

Alaska Planning Commission Handbook



July 2003



Alaska Planning Commission Handbook



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With funding from:
U.S. Department of Environmental Protection Agency
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
American Planning Association

For copies of this publication contact the Department of Community and Economic Development



Published by

Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development

Division of Community Advocacy

Supported by the Alaska Planners' Association

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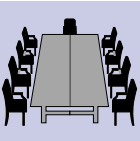
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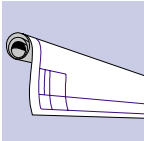
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WELCOME TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Your life is almost certain to become more interesting now that you have agreed to serve on the planning commission. You will attend regular meetings, special meetings and work sessions, evaluate projects and proposals, and make tough decisions about community development projects and policies. You will encounter new terms and concepts; gain more knowledge about activities happening around town; and develop a greater understanding about government and public decision-making.

A good planning commissioner takes the future seriously, works hard, and is patient, and willing and able to make decisions. This handbook will help you understand the legal and policy framework for planning in Alaska's communities. It will also provide you with a reference for the powers and duties of the planning commission.

As a planning commissioner you must have some understanding of the following topics:

1. Comprehensive and other types of planning
2. Zoning and platting
3. How a planning commission operates
4. The authority and duties of the commission
5. Legal aspects of commission conduct
6. Standards for commission decision-making

The Planning Commission Handbook covers all of these topics. If you are new to the discipline of planning, you will want to read the sections in order. If, however, you understand the practice of planning and its applicability, you may want to use the handbook as a reference. Although being a planning commissioner will always be challenging, reading this handbook will make the challenge easier.

About this Handbook

This handbook addresses the three major aspects of planning: 1) land use regulation and platting; 2) the discipline and practice of planning, and; (3) the legal context for planning decisions. The section in the handbook explaining the practice of planning covers the purpose of planning, problem-solving tools and other practical 'how to' aspects. The legal environment addresses constitutional, statutory, and ordinance provisions that limit or guide planning commission actions.

At the end of this handbook is a bibliography of publications, articles and other resources that may be useful to you. Your planning department may have copies you can borrow. Also at the end of this handbook is a reference to most of the statutes that govern Alaska planning commissions. Always check to make sure the statutes on file with your community are the most current. The State of Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development has many planning resources you can access through its website.