

Agency: Commerce, Community and Economic Development**Grants to Named Recipients (AS 37.05.316)****Grant Recipient: Native Village of Gakona****Federal Tax ID: 13-4267032****Project Title:****Project Type: New Construction and Land Acquisition**

Native Village of Gakona - Gakona Gathering Place

State Funding Requested: \$363,594**House District: 39 / T**

One-Time Need

Brief Project Description:

Expand our facility by 1,900 s.f. to house our administrative and program offices and also create more community gathering space for our wellness/social, culture and environmental activities.

Funding Plan:

Total Project Cost:	\$473,594
Funding Already Secured:	(\$110,000)
FY2014 State Funding Request:	<u>(\$363,594)</u>
Project Deficit:	\$0

*Funding Details:**Gakona Village \$50,000 (spent)**Ahtna: land value (2005) & cash donation (2012) combined \$50,000**FY06 Capital Request \$50,000, spent/closed out 6/20/12***Detailed Project Description and Justification:****Existing Components of Expansion:**

Gakona Village originally planned for the community facility to house our environmental and tribal social services offices as well as have a main room large enough to host large gatherings. Due to funding constraints, we agreed to build the facility as it is today, with the plan to enlarge it in the future. In anticipation of the expansion, the gravel pad and mechanical systems for heat, sewer and water were built to accommodate the future addition. To date, we have completed the site work and the foundation is construction ready! We contracted with Kluge & Associates to develop the design plans, the design is 100% and cost estimates were completed by Estimations Inc. The need for this facility is well documented in our Community Plan. Please note that our past Capital request was successfully closed out in June 2012.

Justifying the Need:

The Programs and Tribal Administration offices are still located in a rented building that is greatly inefficient and therefore not economically sound, and continuing to cost the tribe unnecessary expenses. We need permanent office space for our program staff to be able to expand and improve our services. Expected cost savings by moving out of the inefficient building into a modern one has been estimated at \$5,000+ per year.

For the last five years we have coordinated the Youth Environmental Summit, through our environmental programs. A very successful, free program for 1st through 8th grade students, our attendance grows each year. We can expect 70 kids to attend from the eight different communities in the Copper River Basin. Due to our space limitations, we are unable to hold the summit here in Gakona; we must seek larger facilities. Our dream is to be able to host the summit here, once we build

the addition to our facility, we will be able to do that.

In the four years that our facility has been in operation, we have seen what a positive impact local training programs can have on a rural community. For example, in December 2009 thirteen local people received Construction Trades Certificates from University of Alaska Fairbanks. These students received training in our facility right in their community. During their training, we observed the need for more space to accommodate larger student groups and demonstrations and hands-on project work.

On a cultural level, the facility has shown to be very limited. The potlatch is the most important cultural event, and it is an integral part of the grieving and healing process during difficult times. Huge numbers of Ahtna and upper Tanana people come together from many different villages, in order to assist each other with these events. They need space for the attendees, ceremonial activities and food service. This just isn't possible for large events with the existing small space. The Tribe has expressed a great concern that their youth are not able to experience the Ahtna cultural events within their own community. It is exacerbated by the fact that each Tribe has similar, yet different ways of dancing, singing and story telling that is important to them. Teaching their traditions properly is best done within their own communities. It fosters wellness, identity and pride in the individual and community as a whole. This project plans to enlarge their gathering place and is critical to the viability of the Ahtna Athabaskan culture and the Gakona people.

This project is a top priority for the community of Gakona and is strongly supported by our region. We have been coordinating with other service providers in the area to implement programs that meet the needs of the greater Copper River communities as well. A few events have had to scale back on their scope and other events were held that were crowded, but that showed us how important the programs were for the attendees. A few of our coordinating community partners are the Gakona's Environmental Coordinator, Copper River Native Association (local Native Health Consortium), Ahtna Heritage Foundation, Ahtna, Inc. and Copper River Basin Child Advocacy Center. (See attachment)

As you can see, this project has been thoroughly planned, Gakona has invested in obtaining the Design and Cost Estimations and completed the earth work and foundation. We are ready to complete this project during the summer of 2013.

Project Timeline:

Expenditures will occur in summer 2013

February-March 2013: Put project out to bid

June-September 2013: Construct the facility

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

Native Village of Gakona

Grant Recipient Contact Information:

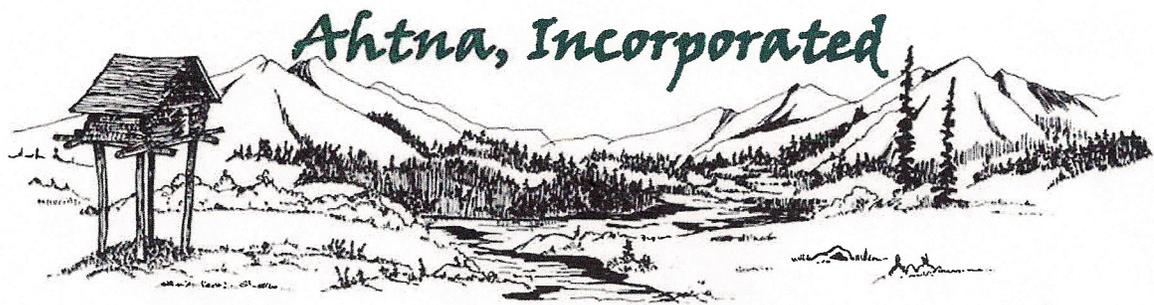
Name: Charlene Nollner
 Title: Administrator
 Address: Mile 4.8 Tok Cut-Off
 Gakona, Alaska 99586
 Phone Number: (907)822-5777
 Email: gakonaadmin@cvinternet.net

Total Project Snapshot Report

2013 Legislature

TPS Report 57623v2

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



December 29, 2011

Mr. Darin Gene, President
Native Village of Gakona
P.O. Box 102
Gakona, Alaska 99586

Dear President Gene,

I am writing in reference to two items:

The Ahtna, Incorporated Board of Directors has approved our 2012 budget which provides for a \$10,000 contribution to the Native Village of Gakona to use at your discretion.

Secondly, I want to state my support for the village's plans to expand the Buster Gene Memorial Facility. A gathering place needs to grow with the community it serves. The existing facility has greatly enhanced the community and region's ability to provide a safe and modern venue for cultural and educational events. There is no question that the village has reached capacity with the existing facility and would greatly benefit from a larger community facility. The Buster Gene Memorial Facility is a tremendous asset to all of us who live and work in the Copper River Basin. I wish you great success in your efforts to expand the facility.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Anderson".

Michelle Anderson
President