90

Mark R. Moderow
7050 East 99th Avenue
Anchorage AK 99507

RECEIVED
DEC 27 2005
DOT & PF DIVISION OF
PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Jeff Ottesen, Director
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Division of Program Development
3132 Channel Drive, Room 200, Mail Stop 2500
Juneau, AK 99801

Reference: DRAFT 2006-2008 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program,
Alaska Highway APLIC and Rest Area.

Dear Sir:

As a fairly frequent traveler of the Alaska Highway with an interest in the indepenadant travelors to our State, I took the time to review the draft 2006-08 STIP. I note that the State's share of multi-agency Visitor Center planned for Tok is no longer listed. The project was listed in the 2004-2006 STIP as the *Alaska Highway APLIC and Rest Area*. With the design development for this facility near completion and funds available for land acquisition, this project will be ready to move into the construction phase and needs to be identified in the STIP to be eligible for funding.

This project involves the Fish and Wildlife Service, your Northern Regional Office, and the Department of Commerce and Community Economic Development in the planning, design and development of a new visitor facility to serve as a State-operated Alaska Public Lands Information Center, a new Tetlin Refuge Visitor Center and rest and trip planning facility for travelers along the Alaska Highway. These agencies have a shared commitment to the project, which has significant local and regional support.

Strategically located in Tok, this facility will serve independent visitors with comprehensive statewide trip planning and information on access to all of Alaska's public lands, rest and comfort amenities and Alaska Marine Highway reservations. As they enter the state, visitors will receive the most current traveler's information related to road construction, wildfire conditions and weather to assist them with safe travel.

This project, due to its multi-agency character, will provide significantly more services than most for less ongoing costs. The Service and DCCED will share in the majority of the maintenance and operations of the Center. DOT will be only be responsible for the entrance road and parking area, vault toilets, and trash collection of the rest area. The joint project will have significant economic benefits for Tok and will increase the momentum of regional efforts to promote tourism in Eastern Interior.

Considerable funds and effort has already gone into this project and tremendous progress has been made. The project receives broad support from local communities, business,

State and Federal agencies. I urge you to reinstate the Tok Interagency Public Lands and Rest Area Facility it in the 2006-2009 STIP.

Sincerely,

Mark Moderow