

Agency: Commerce, Community and Economic Development

Grants to Named Recipients (AS 37.05.316)

Grant Recipient: Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center

Federal Tax ID: 20-1113317

Project Title:

Project Type: Other

Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center - Gateway Exhibit Completion

State Funding Requested: \$500,000
One-Time Need

House District: 9 / E

Brief Project Description:

This will complete the "Gateway" exhibit, the final gallery within the 9,000 sq.ft. exhibit hall at the Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center. This gallery caters specifically to independent travelers and cruise ship passengers, and is designed to encourage safe and efficient access to public lands, activities and Interior communities.

Funding Plan:

Total Cost of Project: \$29,350,722

	<u>Funding Secured</u>		<u>Other Pending Requests</u>		<u>Anticipated Future Need</u>	
	<i>Amount</i>	<i>FY</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>FY</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>FY</i>
Federal Funds	\$16,734,185	2000-2009				
State Funds	\$7,100,000	2004-2009				
Rasmuson Foundation	\$1,000,000					
Local Funds	\$250,000					
Other Funds	\$3,283,637					
Total	\$28,367,822					

Explanation of Other Funds:

- Federal Grants totaling \$16,734,185
 - o Federal Highway Administration: 2000 & 2001, \$496,845
 - o Federal Transit Administration: 2006-2009, \$2,494,250
 - o Denali Commission: 2005, \$313,790
 - o National Park Service: \$13,429,300
- State Grants via DCCED 04, 05, 06, 07, 09: \$7,100,000
- Fairbanks North Star Borough: \$250,000
- Rasmuson Foundation: \$1,000,000
- Private Gifts from 600+ businesses and individuals: \$3,283,637

Detailed Project Description and Justification:

This final grant will allow completion of the "Gateway" exhibit –named such because it is specifically designed to serve as the gateway between visitors and visitor opportunities. It will help visitors learn about Interior Alaska's attractions, public lands and waterways so they can safely and efficiently access and enjoy them.

For use by Co-chair Staff Only:

**\$500,000
Approved**

The Gateway exhibit will feature stewardship and safety information related to efficiency of movement to rural communities that operate tourism related businesses, encouraging economic development in rural Alaska.

The project partners in the Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center incorporated as a 501 c 3 in 2004, and have worked together to build, own, and operate a new 38,720 square foot facility on the banks of the Chena River in downtown Fairbanks. The facility is now open 7 days a week, and expects to serve more than 150,000 visitors in 2010. Historical statistics provided by the Fairbanks Convention and Visitors Bureau indicate that 50% of those visitors are cruise ship passengers.

Vital support from the State of Alaska helped the Morris Thompson Center open 9,000 sq feet of exhibits in September 2009. Project partners request assistance from the State of Alaska to complete the final elements of the exhibits.

Despite its unfinished status, the exhibits and services provided at the Center are drawing rave reviews from visitors to the state. Visitor comments include:

- Beautiful!!! 1st trip. We'll be back! Dan & Shelby McCauley, Chicago
- Real credit for Alaska – Beautiful! Richard Stober, Mobile, AL
- Awesome center – you can be very proud! Larry Kelly, Saginaw MI
- Very Helpful Staff, Beautiful facility
- Can't wait to come back.
- A super high quality addition to Fairbanks. Randall Ensminger, Rocklin, CA
- Love Alaska. Been here 3 times. Looking forward to the 4th. David & Karen Kamucski, Oxford Michigan
- Truly a WELCOME center – thanks!! Ted Maznicki, Mt Airy, GA
- Great place to start your Fairbanks tour. Anusha & Arrind, Santa Clara, CA
- Very helpful. Planned my stay right here. Bill Grubbs, Decatur AL
- Great visitor services – especially the phone and internet! Jeff & Judy Spiegel, Pittsburg PA
- Congrats. This is a credit to your town. Thank you for great services! Barbie & Vaughn Merrylees, Rotorua New Zealand
- Awesome. Like a movie set. Ng Khern, Singapore
- Excellent! 1st trip of many to Alaska!!, Blackett Family, England
- This is certainly the most beautiful visitor center we've ever been to!! Eveline & Martin, Switzerland.
- You are great ambassadors for Alaska. Tony van Rosmalen, Winnipeg, Canada

FUNDS NEEDED TO COMPLETE MORRIS THOMPSON CENTER

as of Jan 15, 2010

Exhibits

Panel Design, fabrication & installation (estimate) 67,660

Debt service on completed exhibits 384,771

"Gateway" Completion (estimate) 391,200

Children's Artwork Gallery (rotating) 7,000

Artifact Collection/Maintenance 5,000

Communities Gallery rotating exhibits 10,000

Other
Honor Wall Installation (estimate) 40,000
Aurora Energy - District Heat installation loan payoff 65,000
Electronic Information Board in lobby (installation/programming) 10,000
TOTAL 980,631

Project Timeline:

The building was completed in August 2008 – under budget and ahead of schedule. Exhibit construction began in Fall 2008 and opened to the public in September 2009.
The exhibits are currently approximately 80% complete, and project planners expect to finalize the unfinished sections immediately upon receipt of final funding. Expenditure of grant funds will occur in Summer 2010.

Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:

Fairbanks Convention and Visitors Bureau

Grant Recipient Contact Information:

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Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority? Yes No