

Alaska Federation of Natives-Alaska State Housing Authority- AFN-ASHA Join Resources to Develop Native Housing Program in Alaska

Last year, by Executive Order, President Nixon created a new national Indian Housing program. Alaska's share of the program for fiscal year 1971 is 1200 units.

Further allocations will be announced for the succeeding four years and the total allocation for the five year program could reach as high as 8,000 units.

Besides housing, the new program will include roads, water and sewer, community centers and perhaps other facilities.

As AFN understands the program, it will allow considerable flexibility in program and design in carrying out its intention of providing a vehicle for the development of housing and subsidiary facilities for all of the native people in need of better housing.

Responsibility for Alaskan

development of the Indian Housing Program now rests jointly with the Alaska Federation of Natives and Alaska State Housing Authority (ASHA).

According to the Memorandum of Understanding between these two groups, AFN will take a major role in planning, choosing villages, and design.

As part of its survey functions, AFN will select villages, determine the number of units needed in each village and select unit sites; ascertain the suitability of each site; and provide ASHA with the facts needed to prepare fund applications. Together, the two groups will prepare these applications.

AFN will also contract design drawings for individual units and facilities; arrange acquisition of title to necessary land, arrange for the preparation of bid documents and review bid proposals and the selection of contract awards.

In general, AFN's role will be as the developer. The Indian Housing Program is a self-determination program and AFN wishes to have intensive involvement in the program. We anticipate that our involvement and responsibilities will grow as the program progresses.

To date, AFN has selected nineteen villages to include in the first year housing program. These villages are Barrow, Kot-

zebue, Nome, Dillingham, Fort Yukon, Togiak, St. Mary's, Savoonga, Gambell, Kipnuk, Quinhagak, Emmonak, Hooper Bay, Noorvik, Sand Point, Teller, Kenai, Unalakleet and Yakutat.

The selection procedure was rather simple. First, we listed all villages in Alaska with Native populations of 300 or more.

Sizeable cities (Anchorage, Juneau, Fairbanks, Ketchikan, etc.) were deleted from the list due to the complex land ownership problems which would be expected and to give emphasis to rural communities at this time.

Next, villages which have already received substantial housing assistance through ASHA or BIA programs were stricken from the list. Then, villages with any obvious problems which would seriously complicate planning, such as serious flood plain conditions, were eliminated.

By these methods, we comprised a basic list of 15 villages. To this we added villages which appealed to AFN with special requests for housing assistance. These were Kenai and Teller.

Yakutat was added to the list because a considerable amount of planning has already occurred there for housing and ASHA indicated that they will not develop housing for Yakutat in Fiscal Year 1971 after all.

Unalakleet was added for still another reason. In spite of recent BIA and ASNA housing construction activity, there remains a large market/demand for more housing there.

Future village selection criteria will include the following: village populations, housing needs, status of water and

sewer plans and facilities, land title status, flood plain information and whether or not local building materials will be utilized. We will also take into account project plans of other agencies which should affect the timing of village selections.

So far, Seattle HUD office has approved programs in eleven villages. These are Kotzebue (100 units), Barrow (100), Teller (30) Noorvik (20), Yakutat

(20), Dillingham (50), Fort Yukon (40), Kenai (35), Gambell (25), Savoonga (25), and Unalakleet (20).

As soon as a program in a village is approved AFN Field Planners, along with technicians from HUD and PHA, begin making on-site selection visits. Each village must assist in the selection of a site or sites on which the houses are to be built.

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