plan might detail.

Priority Issues and Interests

A number of meeting participants noted that this plan must be representative of the entire community.

A significant portion of the meeting was spent discussing residents' vision for the Nulato community and goals and priorities that should shape this plan. These included:

- Enhance tribal governance
- Increase instruction in and usage of Athabascan language
- Strengthen local culture
- Improve school; improve education opportunities for village youth
- Increase cooperation between city and tribal council
- Infrastructure development: water and sewer expansion
- Energy crisis – recognize the increasing price of fuel and impact of this on village life; find creative ways to reduce energy consumption, usage, find alternative energy sources
- Increase cooperation within village and others villages in area (for energy and other issues)
- At present, there is no VPSO in village. Health aides are first responders in crisis situations. There is need for VPSO support and also for housing to attract qualified applicants for this position
- Improve solid waste management – existing landfill is in extremely poor condition; are in process of drafting a Solid Waste Management Plan (should be completed by June)
- Interest in establishing more recycling opportunities; many already exist in the community
- Economic growth; increase ability to bring financial resources into the village
- Think strategically about future projects for the betterment of village
- Make life better for the entire community
- Health, safety and welfare of tribal members
- Subsistence highly important to community

Planning Process

The role of the planning team was defined. This includes guiding the content of the comprehensive plan, working to get community members involved, explaining the importance of the plan to others, raising community concerns, raising issues of importance.

The group also reviewed the major components of the planning process. It will include:

- Establish core planning team with community-wide representatives
- Discuss priority issues for community
- Use the results of this discussion to create a draft of comprehensive plan
- Community will review draft and give feedback
- A new draft will be generated based on community input/edits
- Hold second workshop to review latest version of the plan
- Community will vote on which goals are highest priorities
- Plan adopted by all community entities, agreeing on goals of plan
- Distribute plan to all interested organizations/entities

Other Planning Documents

It was suggested that the following existing documents should be reviewed (if complete copies of these exist, please forward copies to Ellen and/or Mara):

- Strategic Plan (created in 200-01)
- Visioning Document (created in 1994 (?))

Challenges/Concerns

The following were brought up as concerns/challenges to the process by Planning Team members:

- How to reconcile the desire of residents living in old townsite for water and sewer service with the reality that due to location it is likely impossible to fund such an upgrade (while possibly providing such upgrades to residents in the new townsite)
- There is a need for community development and infrastructure development to support the desired economic development (must have the former in place to ensure that the latter can grow)
- Challenges of large, complex projects and finding funding to sustain large efforts (when oftentimes competing against many other communities that are also in need of significant funding). The example of the many challenges of cleaning up existing landfill and establishing new landfill was given. Funding for clean up is extremely hard to find and there are many steps to establishing a new landfill (with funding needed for each of these). It was suggested that breaking large projects down into smaller, easier to manage steps is one way to tackle.

Next Steps and Upcoming Events

- Planning team was asked to review Community Background section (submitted by Agnew::Beck to Greg and Kim Joyce) for their input. Suggestions on content, additions, edits, clarifications are solicited.
- Planning team members who would volunteer to take photos of community life (some of which will be included in plan) are needed.
- Input is needed on the Community History and Culture section – Mara has sent samples of what might be asked/included
- Two surveys need to be distributed:
 - Job survey
 - Business survey
- A second planning team meeting is scheduled for May 11th at 2:00 PM
- Date set for first Community Workshop: the evening of May 30th (Ellen and Mara will arrive on the 29th to facilitate a Planning Team meeting that day)
- Kim and Greg Joyce volunteered to advertise community workshop with assistance from Agnew::Beck (will develop materials)
- Door prizes have already been donated/purchased and the City and Tribe will handle these logistics
- Will there be an associated community potluck?